



**NATIONAL SPORTING LIBRARY & MUSEUM**  
A RESEARCH CENTER FOR EQUESTRIAN, ANGLING AND FIELD SPORTS

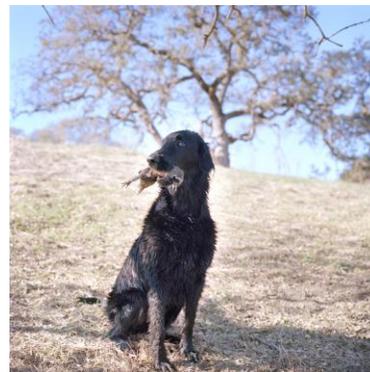
**PRESS RELEASE**

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Caption: *Yukon's First Retrieve*,  
© Jesse Freidin, Photographer

**PHOTO EXHIBIT: Contemporary Hunters and their Gun Dogs by Jesse Freidin**  
**June 5, 2013 – September 29, 2013**  
**National Sporting Library & Museum**

MIDDLEBURG, VA - Award-winning fine art photographer Jesse Freidin has embarked on an epic documentary project telling the story of the contemporary American hunter. The first of its kind, this series uses traditional photo techniques to create a comprehensive survey of contemporary American sporting culture. The first public exhibition of this project is at the National Sporting Library & Museum, June 5, 2013 – September 29, 2013.

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In the exhibit, NSLM George L. Ohrstrom, Jr. Curator Claudia Pfeiffer underlines the motivations of the California and New York-based photographer to create the fifteen color and black and white photographic prints in *American Sporting Heritage: A Portrait Survey of Contemporary Hunters and their Gun Dogs*.

“Freidin is not a hunter himself,” Pfeiffer said. “He started the series by asking himself the question, ‘Why do people still hunt today?’”

Freidin expanded on his ideas in an interview with Pfeiffer. “Humans evolved alongside dogs,” he said. “Learning to hunt became ingrained in humans,” but he posited, “do we need to continue hunting for our food?”

Known for his dog portraits, Freidin identified with the relationships that humans and canines form, but took an unflinching approach to the series. “Something is being killed. Why is this beautiful?” he questioned.

Freidin applied the same techniques he uses for his dog portraiture by conducting in-depth interviews of his human subjects while watching them interact with their dogs. All of the photos were taken in California, many in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Through observation and taking in the sitters’ narratives, Freidin began to appreciate the contemplative aspects of the pastime, the keeping of the tradition and the intrinsic harmony between hunters and nature.

“They are being human, meditative and at ease,” he said of Tom and John, two life-long friends and hunters. “For them the practice is not good or bad. It just is.”

Freidin also experienced dilemmas of the contemporary hunter trying to commune with nature in areas that are becoming increasingly developed. In fact, the photographer sometimes found it difficult to compose images devoid of power lines, roads or overhead planes from an airport near a marsh.

Shooting with medium-format cameras, Freidin still works with film using traditional techniques in an age when digital photography and computer post-processing have overtaken the photographic medium.

“The resulting series of hunting portraits is intimate, vibrant and fresh, yet has a modern appeal,” Pfeiffer said. “In essence, Freidin is preserving two traditions – the art of analog photography and the generations-old experience of hunting.”

Through his camera lens, Freidin invites the viewer to join him in contemplating the question, “Why do people still hunt today?” and explore the relationship between the contemporary hunter, his gun dog and the modern landscape.

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Freidin will be at the National Sporting Library & Museum on September 5, 2013, to present a gallery talk during an open house being held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Caption: *Yukon's First Retrieve*, © Jesse Freidin, Photographer  
courtesy of the National Sporting Library & Museum

*The National Sporting Library & Museum is dedicated to preserving, promoting and sharing the literature, art and culture of equestrian, angling and field sports. Founded in 1954, the institution has over 24,000-books dating from the 16th-21st centuries. The John H. Daniels Fellowship program supports the research of visiting scholars. The Museum, a newly renovated and expanded historic building on the Library campus, houses exhibits of American and European fine animal and sporting art. Information is shared through exhibitions, lectures, seminars, publications and special events. The NSLM is open to researchers and the general public.*

**Admission:** free.

**Library Hours:** Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

**Museum Hours:** Wednesday-Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday noon to 4 p.m.

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