

# PETER BLUM

## For Immediate Release:

### **The Atomic Explosion** *A Collection of Vintage Photographs* **June 9 – July 29, 2011**



*Fireball, 1951*



*Formation of the Plume (column) in the 'Baker' Test, 1946*



*Atomic Blast at Nagasaki, 1945*

Peter Blum is pleased to announce the exhibition **The Atomic Explosion**, June 9 through July 29, 2011, at Peter Blum SoHo, 99 Wooster Street, New York.

**The Atomic Explosion** comprises of 66 vintage photographs of nuclear testing and detonations mainly performed by the United States in the 1940s and 1950s, predominantly at the Nevada Test Site and at the Marshall Islands. A few photographs also show the bombing of Nagasaki on August 9, 1945.

The need for testing and developing the atomic bomb began in the late 1930s in response to the rise of the Third Reich and the fear that Germany would develop a weapon of mass destruction. The United States initiated the Manhattan Project, headed by the physicist Robert Oppenheimer, known as the father of the atomic bomb. During the 1940s and 1950s over 200 atomic bombs were tested. Most famously atomic bombs were used for the attacks on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki which ended World War II.

The photographs in the exhibition were used for documentation, press or taken by eyewitnesses. The photographer is often anonymous. We merely see a photograph of the event, sometimes accompanied by a plain description. The images range from the powerful explosions to shattered crater landscapes to viewers and soldiers watching the explosions from afar.

*Formation of the Plume (column) in the 'Baker' Test, 1946* depicts the detonation of the atomic bomb used in the Baker Test. It illustrates the beauty of the image versus the power of the explosion. This test was part of a series of tests called Operation Cross Roads, which was conducted in the Summer of 1946 in the Bikini Atoll, an island group in the Pacific Ocean.

A selection of photographs in the exhibition includes a mere description of the facts of the bombing. An example is the photo entitled *Atomic Test, Nevada (Annie, Operation Upshot/Knothole), 1953* which has as description: "Las Vegas, Nev., 3/17/53 - This is the viewpoint from which photographers saw a huge cloud arise from today's Atomic test. (...)." The contrast between the neutral description of the event and the knowledge of what nuclear bombing has caused is shocking.

The photographs, with their frankness and striking beauty, represent what could be considered a key legacy of Twentieth Century technology. It shows the power of humans to exploit the laws of physics to destroy nature and humanity. In this sense the photographs in the exhibition are truly astounding and horrific at the same time.

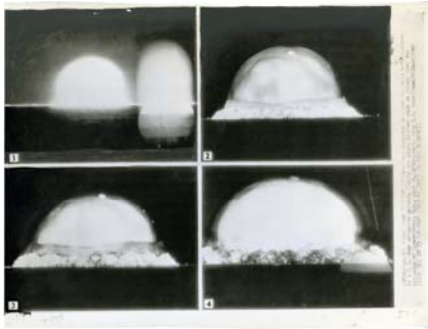
For additional information and photographic material please contact Renée Albada Jelgersma at [soho@peterblumgallery.com](mailto:soho@peterblumgallery.com) (tel: 212-343-0441). Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10am-6pm; Saturday 11am-6pm.  
Summer hours starting July 5th: Monday-Friday 10am-6pm.

BLUMARTS INC.  
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## The Atomic Explosion

June 9-July 29, 2011



*Atomic Bomb Test Explosion, Alamo-Gordo, New Mexico*  
(4 from a sequence of 8 pictures), 1945

gelatin silver print, printed c. 1945

r caption in right margin, numbered below each image,  
numbered in pencil in lower sheet margin on left '495' and  
right '500'

v stamp 'ATOMIC BOMB-TEXT X', archive and date

stamp 'RECEIVED EXAMINER REFERENCE LIBRARY  
AUG 18 1945', numbered in pencil 'P66'

10 3/8 x 13 3/4 in. (26,3 x 35 cm)

AE-31



*Untitled (Atomic bomb explosion at Bikini Atoll), 1946-58*

gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1946-58

v stamped

3 1/2 x 4 1/2 in. (8,9 x 11,4 cm)

AE-23



*A.C. Atom Bomb burst over Nagasaki, 1945*

gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1945

r numbered in negative

v titled, various credit and press stamps, numbered

8 1/8 x 10 in. (20,5 x 25,5 cm)

