

# NUCLEAR MATTERS

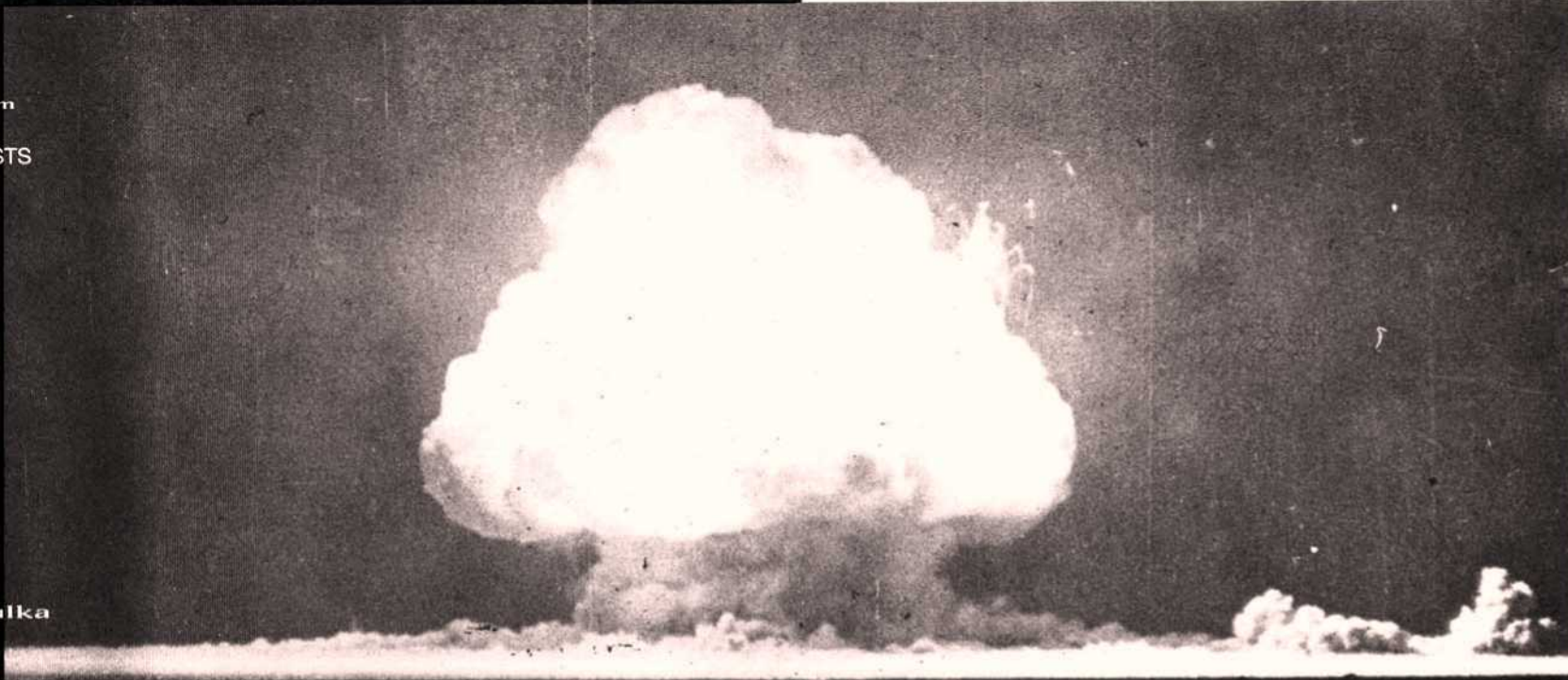
January 31 - March 9, 1991

**OPENING RECEPTION:**

Friday, February 1, 6 - 9 pm

**PHOTOGRAPHERS AND ARTISTS**

Berlyn Brixner  
 Carole Conde  
 & Karl Beveridge  
 Robert Del Tredici  
 Carole Gallagher  
 Peter Goin  
 David Graham  
 James Lerager  
 Yoshito Matsushige  
 Richard Misrach  
 Meridel Rubenstein,  
 Ellen Zweig,  
 Steina & Woody Vasulka  
 Margaret Stratton



**VIDEOS AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING IN THE GALLERY**

*Free Zone: Democracy Meets the Nuclear Threat, 1989.*  
 Mary Beth Braun, David L. Brown and Jim Heddle  
*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 Verdon-Roe, Eric Thiermann and Ian Thiermann\*  
*Atomic Bond, 1990.*  
 KUTV, Salt Lake City  
 \*Video courtesy of The Video Project, Oakland.

