

PIMP MY POODLE



Take a poodle, some non-toxic dye, clippers and scissors, a huge amount of imagination and a skilled groomer and what do you end up with? Walking works of art.

Extreme or Creative grooming is all about taking conventional grooming skills and using them to create amazingly complex works. Mostly, these works are for grooming competitions with some international titles come with big prize money. In Australia, the prizes and the money are not as enticing but nevertheless, the competition is fierce.

Cats also experience the fur flying action too, and recently, Central Coast Pet Stylist, Annett Whitelum, from Turners and Pooch Pet Salon, was awarded the first certified feline master groomer in NSW. As Annett says, "It was relatively easy to find cats that needed grooming for me to use in my exams. The cats were

perfectly well behaved and when they were almost finished they were standing up so proudly rubbing their faces on the grooming table frame as if to say how fabulous they looked and felt."

As part of the program, cats were clipped into the traditional lion trim which leaves hair on their head, feet and a pom pom of the end of their tail and the rest is clipped back very short.



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Photos by Ren Netherland


In the US, Intergroom's Creative Challenge contest featured the stylings of over 3,000 groomers and their art; dogs and cats. Intergroom's International grooming contest has become the largest of its kind in the world, with participants from over 20 countries across the globe. The first competition was held in Newark, New Jersey and has been an annual staple for pet groomers ever since.

Arkansas based groomer, Angela Kumpe has been competing since 2002. She started out colouring her poodles with food colouring when she was about six. Angela says that her life revolves around creative styling and will style around three to five dogs a day for customers at her Little Rock Grooming salon. For a fairly conservative part of the US, her customers keep coming back for more outlandish and wacky designs.

Angela competes in most of the US based competitions and these creations take

a great deal of planning. She first works out a design on paper and studies the technicality of the artwork. With many of the designs, the dogs' hair needs to be grown quite long and often dyed in stages to achieve different colours. It takes about three washes for the dye to disappear and many of the dogs are clipped back shortly after the competition.

The competitions run for just over two and a half hours and in that time the groomer has to clip and style the dogs. Many of the dogs used in competitions arrive with long hair and have already been dyed with non-toxic colourings. Surprisingly, most of the dogs are pretty calm and enjoy the attention. The dogs are pros, just like their groomers.

Groomex 2011 Creative competition will be held at the Sydney Showgrounds at Olympic Park from 2:00pm on Saturday, October 8th. 

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