AE-03

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*Second Atomic Bomb, 1946*  
modern print  
r numbered in negative  
v titled  
10 x 8 1/4 in. (25,4 x 20,8 cm)  
AE-02



*Untitled (Atomic bomb seen from airplane), 1946*  
gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1946  
v noted '5048 Bikini', numbered '116.288', typewritten  
newspaper caption affixed  
10 x 8 1/8 in. (25,4 x 20,7 cm)  
AE-12



*Seminole, Operation Redwing (Atomic Bomb Explosion, June 6, 1956), 1956*  
c-print, printed c. 1960s  
v titled, dated and numbered in ink 'XX-48 Seminole 6-6 56 Operation Redwing', inscribed in ballpoint pen 'NOT FOR REPRODUCTION'  
8 1/4 x 10 3/4 in. (20,8 x 27,3 cm)  
AE-33



*Bikini-Atoll (Nuclear weapon test, Operation Crossroads, 'Baker' explosion, from Eneu Island), 1946*  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1946  
r in negative titled and numbered 'DBCR-TI-I-318-EXP#2 BIKINI ATOLL, AF 434-6'  
4 2/3 x 9 1/8 in. (11,9 x 23,2 cm)  
AE-56

## PETER BLUM



*Bikini-Atoll (Nuclear weapon test, Operation Crossroads, 'Able' explosion, from Eneu Island), 1946*  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1946  
r in negative titled and numbered 'DBCR-TI-I-318-EXP#6  
BIKINI ATOLL, AF 434-4'  
4 1/2 x 9 1/8 in. (11,5 x 23,3 cm)  
AE-55



*Formation of the Plume (column) in the 'Baker' Test, 1946*  
gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1946  
v stamped 'Propriété Science et Vie', dated in pencil, noted  
'Bikini', various other notations  
8 x 10 in. (20,4 25,5 cm)  
AE-18



*Atomic Bombs, Experiments (Able, Operation Crossroads, Bikini Atoll), 1946*  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1946  
v inscribed in crayon 'Atomic Bombs, -Experiments',  
numbered in pencil 'CA 0305', mounted newspaper  
clipping  
12 1/8 x 10 1/2 in. (30,9 x 26,7 cm)  
AE-44

## PETER BLUM



*Untitled (First A-Bomb Blast looked from Bikini)*, 1946  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1946  
r layout marks in right and lower sheet margins  
v Associated Press caption label, dated '7/28/46' and  
Associated Press credit stamp, one caption and one image  
magazine clipping. caption with date stamp 'AUG 17 1946',  
five other press archive resp. date stamps from 'May 28',  
News-Views, Midwest Magazine Chicago Sun Times  
1965, Daily News 1975, 1978; inscribed in ink and  
ballpoint pen 'Bombs, Atomic Tests 1946, Icol 4 1/8,  
w/Bomb. shoot 4x'  
4 1/2 x 9 3/8 in. (16,5 x 23,9 cm)  
AE-57



*Untitled (First A-Bomb Blast looked from Bikini)*, 1946  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1946  
v date stamp 'JUL 30 1946', Associated Press caption label,  
dated '7/28/46', image newspaper clipping with date stamp  
'NOV 20 19..' partly illegible, inscribed in ballpoint pen  
'Atomic Bomb'  
6 1/4 x 9 1/4 in. (15,8 x 23,4 cm)  
AE-58



*Untitled (Atomic Bomb seen from above)*, 1946  
gelatin silver print (telephoto), printed ca. 1946  
v dated, numbered '18899', copyright stamp and labeled  
press caption  
7 1/2 x 8 7/8 in. (19,2 x 22,4 cm)  
AE-53



## PETER BLUM



*Untitled (Atomic Cloud over Bikini Atoll, photo made from flagship USS Mt. McKinley), 1946*  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1946

v International News Photo copyright stamp, typewritten caption and comment label (loose) and numbered in pencil '7-4-46'

7 3/4 x 5 7/8 in. (19,7 x 15,0 cm)

AE-59



*Nevada - Bombe atomique experimentale, ca. 1950s*

gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1950s

v titled, stamped 'Photo Keystone'

9 1/2 x 7 1/8 in. (24,1 x 18,2 cm)