**CURATORS**

Timothy Druckrey  
 Marnie Gillett

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100 METERS

**PROGRAM OF EVENING EVENTS**

Meridel Rubenstein & Ellen Zweig  
 Margaret Stratton  
 Thursday, January 31, 8 pm  
 Robert Del Tredici  
 Dale Kistemaker  
 Thursday, February 7, 8 pm  
*Radiation: Visible and Invisible Effects*  
 Dean Echenberg, Peter Goin, Jan Kirsch and  
 James Lerager  
 Individual presentations and discussion  
 Thursday, February 21, 8 pm  
*Direct Action: A Blueprint for Artists*  
 Bob Fulkerson, Rachel Johnson, Richard Misrach  
 and William Rosse, Sr.  
 A round table discussion  
 Thursday, February 28, 8 pm

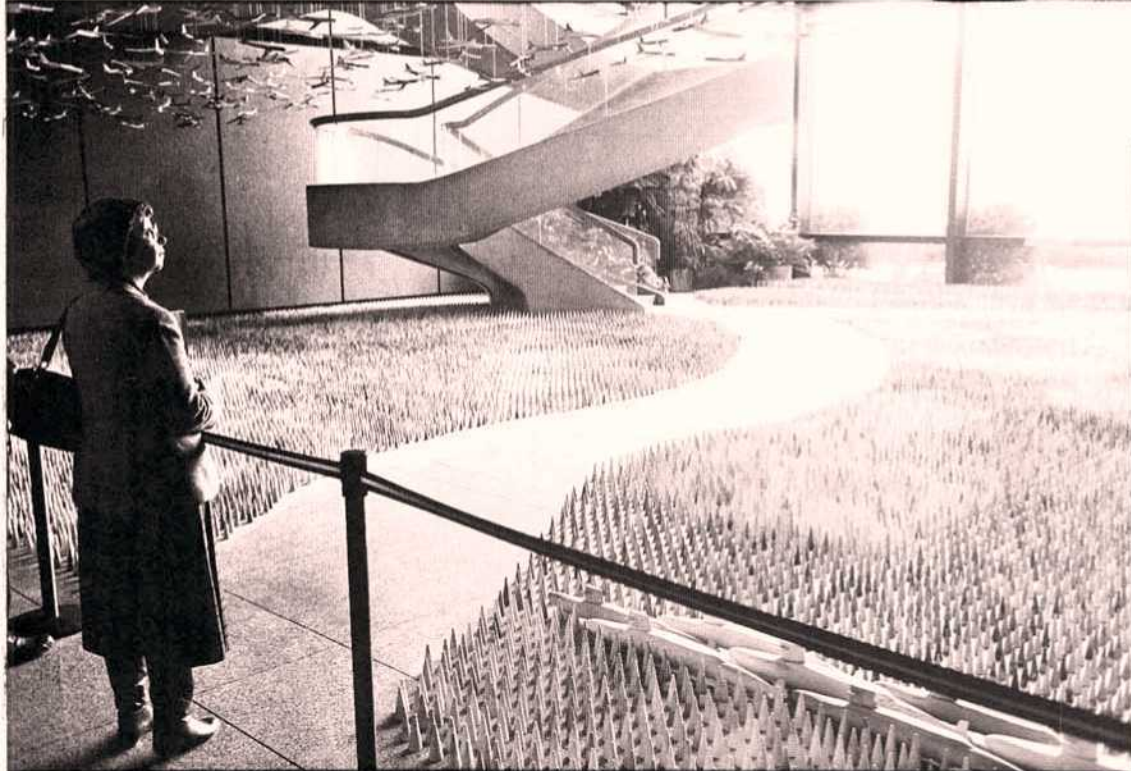


Berlyn Brixner: *Trinity*, 5:30 a.m., July 16, 1945. The Trinity atomic blast took place in the Alamogordo Desert of New Mexico. Brixner was the official photographer of this event. This was the world's first atomic explosion.

*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

Meridel Rubenstein, Steina and Woody Vasulka, Ellen Zweig: video still from a four-channel video tape for the central column in the installation, *The Portal to Archimedes' Chamber*. Original in color.

