NUCLEAR MATTERS

OPENING RECEPTION:
Friday, February 3, 6 - 9 pm

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND ARTISTS
Berlyn Brixner
Carole Conde
& Karl Beveridge
Robert Del Tredici
Carole Gallagher
Peter Goon
David Graham
James Lerager
Yoshito Matusuhige
Richard Misrach
Merideth Rubenstein,
Ellen Zweig
Stina & Woody Vasulka
Margaret Stratton

VIDEOS AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING IN THE GALLERY
Free Zone: Democracy Meets the Nuclear Threat, 1980.
Mary Beth Braun, David L. Brown and Jim Huddle
Final Test for the Earth, 1990.
David L. Brown, Lynn Feinerman and Eric Ladenburg
In the Nuclear Shadow
What Can the Children Tell Us?, 1983.
Vivienne Vernette-Roe, Eric Thiemann and Ian Thiemann
KUTV, Salt Lake City
Video courtesy of The Video Project, Oakland.

CURATORS
Tomothy Drakekroy
Marnie Gillett

PROGRAM OF EVENING EVENTS
Merideth Rubenstein & Ellen Zweig
Margaret Stratton
Thursday, January 31, 8 pm
Robert Del Tredici
Dale Keith

Individual presentations and discussion
Thursday, February 7, 8 pm

Radiation: Visible and Invisible Effects
Dean Ehrenberg, Peter Goon, Jan Kirsch and
James Lerager

Direct Action: A Blueprint For Artists
Babs Fallahian, Rachel Johnson, Richard Misrach
and William Rossetti, Sr.
A round table discussion
Thursday, February 28, 8 pm

Berlyn Brixner: Today 5:30 am, July 16, 1945.
This picture was taken immediately after the explosion of the
first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. This was the
first atomic bomb dropped by the U.S. in World War II.
(National Archives)


Admission is free to the exhibition.

Nuclear Matters is a survey exhibition of photographers, filmmakers, and video artists committed to exposing how the nuclear industry, in its many forms, permeates daily existence. This show takes as its starting point our collective, inherited imagery—the universal icon of the mushroom cloud—and posits the idea that the "nuclearization of culture" is not neutral. Using approaches which range from a factual, investigative documentary style to a metaphorical representation, the artists expose this elusive era, the Nuclear Age, making it visually accessible and demonstrating that its impact has not come to an end even with the thawing of the Cold War.
The exhibition Nuclear Matters brings together works that explore the issues surrounding the nuclearization of our culture. The realities and activities of nuclearization have a dramatic, omnipresent impact on society and culture, and are visible in areas as diverse as medicine, politics, science and environment. Nuclear energy has a curious existence with both visible and invisible effects. To represent these effects and the broad ranging issues surrounding them is both a challenge and a dilemma which the photographers and artists in Nuclear Matters encounter in various ways. Clearly, there is no single viewpoint, but a set of interpretations that establishes a intertwined relationship among diverse aspects, including the scientific development of nuclear bombs and testing, employment in the nuclear industry, the health hazards of radiation fallout, and the media’s fictionalization of nuclear crises.

This exhibition takes as its starting point the collective imagery we have inherited—the universal icon of the mushroom cloud—and points the idea that the nuclearization of culture is not neutral. Using approaches which range from the factual and reportage to the more interpretative, the exhibition demonstrates that issues and lag from our nuclear cycle have not come to an end even with the thawing of the Cold War. The devastating consequences of the nuclear industry can be seen clearly in specific geographically located nuclear catastrophes, as we have seen in the tragedies of Chernobyl and Three Mile Island. But the nuclear industry operates on a much wider scale, its impact in many of its manifestations, permeates daily life. This impact is not only in the form of images that the meaning of this exhibition resides—rather, it’s intended result will be the mobilization of public awareness and action.

**Lectures and events sponsored in conjunction with NUCLEAR MATTERS**

**Meridel Rabensteiner & Ellen Zweig/Margaret Stratton**
Thursday, January 31, 8pm

Meridel Rabensteiner and Ellen Zweig will discuss their video and photographic installation The Portal to the Enchanted Chamber, included in Nuclear Matters. This collaboration with Walter and Wendy Nesbit explores J. Robert Oppenheimer and the Institute for Defense Analyses near Washington, D.C., the laboratory where the first atomic bomb was built in secret land in New Mexico. The piece poses the question: What is the nature of warfare development outside the battleground and reinvents an historical narrative which makes us realize that power is one of the central themes of our time.

Margaret Stratton will talk about her work entitled Hotjock and the Bomb: Perilous Fictions which deconstructs the presence of the nuclear within popular media. Her work addresses how films and television programs—nuclear entertainment—are imbued with messages and codes used to manipulate audiences into not only accepting the use of nuclear weapons but their continued testing and production. Apocalyptic programming is flattering and the nuclear film’s where popular culture watches—what many have come to believe: our final moments.

