PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DiverseWorks, Barrio Dogs, and Box 13 present
No One’s Dog

a community-based photography project documenting Houston’s animal
overpopulation crisis

EXHIBITION: July 26 – August 9, 2014
Opening Reception Saturday, June 27, 2 - 4 pm
at DiverseWorks, 4102 Fannin Street, Houston, TX  77004

COMMUNITY AWARENESS EVENT: Saturday, August 9, 5 – 7 pm
at Box 13 ArtSpace, 6700 Harrisburg Blvd., Houston, TX  77017

(Houston, TX, June 27, 2014) – Building on DiverseWorks’ long history of social justice advocacy, DiverseWorks, Barrio Dogs, and Box 13 have teamed up to present No One’s Dog, a community based project that uses art to bring attention to Houston’s animal overpopulation crisis. The project involves a photography exhibition at DiverseWorks (July 26 – August 9, 2014), a community awareness event at Box 13 ArtSpace (August 9, 5 – 7 pm), and a commissioned coloring book created by Houston-based artist Michael Bise. The coloring book tells the story of Rusty the dog (in English and Spanish), one of Barrio Dogs greatest success stories, and will be distributed free of charge.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE
All members of the general public are invited to participate in the No One’s Dog exhibition by uploading digital photographs of stray, injured, or neglected dogs in their neighborhoods to the No One’s Dog Flickr group: https://www.flickr.com/groups/houstondogs/ by July 8, 2014. Photographs should be a minimum of 1800x2400 pixels. Additionally, so that the most number of people possible are able to participate, disposable cameras were distributed to East End residents, including school children, at recent Barrio Dogs community awareness events. DiverseWorks will choose a selection of photographs to print and include in the No One’s Dog exhibition. All participants will be invited to the opening reception on Saturday, July 26 from 2 – 4 pm.

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There are more than one million homeless animals living in Houston, most of which reside in the city’s most impoverished communities. According to the 2010 Health of Houston Survey, stray animals are the number one neighborhood problem in Houston, ahead of crime and public services. Among the areas most affected are the poorest, where it is common to see injured, sick, pregnant, and nursing dogs—oftentimes in packs—roaming the streets and living in parks, alleys, vacant lots, and empty buildings. Sadly, dead dogs are ubiquitous, found alongside busy roads, in ditches, and even in dumpsters—the victims of cars, disease, starvation, or violence.

Social documentary photography has been a powerful force for change—from Jacob Riis’ late 19th century photographs of New York City slums, to the Great Depression-era work of Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, and the numerous other Farm Security Administration photographers who documented the plight of the rural poor. More recently, DiverseWorks has a long history of presenting activist work, including Richard Lewis’ Mothers of the Disappeared (1989), Stories about Us: Photographs from Juárez (1998), and Ben DeSoto’s Understanding Poverty (2008). What makes No One’s Dog different though, is the fact that the photographers are not professional artists, but members of the public who live in the neighborhoods they are documenting.

Spay/neuter programs and education are the only ways to solve Houston’s animal overpopulation crisis, and the goal of No One’s Dog is to educate through art. This is a citywide problem, and we hope increased visibility will lead to positive change in the lives of residents AND animals alike.

WEBSITE
http://diverseworks.org/in-the-works/exhibtion-performance/ones-dog

FLICKR GROUP
https://www.flickr.com/groups/houstondogs/

THE COLORING BOOK
DiverseWorks engaged artist Michael Bise to tell the story of Rusty—a stray found in a cemetery who has found his forever home with a Barrio Dogs volunteer. Rusty is now a certified Youth and Paws dog that visits area schools and community centers to teach children about proper pet care and the importance of fixing their pets. The coloring book will be distributed for free at DiverseWorks and Box 13, and will also be used in the Barrio Dogs’ Youth and Paws program.

Michael Bise received his BFA from the University of North Texas and his MFA from the University of Houston. He has had solo shows at Moody Gallery (Houston), McKinney Avenue Contemporary (Dallas), Fort Worth Contemporary Arts at Texas Christian University, and Small A Projects (Portland, OR). His work has been included in numerous group exhibitions, including Parallel Myths, David Shelton Gallery (Houston), The State of Drawing, The Gallery at the University of Texas at Arlington; The Drawing Room, Galveston Arts Center; Fathom, Texas State University (San Marcos), and Perspectives 152: Four Artists, Four Stories, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston. Bise’s works are in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Piggozi Collection (New York, NY).

ABOUT BARRIO DOGS
Barrio Dogs is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit established in 2010 for the purpose of educating, empowering and transforming the East End by raising awareness and educating the community about proper animal care, leash and tethering laws, the importance of reporting animal neglect and abuse and above all, promoting and when possible paying for spay and neuter of dogs. Comprised completely of volunteers, Barrio Dogs’ approach to helping the East End’s homeless and mistreated animals has resonated with many people, not just dog lovers. www.barriodogs.org

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ABOUT BOX 13
Box 13 is an artist-run nonprofit and innovative environment for the creation and advancement of experimental contemporary art in Houston. BOX 13 artists create this environment through the offering of affordable workspaces for emerging and established artists, dedicating five interior spaces to the exhibition of artistic explorations, a window gallery for installations and an outdoor courtyard space. Box 13 promotes dialogue among artists and the art community on current trends affecting the arts. Box 13 is a member of the East End Chamber of Commerce.  www.box13artspace.com

ABOUT DIVERSEWORKS
DiverseWorks is a non-profit art center in Houston, Texas dedicated to commissioning and presenting new visual, performing, and literary art. DiverseWorks is a place where the process of creating art is valued and where artists can test new ideas in the public arena. By encouraging the investigation of current artistic, cultural, and social issues, DiverseWorks builds, educates, and sustains audiences for contemporary art.  www.diverseworks.org

SUPPORT
This project is supported in part by The Texas Commission on the Arts through an Arts Respond Grant, with additional support from the City of Houston through the Houston Arts Alliance.

DiverseWorks Season Sponsors: The Brown Foundation, Inc., The Cullen Trust for the Performing Arts, and The Houston Endowment

Additional In-Kind Support: Topo Chico USA

DiverseWorks is a member of the Houston Museum District.

DiverseWorks
4102 Fannin, Suite 200
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(entrance on Cleburne between Fannin and Main)
(713) 223-8346
Gallery Hours: Wednesdays, noon – 8 pm / Thursdays – Saturdays, noon – 6 pm / or by appointment
Admission is open to the public and FREE

Facebook:  www.facebook.org/diverseworks
Twitter:  @DiverseWorks
Web:  www.DiverseWorks.org

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