

Ms.  
Coll.  
00448

Tata, Sam  
Photographs  
Photographer

Collection contains large black and white photographic prints and scrapbooks related to the life and work of Sam Tata.

Purchased from John Metcalf in 2006

Extent: 5 boxes (2.5 metres)

Biographical sketch:

Sam Tata was born in Shanghai, China, on September 30th, 1911, to father Bejan, and mother, Naja, of the wealthy, mercantile Tata family. He died July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2005 at the age of 93 at Sooke, British Columbia, Canada, on Vancouver Island.

He took up photography after studying at the University of Hong Kong in the 1930s, and was one of the founding members of the Shanghai Camera Club. He learned studio portraiture with Oscar Seepol, later studying with well-known photographers, Chin San Long and Liu Shu Chong. His photographs began to be accepted for publication by British and American magazines. In the 1940s he had his own photography exhibition in Bombay (Mumbai). He lived in India for part of the 1940s where he met future mentor and friend, famed French photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson. With Cartier-Bresson, Tata learned the art of street photography. The two documented the Indian Independence movement from 1946-1948, including the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1949, Tata returned to Shanghai, where he documented the rise of Communism in China following the Chinese Civil War. Tata immigrated to Canada in 1956 with his wife, Marketa (Rita) Langer and settled in Montreal, developing his photography career as a portraitist, and raising his daughter, Toni. Photographs of Toni as a small child appeared frequently in Canadian magazines-- she was clearly one of her father's favourite subjects. Tata also became known for his portraits of celebrities such as Leonard Cohen, Irving Layton, Buster Keaton, Elizabeth Smart, Christopher Plummer, Donald Sutherland to name a few.

Tata is survived by daughter Antonia (Toni), in Canada, sister Aloo Daver, of Hong Kong, brothers Phiroze Tata of London, England, Jango Tata, of San Francisco, and two grandsons. One brother died before him.

Tata's work has appeared in numerous magazines and newspapers, including *Macleans*, *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, *Time*, *The Globe Magazine*, *Star Weekly*, *Perspectives*, *French Chateleine* and many others, especially during the 1940s-1960s. His work has also appeared in numerous books and photography shows. In 1982 he received an honorary degree from Concordia University, Montreal. He was awarded the lifetime achievement award from the Canadian Association of Photographers and Illustrators in Communication (CAPIC). In 1991, forty of his photographs appeared in the National Library of Canada exhibition, Canadian Writers at the National Library of Canada.

Ms.  
Coll.  
00448

Tata, Sam  
Photographs  
Photographer

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Box 1<br>47 photographs | 46 black and white photographic prints.<br>1 colour photographic print. 8x 10 mostly   |
|                         |  |
|                         | 5 x 8 colour photograph<br>'Two guitars, Montreal, 1962, Sam Tata',<br>holograph. 'The only colour of Sam's I<br>saw. He loathed colour, saying "it betrayed<br>form".' J.M. |
|                         |  |
|                         | 'Hommage to Kertesz, McGill University,<br>Montreal, 1982 (Tata)' holograph  |
|                         |  |
|                         | 'Conversation, Shivajinagar, Bangalore<br>'83', holograph  |
|                         |  |
|                         | 'Family, Hong Kong, 1984', holograph   |
|                         |  |
|                         | 'Roof Tops, Tokyo, 1973 (Tata)',<br>holograph  |
|                         |  |
|                         | 'Toy Shop, Udaipur '84', holograph   |
|                         |  |
|                         | 'Latrine, Market place, Udaipur '84',<br>holograph   |
|                         |  |
|                         | 'Drugstore, Mohammed Ali Rd., Bombay<br>'83', holograph  |
|                         |  |
|                         | Uncaptioned [China street scene?]  |
|                         |  |
|                         | 'Race Club, Bombay '83', holograph   |
|                         |  |
|                         | 'Destitutes, Shanghai, April 1949 (Paper<br>with writing gives reasons for begging)'   |
|                         |  |
|                         | 'Sisters, Wan Chai, Hong Kong 1973<br>(Tata)', holograph   |
|                         |  |
|                         | John Metcalf, 1985(?)  |
|                         |  |
|                         | 'Quick lunch, Des Voeux Rd, Hong Kong<br>1973', holograph  |
|                         |  |

