

'A photography idol'

New book celebrates Cartier-Bresson's skill at capturing decisive moments of history

Kim Willsher
Paris

A new edition of distinctive black and white photographs of Henri Cartier-Bresson is to be published in France. Almost two decades after his death, the man nicknamed "the Eye of the Century" for his documentation of 20th-century history remains the focus for a new generation of photographers and art lovers.

It is not clear if this would have delighted or dismayed the man who abandoned his trademark Leica 35mm Rangefinder camera in the 1970s to take up drawing and painting, declaring: "I have no interest in photography."

Henri Cartier Bresson: *Photographe* is the 11th edition of

a set of 155 photographs - some famous, some rarely seen - taken between 1926 and 1978, four years after the Frenchman had resigned from the Magnum picture agency he co-founded with colleagues including the war photographers Robert Capa, killed in Indochina, and David "Chim" Seymour, shot dead near the Suez Canal in 1956.

Catherine Philippot, from the French publisher Delpire, that has produced the latest edition of the book, said despite Cartier-Bresson's later dismissal of his work, he remained one of the leading names in the history of photography.

"The book has been out of print for some time, but there was clearly a demand for it otherwise we wouldn't be publishing this edition," Philippot said. "Cartier-

▼ *Cartier-Bresson's camera captures a group of boys in Madrid in 1933*



Bresson continues to fascinate because he is one of the key photographers of historical record.

Cartier-Bresson has been described as the godfather of photojournalism, one of the first to practise the art. In his famous 1952 essay, "The decisive moment", he describes photography as a physical ability to capture the key instant.

The book is an extraordinary walk through 50 years of history captured by a man who saw the camera as an extension of his eye but who spent his later years downplaying what he had caught on film.

In 1937, he travelled to Britain to cover the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth for the French weekly magazine *Regards*. He took pictures of ordinary people waiting in the streets of London and none of the new monarch. He documented the Spanish civil war and the liberation of Paris in 1944. In 1948, he photographed Gandhi hours before he was assassinated. In 1954, he was the first western photographer invited to the Soviet Union to record life after Stalin. At one point he decided to concentrate on portraits, capturing Pablo Picasso, Albert Camus, Colette, Henri Matisse and Alberto Giacometti.

The American-born photographer Marilyn Stafford, who now lives in the UK, was mentored by Cartier-Bresson and Capa in postwar Paris. She also took one of the very few existing images of the famously camera-shy Cartier-Bresson at that time.

"Capa and Cartier-Bresson were photography idols at the time. They were the gods," Stafford said.

Cartier-Bresson spent his last years drawing and painting. When he died, he left behind an estimated half a million negatives. "I don't believe in my career as a photographer," he said in a 2003 interview a year before his death. "Photography is just about clicking the shutter, bringing your finger down at the right moment. Drawing is what matters."

Emmanuelle Kouchner, director of Delpire, said: "It's important to remember that this is a book originally created with Cartier-Bresson with his choice of images ... these were the photographs he wished to be remembered for".

Henri Cartier Bresson: Photographe is published in French by Delpire & Co, €65



▲ *Cartier-Bresson captured ordinary lives, here in Alicante, Spain, in 1933*



▲ *The Swiss sculptor Alberto Giacometti at the modern art gallery Galerie Maeght, Paris, in 1961* PHOTOGRAPHS: FONDATION HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON/MAGNUM PHOTOS

Top dog: Eve the kelpie sells for an Australian record of £27,500

Australian Associated Press

Eve the Australian kelpie is not yet two, but half a century of work has gone into making her a star.

The classic black-and-tan working dog, from Capree Stud at Newbridge, in central-west New South Wales, set an Australian record for kelpies when she sold at auction for \$49,000 (£27,500) on Thursday.

Her breeder, Chris Stapleton, said

it appeared to be his lucky number as he celebrated 49 years of marriage to his wife, Pauline, on the same day.

"I was pretty happy yesterday," Stapleton said yesterday morning.

The previous record, set last year, was \$35,200. Stapleton had expected to get about \$30,000 for Eve and was surprised by the result.

"She's a pretty good little dog and she's really well bred. She was no accident, she was bred to be as good as she is," he said.

Eve's bloodline goes back 50 years

to some of Stapleton's original dogs. "She's pretty laid back and goes with the flow. She doesn't get too excited about things," he said.

"She's a very nice dog to have around because she's not hyperactive and when you need a job done, she's willing and able to do it. She's the perfect dog."

When the bids reached \$46,000 from buyers on site at Newbridge and online through AuctionsPlus, the auctioneer Jason Pearce joked: "It's fair to say she's on the market."

Pearce, from the agribusiness Elders in Mudgee, said that working dogs were in high demand due to skills shortages across the Australian agriculture industry.

"With demand comes increasing

price, like any commodity. There's more emphasis on there being fewer workers, less skills, so there's a requirement for a dog to potentially do more," he said.

Eve's fit physique and her unique



▲ *Eve the kelpie has been trained to work with cattle, sheep and goats*

ability to work with cattle, sheep and goats helped to attract potential buyers.

"She had pedigree bloodlines, the physical attributes, she was trained at 20 months, which is quite rare," Pearce said. "She was the complete package."

Eve's new home will be at a sheep stud in nearby Oberon.

Stapleton, who has about 20 dogs including pups and retired Australian kelpies, said the ultimate reward for a working dog was a warm kennel.

"I like to keep my dogs into retirement, so I've always had quite a few."

He added: "You give them verbal praise, and they know when they've done something well. I like to give them a pat."