AE-16



*Untitled (Atomic Bomb Explosion), 1950s-1960s*

c-print, printed c. 1960s

v numbered in crayon '3 0687, 10.5/II', inscribed in felt tip pen 'NOT FOR REPRODUCTION'

7 x 9 1/2 in. (17,7 x 24,1 cm)

AE-29



*Untitled (Atomic bomb test crater, Nevada, USA), 1950s-1960s*

c-print, printed c. 1960s

v archive stamp 'LRL NEVADA', numbered in ballpoint pen

'N-76340'

6 3/4 x 8 3/4 in. (17,3 x 22,1 cm)

AE-26

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## PETER BLUM



*Untitled (Atomic bomb test crater, Nevada, USA), 1950s-1960s*

c-print, printed c. 1960s

v archive stamp 'LRL NEVADA', numbered in ballpoint pen

'N-26401'

6 3/4 x 8 3/4 in. (17,3 x 22,1 cm)

AE-27



**Photograph by Robert Cohen**

*Du sable vitrifié a l'endroit où a explosé la bombe atomique française, 1960*

gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1960

v titled, dated, Press-Texte typed, stamped "AGIP Robert Cohen, Reportage Photographiques, Paris"

5 1/8 x 7. 1/4 in. (13 x 18,2 cm)

AE-01



*Untitled (Atomic bomb explosion), 1950s-1960s*

c-print, printed c. 1960s

v inscribed in ink 'NOT FOR REPRODUCTION'

6 7/8 x 9 1/2 in. (17,5 x 24 cm)

AE-32



*NEW A-BLAST (Nevada Desert), 1951*

gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1952

v typewritten newspaper caption affixed

8 1/8 x 6 in. (20,6 x 15,3 cm)

AE-09

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## PETER BLUM



*Nevada le 3.5. 52, 1952*  
gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1952  
v titled, press stamp  
9 1/2 x 7 1/8 in. (24 x 18,1 cm)  
AE-19



*Las Vegas, Nevada, Oct. 30 - Blast Cloud has Base Mushroom (Charlie, Operation Buster), 1951*  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1951  
r caption in lower margin  
v stamp 'ATOMIC-POWER-RESEARCH-U.S. TESTS NEVADA', and archive stamp 'RECEIVED EXAMINER REFERENCE LIBRARY, NOV 1 1951'  
9 1/4 x 6 3/4 in. (23,5 x 17 cm)  
AE-36



**Photograph by Harry Matosian**  
*Atomic Blast from 70 Miles Away, Las Vegas, Nevada (Baker-2, Operation Ranger), 1951*  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1951  
v archive resp. date stamp 'RECEIVED 1951 FEB 2 AM 8 39', numbered in pencil, label numbered in ballpoint pen 'over 028', mounted newspaper clipping with date stamp '2\* FEB 2-1951'  
11 1/8 x 12 in. (28,1 x 30,4 cm)  
AE-37



*(WX6-June 15) Atomic explosion in Nevada desert, 1951*  
gelatin silver print  
r typewritten newspaper caption  
v press stamp 22,9 x 18,3 cm  
9 x 7 1/4 in. (22,9 x 18,3 cm)  
AE-15



## PETER BLUM



*Fireball*, 1951  
gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1951  
v typewritten newspaper caption affixed  
8 7/8 x 7 1/4 in. (22,7 x 18,2 cm)  
AE-10



*Atomic bomb exploding, Bikini-Atoll ("Bravo" Blast, 1st March 1954)*, 1954  
3 c-prints, printed ca. 1954  
v noted 'not for reproduction', numbered '10/11'; '50/80'  
each ca. 6 7/8 x 9 1/2 in. (17,5 x 24 cm)  
AE-21-A-C



## PETER BLUM



### Photograph by David Lees

*Atomic Power Research US Tests, Nevada (Easy, Operation Buster-Jangle), 1951*

gelatin silver print, printed c. 1951

r caption in left margin

v stamp 'ATOMIC POWER/RESEARCH

US/TESTS/NEVADA', INP copyright stamp, archive resp.

date stamp 'RECEIVED EXAMINER REFERENCE

LIBRARY NOV 6 1951', label numbered in ballpoint pen 'Over 045'

13 7/8 x 10 5/8 in. (33,4 x 27,2 cm)