Ms.  
Coll.  
00448

Tata, Sam  
Photographs  
Photographer

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | Montreal [Jewish men studying]   |
|  |  |
|  | John Metcalf with Al Purdy 1989, 5x8                                     |
|  |  |
|  | John Metcalf 1978, Delta, ON   |
|  |  |
|  | Montreal. [Jewish men and boys praying]                                  |
|  |  |
|  | Montreal. [Jewish man studying]  |
|  |  |
|  | Buster Keaton during the making of CN movie.                             |
|  |  |
|  | [Interior. Seated Chinese man.]  |
|  |  |
|  | 'Overheard in a barbershop.' Kashmir?                                    |
|  |  |
|  | 'Pupils for Parsi priesthood, Dadar, Bombay '84', holograph              |
|  |  |
|  | 'Pedicab coolie, Ernakulam, Cochin '83', holograph                       |
|  |  |
|  | 'Muslim merchants, Mohammed Ali Rd., B'bay '83'                          |
|  |  |
|  | 'Market, Panaji, Goa '83'  |
|  |  |
|  | 'Shopper, Southall, London, 1983', holograph                             |
|  |  |
|  | London (Probably 1983) J.M.  |
|  |  |
|  | One of the Shanghai photos J.M.  |
|  |  |
|  | I have a suspicion this is Cartier-Bresson. J.M. [Henri Cartier-Bresson] |
|  |  |
|  | 'John Metcalf', holograph, October 1987, signed Tata                     |
|  |  |
|  | John Metcalf by Sam Tata, Oct. 87  |
|  |  |
|  | 'Elizabeth Smart, Toronto, 1983' holograph                               |

Ms.  
Coll.  
00448

Tata, Sam  
Photographs  
Photographer

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
|                                 |   |
|                                 | 'Yoshi Toshi Mori, Artist, Tokyo 1984',<br>holograph                    |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | Leon Rooke 1988-89 Victoria   |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | 'B'bay 1948', holograph   |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | 'Clothier, Udaipur '84', holograph                                      |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | Buster Keaton, CN film  |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | Parsi function, Montreal  |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | 'Bookstall, Mohammed Ali Rd, Bombay<br>'83' holograph                   |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | 'Marketplace, Udaipur '84', holograph                                   |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | R. Caouette [Réal Caouette]   |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | 'Merchant, Mohammed Ali Rd., Bombay<br>'83', holograph                  |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | 'Sikh flower seller, Chandni Chowk, Delhi<br>'84', holograph            |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | 'Papier Maché elephant, Delhi 1984',<br>holograph                       |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | 'Brahmin couple, Chandni Chowk, Delhi<br>'84', holograph                |
|                                 |   |
|                                 | 'Journey to Amarnath, Kashmir 1955',<br>holograph                       |
|                                 |   |
| Box 2<br>29 photographs/folders | Mostly 11 x 14 inch black and white<br>photographs                      |
|                                 |   |
| Folder 1                        | 'Pilgrims at Panchtarni enroute to<br>Amarnath, Kashmir 1955' holograph |
|                                 |   |
| Folder 2                        | 'Family, Nantao, Shanghai 1949',<br>holograph                           |
|                                 |   |