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.



Robert Del Tredici: *All the Warheads in the U.S. Nuclear Arsenal*. This field of ceramic nose-cones represents, in miniature, all the warheads in the U.S. nuclear arsenal. Estimates set the U.S. warhead total at about 25,000. Amber Waves of Grain installation, Boston Science Museum, Boston Massachusetts, February 13, 1985.

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in *Nuclear Matters* encounter in various ways. Clearly there is no single viewpoint, but a set of interpretations that establishes an interwoven 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.

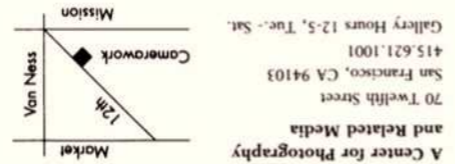
This exhibition takes as its starting point the collective imagery we have inherited—the universal icon of the mushroom cloud—and posits the idea that the nuclearization of culture is not neutral. Using approaches which range from the factual and investigative to those which encounter the bomb's indirect impact (for instance on media), the exhibition demonstrates that issues arising from the nuclear cycle have not come to an end even with the thawing of the Cold War. The devastating consequences of the nuclear industry will continue to exist not only in specific geographical locations of nuclear catastrophes, as we have seen in the tragedies of Chernobyl and Three Mile Island, but also in the irreversible contamination of the environment caused by nuclear residue and the accumulation of radioactive fallout which shrouds the globe.

*Nuclear Matters*, a survey of works by committed photographers and artists, exposes how the nuclear cycle, in many of its manifestations, permeates daily existence. Yet it is not only in the form of images that the meaning of this exhibition resides—rather, its intended result will be in the mobilization of public awareness and opinion.

The exhibition *Nuclear Matters* brings together works that explore the issues surrounding the nuclearization of culture. The nuclear age has had a dramatic, omnipresent impact on society and culture. Because of its continuing impact 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



James Lerager: *Kazakhs demonstrating for an end to nuclear testing, Kazakhstan, U.S.S.R., May, 1990. Nevada-Semipalatinsk Movement.*



SF CAMERAWORK

A Center for Photography and Related Media

70 Twelfth Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
415.621.1001  
Gallery Hours 12-5, Tue-Sat.

## NUCLEAR MATTERS

January 31 - March 9, 1991  
RECEPTION: Friday, February 1

MOVING PICTURES

Films by Photographers  
Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm  
during February and March  
at SF Art Institute. Call  
Camerawork for information.

OPEN FORUM:

Portfolio Reviews

Adelaida Mejia/Jon Winter

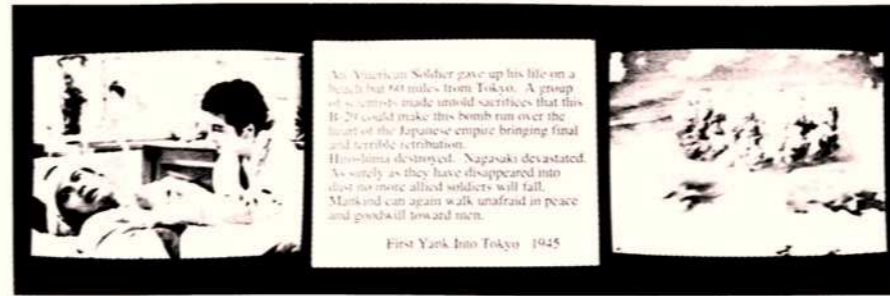
Wednesday, February 27

John Bloom/Julie Nelson-Gal

Wednesday, March 27

Frank Espada/Ellen Salwen

Tuesday, April 23



Margaret Stratton: *First Yank into Tokyo, 1945, 1990.* From the series *Hollywood and The Bomb: Perilous Fictions.*

Lectures and events sponsored in conjunction with

# NUCLEAR MATTERS

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

Meridel Rubenstein and Ellen Zweig will discuss their video and photographic installation, *The Portal to Archimedes' Chamber*, included in *Nuclear Matters*. This collaboration with Steina and Woody Vasulka explores J. Robert Oppenheimer's relationship to Archimedes and Oppenheimer's decision to site the laboratory where the first atomic bomb was built on sacred land in New Mexico. The piece grasps the meaning of the human consequence of wartime development outside the battleground and reinvents an historical narrative which makes us realize that power has always been a fascination of science.