AE-47



*Members of the Eleventh Airborne Division kneel and watch the mushroom-like cloud formed by yesterday's atom bomb explosion in Nevada (Dog, Operation Buster-Jangle), 1951*

gelatin silver print, printed c. 1951

v stamp 'ATOMIC POWER-U.S. TEST NEVADA',

archive resp. date stamp 'RECEIVED EXAMINER

REFERENCE LIBRARY NOV 1 1951', mounted

newspaper clipping with date stamp 'NOV 2 1951'

12 1/8 x 11 1/8 in. (30,9 x 28,2 cm)

AE-42



*Atomic Explosion (Dog, Operation Buster-Jangle, Nevada), 1951*

gelatin silver print, printed c. 1951

v typewritten caption and photographer's note, 3 agency

stamps Culver Pictures Inc., New York, 1 copyright stamp

Culver Pictures, inscribed and dated in pencil 'NOV. I 1951

DOG, ATOMIC', number stamp '26792'.

9 2/3 x 7 7/8 in. (24,5 x 19,7 cm)

AE-52

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*Slug (Atom Cloud), Operation Tumbler-Snapper, Event Charlie, 22. April 1952, 1952*

gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1952

v stamped, typewritten newspaper caption

8 1/2 x 5 7/8 in. (21,7 x 15 cm)

AE-22



*Atom test site, Nev., Apr. 22, Observers watch atomic blast, 1952*

gelatin silver print, printed c. 1952

r caption in lower margin

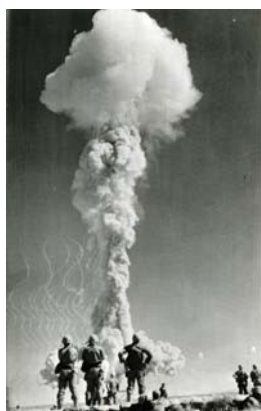
v stamp 'ATOMIC ENERGY-RESEARCH-US-TEST-NEVADA', date resp. archive stamp 'RECEIVED

EXAMINER REFERENCE LIBRARY APR 23 1952',

mounted newspaper clipping with two date stamps 'JUL 16 1987'

6 3/4 x 8 3/4 in. (17,2 x 22,3 cm)

AE-30



*Untitled (The Bomb, Nevada Atomic Proving Ground), 1952*

gelatin silver print, printed c. 1952

v newspaper clipping titled 'THE BOMB' with two date stamps 'MAY 4 1952' over archive stamp, inscribed in pencil 'pic page', further date stamp 'MAY 4 1952', typed inscription 'FRENCHMAN'S FLAT ATOMIC PROVING GROUND', typed label 'NUCLEAR TESTS & EXPLOSIONS - U.S.', measures in pencil and red crayon

10 x 6 1/8 in. (25,4 x 15,7 cm)

AE-63



*Atomic Power Research U.S. Tests, Nevada (Dog, Operation Snapper), 1952*

gelatin silver print, printed c. 1952

r caption in lower margin

v stamp 'ATOMIC-POWER-RESEARCH-U.S. TESTS NEVADA', INP copyright stamp, archive resp. date stamp 'RECEIVED

EXAMINER REFERENCE LIBRARY MAY 3 1952'

7 3/8 x 8 1/4 in. (16,8 x 21 cm)

AE-49

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## PETER BLUM



(LV5) *Las Vegas, Nev., Mar.23 - Dirty Atomic Blast*, 1955  
gelatin silver print  
v typewritten newspaper caption  
7 1/4 x 9 in. (18,2 x 22,9 cm)  
AE-07



**Photograph by Hal Filan**  
*Atomic Proving Grounds, Nevada - Atomic Fury (Annie, Operation Upshot/Knothole)*, 1953  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1953  
r caption in right margin  
v stamp '(ATOMIC P)OWER--RESEARCH--U.S. NEVADA TEST', archive resp. date stamp 'RECEIVED EXAMINER REFERENCE LIBRARY MAR 19 1953', label inscribed in ballpoint pen 'OV 556'  
11 1/3 x 14 2/3 in. (28,7 x 37,2 cm)  
AE-38



*Atomic Proving Grounds, Nevada - Boiling Fireball (Annie, Operation Upshot/Knothole)*, 1953  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1953  
r caption in lower margin  
v stamp 'ATOMIC POWER--RESEARCH U.S. TESTS' over two mounted newspaper clippings with date stamps 'MAR 18 1953', archive resp. date stamp 'RECEIVED EXAMINER REFERENCE LIBRARY MAR 18 1953', measures in pencil  
11.1/3 x 15 2/3 in. (28,8 x 39,7 cm)  
AE-39