Ms.  
Coll.  
00448

Tata, Sam  
Photographs  
Photographer

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Folder 3  | 'Beggar Boys, Shanghai, 1949', holograph   |
| Folder 4  | Uncaptioned, [Shanghai, 1949?]   |
| Folder 5  | 'Street conversation, Shanghai, 1938',<br>holograph  |
| Folder 6  | 'Mourners, Millionaire Aw Boon Haw's<br>Funeral, Hong Kong, 1954', holograph   |
| Folder 7  | 'Baby-Sitter, Shanghai, China, 1949',<br>holograph   |
| Folder 8  | 'Parade Participants on Stilts, Shanghai,<br>1949'   |
| Folder 9  | 'Actress Diana Van Der Vlis, New York,<br>1959' 2 prints   |
| Folder 10 | 'Priest With Hindu Women and Child,<br>Galta, India, 1955', holograph  |
| Folder 11 | 'Trevor Payne, Musician, Montreal, 1974'<br>2 prints   |
| Folder 12 | 'probably Montreal', note, John Metcalf  |
| Folder 13 | 'Market Place, Udaipur, 1984', holograph   |
| Folder 14 | 'Chovalo-Cleroux, copyright 1960'<br>boxers George Chovalo and Bob Cleroux<br>in action                                  |
| Folder 15 | 'Family on the move: boy in the basket<br>awaits his parents amidst goods and<br>chattels. Shanghai. 1949.' Note by J.M. |
| Folder 16 | 'Craig St. (now St. Antoine), Montreal.<br>1962', holograph  |
| Folder 17 | 'Hampton Court, 1978', holograph   |
| Folder 18 | 'Blind Beggars, Darjeeling, India, 1946',<br>holograph   |

Ms.  
Coll.  
00448

Tata, Sam  
Photographs  
Photographer

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Folder 19                       | 'Children's Clothes over door with antique carving, Shanghai, 1949', holograph  |
| Folder 20                       | 'Peasant Women, Delhi, 1955', holograph   |
| Folder 21                       | 'Donald Sutherland, actor, London, 1976', holograph   |
| Folder 22                       | uncaptioned   |
| Folder 23                       | 'Street Market, Hong Kong, 1973'  |
| Folder 24                       | 'Jumma Masjid, Delhi, 1955'   |
| Folder 25                       | Uncaptioned [Shanghai, 1940s?]  |
| Folder 26                       | 'Comedian Arthur Treacher, Montreal, 1958'  |
| Folder 27                       | 'Sacred Cow, Bombay, 1947', holograph   |
| Folder 28                       | 'Pilgrims to Amarnath, Pisu Ghati, Kashmir, 1955', holograph  |
| Folder 29                       | uncaptioned   |
| Box 3<br>52 photographs/folders | 55 11 X 14 black and white photographic prints  |
| Folder 1                        | 'used as front cover of Ovo Magazine (Montreal)' – note J.M. mounted print of nuns ascending church steps.                              |
| Folder 2                        | John Metcalf, 1969 or 1970.<br>Inscribed 'For John, to celebrate "auld acquaintances, affectionately, Sam'. Signed and mounted on board |
| Folder 3                        | 'H.W. Jones, Painter, Montreal, 1977'<br>2 prints   |
| Folder 4                        | 'John and Myra Metcalf (1985?)'   |
| Folder 5                        | 'Escaping Nationalist Soldier, Shanghai, 1949. Ironically flags in background   |

Ms.  
Coll.  
00448

Tata, Sam  
Photographs  
Photographer

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
|           | celebrate some previous Nationalist Victory Day.’ Holograph   |
| Folder 6  | ‘Crowds Seeking Entry into the China Travel Service for Railway Tickets Early May, Shanghai, 1949.’ Signed ‘Tata’ holograph. 2 prints [1 original?] |
| Folder 7  | ‘Roof Tops, Tokyo, 1972’. Signed ‘Tata’. holograph  |
| Folder 8  | ‘Parade of Soldiers of the Peoples’ Liberation Army, Shanghai, 1949’ holograph  |
| Folder 9  | Hong Kong   |
| Folder 10 | ‘[dancer, Southeast Asia?]  |
| Folder 11 | ‘Graffiti, Amsterdam, 1981.’ holograph  |
| Folder 12 | ‘Emile Belcourt, Singer, Wimbledon, 1976’ holograph   |
| Folder 13 | Uncaptioned [musicians?]  |
| Folder 14 | Note – J.M. ‘I think this is Edward Steichen’ [photographer]  |
| Folder 15 | Mulk Raj Anand. Author of ‘Coolie’. [reading ‘Coolie’]  |
| Folder 16 | ‘Fakir, Pakistan, 1955’ holograph   |
| Folder 17 | uncaptioned   |
| Folder 18 | ‘Trial by a Nationalist Court of man accused of being a Communist and Blackmarketeer. Shanghai, China, 1949.’ Holograph                             |
| Folder 19 | Uncaptioned [trial, Shanghai, 1949]   |
| Folder 20 | ‘Nationalist trial of a man accused of being a Communist, Shanghai, China, 1949.’   |