Margaret Stratton will talk about her work entitled *Hollywood and the Bomb: Perilous Fictions* which deconstructs the presence of the nuclear within mass 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 flourishing and the nuclear film is where popular culture watches—what many have come to believe—our final moments.

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

Ellen Zweig is a performance/installation artist, a writer and theorist. Her work in all of these fields concentrates on images of the Other and the discourses between us and them. She has presented work in Europe, Australia and the U.S. and has received two NEA grants.

Margaret Stratton is an Assistant Professor at the University of Iowa. Currently she is on sabbatical teaching at Cornish College of the Arts and living in Seattle.

Robert Del Tredici: *At Work in the Fields of the Bomb*  
Dale Kistemaker: *Me and the Blue Pacific*  
Thursday, February 7, 8 pm

Robert Del Tredici has been documenting the production facilities for nuclear weapons in America and Canada for the past ten years. His photographs and interviews are a powerful expression of the human dimension of these factories. His work on view at Camerawork is from his book, *At Work in the Fields of the Bomb* (Harper & Row, 1987), which received the Olive Branch Award for the most outstanding book on the subject of world peace in 1988. Del Tredici is the founder of The Atomic Photographers Guild. He resides in Montreal and is currently working on a book project in the USSR.

Dale Kistemaker will premier his multi-media presentation, *Me and the Blue Pacific*. This piece examines the myth and reality of the warrior based on Kistemaker's personal history. After his father's death of leukemia in 1969, he learned his father had witnessed atomic testing in the island areas of Entiwitok and Kwajalein. *Me and the Blue Pacific* is a multi-media presentation using three slide projectors, a computerized dissolve unit and stereo audio. The photographs and memorabilia his father collected during the War are the source materials for the visuals. Dale Kistemaker is an Assistant Professor and Head of the Photography Area in the Art Department at San Francisco State University.

Radiation: *Visible and Invisible Effects*  
Dean Echenberg, Peter Goin, Jan Kirsch and James Lerager  
Individual presentations and discussion  
Thursday, February 21, 8 pm

Rarely in the fifty year history of the nuclear age have the world's headlines carried the message of the ominous consequences of nuclear experimentation, testing and the dumping of nuclear wastes across the globe. With assured budgets and protected by claims of "national security" from public scrutiny, agencies of many governments have knowingly committed atrocities against their own peoples and land as well as across international borders.

What are the radiation health standards for the public, how were they set, what do they mean? This panel will explore these questions by examining a few specific locations of the nuclear industry including the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in southeast Washington, the Soviet nuclear weapons test site in Kazakhstan, and the controversy surrounding Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories (25 miles from San Francisco), where America's nuclear weapons have been designed and perfected since the early 1950s.

Peter Goin and James Lerager will give slide presentations of their photographic work as part of this evening's presentation. Panel was organized by James Lerager.

An American Soldier gave up his life on a beach but 60 miles from Tokyo. A group of enemy made and sacrifices that this H-29 could make this bomb run over the heart of the Japanese empire bringing final and terrible retribution. Hiroshima destroyed. Nagasaki devastated. As surely as they have disappeared into dust no more allied soldiers will fall. Mark and can again walk unafraid in peace and good will toward men.

First Yank Into Tokyo 1945

Dean Echenberg, M.D., P.H.D., is a public health physician and epidemiologist. He was chief of disease control of San Francisco and works in international public health. He was recently in Kazakhstan, USSR, where he spoke with many health clinicians about radiation effects within the surrounding areas of Soviet test sites.

Peter Goin has photographed the nuclear lands of Nevada's Nuclear Test Site, the Trinity Site in Alamogordo, New Mexico, the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington, and the Bikini and Eniwetok Atolls in the Marshall Islands. His images of cement bunkers, defunct military hardware, and decommissioned reactors bespeak a critical moment in our history, as individuals and as a nation.

Jan Kirsch, M.D., is a medical oncologist and a member of the executive committee of the Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) and PSR's National Task Force on the Department of Energy. She has studied the health impacts of nuclear production weapons facilities in Hanford, WA; Rocky Flats, CO; and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories, CA.