(LV1) *Las Vegas, Nev., Oct. 10 --- Familiar Mushroom Cloud*, 1958  
gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1958  
r typewritten newspaper caption affixed  
v AP press stamp  
10 x 8 1/8 in. (25,3 x 20,7 cm)  
AE-11

## PETER BLUM



### Photograph by GROSH, MILLER, LEES

*Atomic Test, Nevada (Annie, Operation Upshot/Knothole),*  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1953

r caption in lower margin, numbered in ballpoint pen in left margin '100'

v v stamp '(ATOMIC P)OWER--RESEARCH--U.S. TEST NEVADA', archive resp. date stamp 'RECEIVED EXAMINER REFERENCE LIBRARY MAR 18 1953', INP copyright stamp, mounted newspaper clipping with date stamp 'MAR 18 1953'

12 2/3 x 9 7/8 in. (32,3 x 25,3 cm)

AE-41



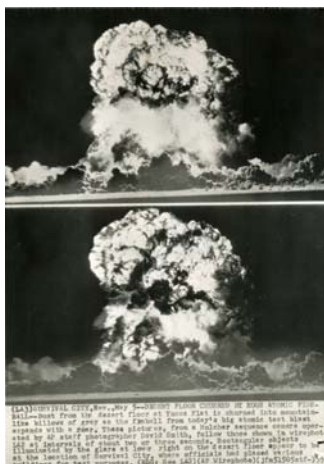
*Climax, Operation Upshot/Knothole (Atomic Bomb Explosion, June 4, 1953),* 1953

c-print, printed c. 1960s

v titled, dated and numbered in ink 'XX-39, CLIMAX, Operation upshot/knothole, 6-4-53', inscribed in ballpoint pen 'NOT FOR REPRODUCTION'

8 x 10 5/8 in. (20,4 x 27,1 cm)

AE-35



### Photograph by David Smith

*Atomic Power US Tests (Apple-2, Operation Teapot, Nevada),* 1955

gelatin silver print, printed c. 1955

r caption in lower margin

v stamp 'ATOMIC POWER-- U.S./TESTS, archive resp. date stmp 'RECEIVED EXAMINER REFERENCE LIBRARY MAY 6 1955', label numbered in ballpoint pen 'OV 484'

16 1/2 x 9 3/8 in. (41,9 x 29,3 cm)

AE-48

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## PETER BLUM



*Untitled (Atomic Detonation, Nevada Test Site)*, 1955  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1955  
r inscribed in ink '3 col 1st Wed' in upper margin, INP  
Soundphoto credit, caption and comment in left margin  
v numbered in pencil '3 Col'  
8 3/8 x 6 2/3 in. (21,5 x 16,9 cm)  
AE-61



*Untitled (Mushroom over Christmas Island)*, 1962  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1962  
r AP Wirephoto credit, caption and comment in lower sheet  
margin  
v newspaper clipping with date stamp 'MAY 27 1962' over  
inscription and measures in red crayon, two further date  
stamps 'MAY 27 1962, WED JUN 9 1993', typed  
inscription 'CHRISTMAS ISLAND', typewritten label  
'NUCLEAR TESTS & EXPLOSIONS - U.S.',  
7 3/8 x 6 in. (18,6 x 15,3 cm)  
AE-62

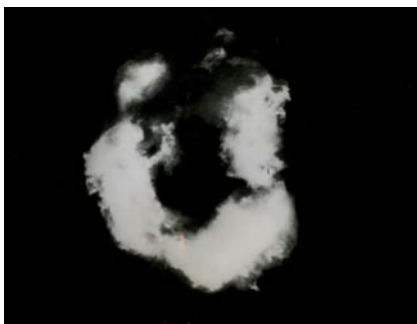


**Photograph by Dave Cicero**  
*Atomic Power US Tests, Nevada (Boltzmann, Operation Plumbbob)*, 1957  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1957  
r caption in left margin  
v two stamps 'ATOMIC POWER-US-TESTS-NEVADA',  
stamp 'ATOMIC POWER--RESEARCH--U.S. TEST  
NEVADA', archive resp. date stamp 'RECEIVED  
EXAMINER REFERENCE LIBRARY MAY 29 1957',  
label numbered in ballpoint pen 'OV 557'  
13 1/2 x 10 1/5 in. (34,5 x 26 cm)  
AE-45