Ms.  
Coll.  
00448

Tata, Sam  
Photographs  
Photographer

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
|           | Signed, holograph   |
| Folder 21 | 'Trial of man accused of being a Communist and blackmarketeering. His "crimes" are inscribed on paper-covered stick of wood.' Shanghai, 1949. holograph                           |
| Folder 22 | '... after which he is hustled off to be shot.' Holograph   |
| Folder 23 | Montreal sculptor. Stanley Lewis (?) note by J.M.   |
| Folder 24 | 'Pauline Julien, Montreal. 1972' signed 'Tata'. Holograph. [singer, actress, songwriter, 1928-1998]   |
| Folder 25 | 'Coolie woman, Monsoon, Bombay, 1948.' Inscribed 'For Myrna and John with affection, from Sam, 11 July 1992'. Signed, holograph   |
| Folder 26 | 'Salvation Army Band, St. Ives, Cornwall, 1978' signed 'Tata'. Note from John Metcalf: 'I used this as cover for Norman Levine's <i>From a Seaside Town</i> (Porcupine's Quill).' |
| Folder 27 | 'Yoshi Toshi Mori, Artist, Tokyo, 1984. J.M.'   |
| Folder 28 | John Colicos [Actor, played first Klingon in Star Trek]   |
| Folder 29 | 'House-moving, Shanghai, 1949'. Holograph   |
| Folder 30 | Uncaptioned [China]   |
| Folder 31 | London, UK  |
| Folder 32 | Uncaptioned [cellist]   |
| Folder 33 | 'Papier-maché Horse, Jaipur, 1955', holograph   |



Ms.  
Coll.  
00448

Tata, Sam  
Photographs  
Photographer

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
|           |  |
| Folder 34 | 'Petticoat Lane, London, 1959' holograph   |
|           |  |
| Folder 35 | 'Concert, Public Square, Panaji, Goa, 1983' holograph  |
|           |  |
| Folder 36 | Uncaptioned [India?]   |
|           |  |
| Folder 37 | 'Fountain, Trafalgar Square, London, 1983.' Holograph  |
|           |  |
| Folder 38 | 'Uniforms and Musical Instruments, Udaipur, 1984.' Signed 'Tata' holograph   |
|           |  |
| Folder 39 | 'Lubavitcher Bride, Montreal, 1972' holograph  |
|           |  |
| Folder 40 | Uncaptioned [cat and statue, China?]   |
|           |  |
| Folder 41 | 'A Lubavitcher Bridegroom, Montreal, 1972.' Holograph  |
|           |  |
| Folder 42 | [lion dancers in parade]   |
|           |  |
| Folder 43 | 'Muslim Woman outside the Zakaria Mosque, Bombay, 1948' holograph  |
|           |  |
| Folder 44 | 'Hikers, Luxembourg, 1976' holograph   |
|           |  |
| Folder 45 | Young foreign refugee waiting to embark on the <i>Wooster Victory</i> . Shanghai, 1949. note by J.M.                                     |
|           |  |
| Folder 46 | Uncaptioned [India?]   |
|           |  |
| Folder 47 | 'A View from a window, Wembley, London, 1976'. Holograph, signed. Ada and Frenny Tata – 'Tata's brother and wife at home in London' J.M. |
|           |  |
| Folder 48 | Réal Caouette. 1962. Atwater Market. Provincial campaign. J.M. note  |
|           |  |
| Folder 49 | 'Worshippers, Hazrat Bal Mosque, Srinagar, Kashmir, 1955', holograph   |

Ms.  
Coll.  
00448

Tata, Sam  
Photographs  
Photographer

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
|           |  |
| Folder 50 | [Christopher Plummer]  |
|           |  |
| Folder 51 | Montreal. Ritz. J.M.   |
|           |  |
| Folder 52 | 'Coolies resting, Jaipur, 1955' holograph                          |
|           |  |
| Box 4     | 4 scrapbooks<br>blank notecards in folder depicting Tata<br>photos |
|           |  |
|           |  |
| Box 5     | Scrapbook, large with 'T' on cover                                 |
|           |  |