James Lerager has been documenting nuclear age topics since 1983. He has exhibited his work widely in the U.S. and Europe, including a 1987 show at SF Camerawork. His book, *In The Shadow Of The Cloud: Photographs and Histories of America's Atomic Veterans*, was published in 1988 by Fulcrum Press. He has also worked on nuclear stories in the Marshall Islands, Britain and the USSR.

Direct Action: *A Blueprint for Artists*  
Bob Fulkerson, Rachel Johnson, Richard Misrach and William Rosse, Sr.  
A round table discussion. Thursday, February 28, 8 pm



Carole Conde and Karl Beveridge:  
From the series *No Immediate Threat*, 1985-86. Original in color.

Organized by Richard Misrach, this discussion will focus on how artists might become more directly involved in political actions using nuclear issues as a model. Although socially concerned and "political" artists in general have their hearts in the right place, sometimes their efforts are less effective because they are enclosed in the academic or theoretical world. Artists and photographers can mediate ideas and help raise awareness, understanding and consciousness in general. More cross fertilization between artists and activists is necessary and long overdue in addressing the multitude of social problems which affect our lives and environment. The participants will talk about their personal political actions and alternative ideas for change.

Bob Fulkerson has been the executive director of Citizen Alert in Nevada since 1984. This organization was founded in 1975 in response to federal plans for nuclear waste storage in Nevada. A fifth generation Nevadan, Bob's background includes teaching at the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony and working on Capitol Hill.

Rachel Gertrude Johnson has participated in a number of direct actions at the Nevada Nuclear Test Site. She is one of the Princesses of Plutonium and part of the Circle cluster. For her master's project in the Inter-Arts Program at San Francisco State University, she helped organize a collective maskmaking workshop and torchlight procession for the Peace Camp activists at the Test Site during the Spring 1989 Action, which became an overnight occupation of the road into the Test Site. Rachel is a workshop organizer, performer, photographer and activist, whose art has direct political impact.

Richard Misrach has been photographing the American desert since the mid-1970s. Over the last several years, his work has become explicitly political documenting military use and abuse of the western landscape and its inhabitants. Misrach's most recent project includes an exhibition *BRAVO 20: A NATIONAL PARK PROPOSAL* and a book with Myriam Weising Misrach entitled *Bravo 20: The Bombing of the American West*, published in 1990 by Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland.

William Rosse, Sr. is the former chairman of the Yomba-Shoshone Tribe in Central Nevada and a member of the Western Shoshone National Council. He serves as a board member on American Peace Test, Citizens Alert and Nevada Indian Rural Legal Services. Rosse has been trying to establish respect for the indigenous land rights of the Shoshone, which is being criminally neglected by the D.O.E. as testing of nuclear weapons continues on Shoshone land.

Events begin at 8 pm. The gallery and bookstore are open at 7 pm on lecture evenings.

Admission to all lectures and events:  
Camerawork members and students \$3/General public \$5.

*Nuclear Matters* can be seen Tuesday - Saturday, noon to 5 pm.  
There is no admission charge to the exhibition.

SF CAMERAWORK

70 Twelfth Street, 3rd floor  
One block south of Market Street off South Van Ness.  
415-621-1001

KEN LIGHT: *To the Promised Land*  
EYE Gallery  
1151 Mission Street, San Francisco  
February 26 - April 6  
Opening Reception: Friday, March 1, 6 - 9 pm

SF Camerawork has published an accompanying catalog with the exhibition. *Nuclear Matters* includes artists' statements with reproductions of their work; essays by Robert Del Tredici, Timothy Druckrey, Rebecca Solnit and Margaret Stratton; and a suggested bibliography and resource list. To order, please send a check payable to SF Camerawork for \$12.50 (includes first class postage).

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This exhibition, accompanying catalog and lectures are supported in part by a Special Exhibitions Grant through the Museum Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, Grants for the Arts of the SF Hotel Tax Fund, and Pamela Bonino. San Francisco Camerawork is funded in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Grants for the Arts of the SF Hotel Tax Fund, the California Arts Council, The San Francisco Foundation, Fleishhacker Foundation, Zellerbach Family Fund, The LEF Foundation, BankAmerica Foundation, Agfa Corporation, and Camerawork's membership. San Francisco Camerawork is a member of the National Association of Artists' Organizations, the San Francisco Bay Area Coalition for Freedom of Expression, and the Society of Photographic Education.

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