Meridel Rabensteiner has received several grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and a Guggenheim Fellowship. With a support from a NEA Inter-Arts Grant, Rabensteiner is collaborating with video artists Stanis and Willy Nicolaus, and performance artist Ellen Zweig on a project about the founding of Los Alamos and its impact on culture.

Ellen Zweig is a performance/installation artist, a writer and theorist. Her work is in many of the fields on view in images at the Exhibition. She teaches at the University of the Arts and is in residence at the Fulbright Commission in Sweden. She is concluding her book project on Los Alamos.

**Margaret Stratton** is an Assistant Professor at the University of Iowa. Currently she is the Curator of the College of the Arts and living in Stockholm. Robert Del Tredici: At Work in the Fields of the Bomb: J.R.D. and the Blue Pacific

Robert Del Tredici’s photographs document the life of J. Robert Oppenheimer, scientist for nuclear weapons in America and Canada for the past ten years. His photographs and interviews provide a powerful expression of the human dimension of nuclear testing. His work on view at Camerawork is from his book, At Work in the Fields of the Bomb: J.R.D. and the Blue Pacific. Del Tredici is the founder of The Atomic Photograph Project. His photography is both poetic and humorous, revealing the absurdities of the nuclear age.

Dale Kistemaker is a still photographer, media producer, and the Blue Pacific. This piece examines the myth and reality of the war based on Kistemaker’s interviews with many of the participants in Oppenheimer’s life. His new book, The Oppenheimer Project, explores the complex relationship between the scientist and his father. The book has been described as a puzzle that combines science, politics, and history. The Oppenheimer Project is a collaborative project between the artist and Kistemaker. Del Tredici is an Assistant Professor and Head of the Photography Area in the Art Department at the University of Hawaii. His work has been shown in numerous exhibitions, including the Walker Art Center and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

**Radiation: Visible and Invisible Effects**

Dean Echenberg, Peter Goin, Jan Kirsch and James Lerager

Inaugural Lecture and Reception
Thursday, February 1, 6:30 pm

Recently, there has been a great deal of discussion in the nuclear age about the health hazards of radiation fallout, and the role of the arts in raising awareness of these issues. The exhibitions Nuclear Matters and CAMERAWORK's current show, The Nuclear Age: A Blueprint for Artists, explore the intersection of these two fields through a series of lectures and discussions. The lecture will be followed by a reception and launch party for the exhibition.

**Margaret Stratton:** First Yoga into Toa, 1945, 1993. From the series Hollywood and The Bomb: Perilous Fictions. (SF CAMERAWORK)

**Carolee Conde and Karl Beveridge:** From the series Invisible Cities, 1985-86. (Fulcrum Press)

**Dean Echenberg, M.D., P.H.D.,** in a public health physician and executive. He was chief of Disease Control and San Francisco and worked in international public health. He was recently in Kabul, Afghanistan, where he spoke with many health care professionals about the condition of the country’s health care system, and the need for continued support.

Peter Goin has photographed the nuclear lands of Nevada’s Test Site, the Trinity Site in New Mexico, the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington, and the Bikini and Eniwetok Atolls in the Marshall Islands. He has written numerous booklets for the military, and his work has been published in the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, and the San Francisco Chronicle.

Margaret Stratton, and a suggested bibliography and resource list. To order, please send a check payable to SF Camerawork for $12.95 (includes first class postage).

Organized by Richard Misrach, this discussion will focus on how artists might become more directly involved in public health. The panelists will discuss the role of art in raising awareness of public health issues, and the potential for artists to contribute to the development of new public health strategies.

Richard Misrach has been photographing the American West since the mid-1960s. Over the past 30 years, his work has been explicitly political documenting milleniums of culture and lifestyle. The Art of the Lunar Experiments is a book which documents the rich history of the American Space Program. The book has been praised for its unique and compelling approach to the history of space exploration.

**Richard Misrach:** In his book The Lunar Experiments, Misrach explores the art and science of space exploration. The book was published by Photography West in 1990 and includes contributions from leading space scientists and artists.

**William Ross, Sr.** The former member of the Yuma-Shoshone Tribe in Central Nevada and a member of the Nevada State Historical Society, will discuss the history of the Shoshone Nation and its relationship to the nuclear testing program. Ross has been trying to raise awareness for the indigenous rights of the Shoshone, which is being criminally neglected by the government.

**Robert Del Tredici:** Del Tredici’s photographs document the life of J. Robert Oppenheimer, scientist for nuclear weapons in America and Canada for the past ten years. His photographs and interviews provide a powerful expression of the human dimension of nuclear testing. Del Tredici is the founder of The Atomic Photograph Project. His photography is both poetic and humorous, revealing the absurdities of the nuclear age.

**Grant Rubenstein:** Rubenstein is collaborating with video artists Steina and Woody Vasulka, and his show at Camerawork is a collaboration with their work. His show at the University of the Arts and is in residence at the Fulbright Commission in Sweden. He is concluding his book project on Los Alamos.

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