*Explosion nucléaire en haute altitude*, ca. 1940s-50s  
gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1940s-50s  
v titled in ballpen, typewritten newspaper caption  
9 5/8 x 7 7/8 in. (24,6 x 20 cm)  
AE-20

## PETER BLUM



*Untitled (Atomic Bomb seen from above, Las Vegas, Nevada), 1957*

gelatin silver print (telephoto), printed ca. 1957

v dated, numbered '18899', copyright stamp, press caption mounted

6 2/3 x 8 2/3 in. (17 x 21,9 cm)

AE-54



**Photograph by Dave Cicero**

*Atomic Power US Tests, Nevada (Boltzmann, Operation Plumbbob), 1957*

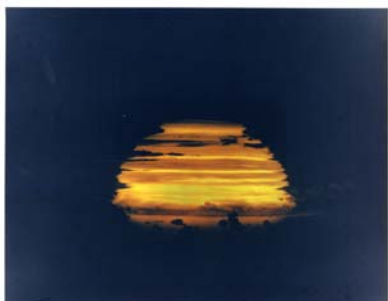
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1957

r caption in lower margin

v two stamps 'ATOMIC POWER-US-TESTS NEVADA', stamp 'ATOMIC POWER--RESEARCH--U.S. TEST NEVADA', archive resp. date stamp 'RECEIVED EXAMINER REFERENCE LIBRARY MAY 29 1957'

10 2/3 x 12 2/3 in. (26,9 x 32,1 cm)

AE-40



*Apache, Enewetak Atoll (Atomic Bomb Explosion, July 8, 1956), 1956*

c-print, printed c. 1960s

v inscribed and dated in felt tip pen 'XX-36 Apache, 7-8-56 Enewetak atoll', inscribed in ballpoint pen

8 1/4 x 10 5/8 in. (20,9 x 27 cm)

AE-28



*Untitled (Ivy King Fireball, Atomic Bomb Explosion, Nov 16, 1952), 1952*

c-print, printed c. 1960s

v numbered in ink 'XX-59', inscribed in ballpoint pen 'NOT FOR REPRODUCTION'

8 1/8 x 10 5/8 in. (20,7 x 27 cm)

AE-34

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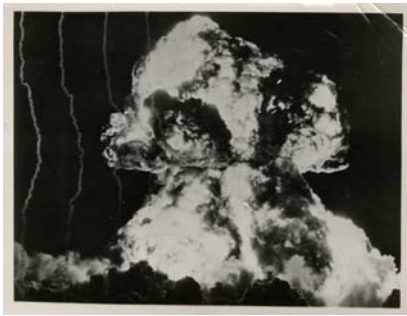
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## PETER BLUM



*(LA 6) Atomic Proving Grounds, Nev., March 17 --  
Atomic blast bursts into billowy flame, 1953*  
gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1953  
r typewritten newspaper caption  
v press stamp  
9 1/4 x 7 in. (23,3 x 17,8 cm)  
AE-13



*Atomic Proving Grounds, Nevada - Atomic Fury (Annie,  
Operation Upshot/Knothole), 1953*  
gelatin silver print, printed c. 1953  
v various notations and press stamps, newspaper caption  
affixed with date-stamp and stamp 'Journal'  
10 1/8 x 7 1/2 in. (25,6 x 19 cm)  
AE-04



*(LA 5) Atomic Proving Grounds, Nev., March 17 --  
development of an atomic fireball, 1953*  
gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1953  
r typewritten newspaper caption  
v press stamp; noted 'Nevada'  
9 1/4 x 7 in. (23,4 x 17,7 cm)  
AE-14

## PETER BLUM



*LVO62402-6/24/57-Las Vegas, Nev., 1957*

gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1957

v various notations and press stamps, newspaper caption affixed with date-stamp and stamp 'Journal'

7 x 9 in. (17,9 x 22,7 cm)

AE-06



*Atomic Bomb Experiment (Able, Operation Crossroads, Bikini Atoll), 1946*

gelatin silver print, printed c. 1946

v inscribed in crayon 'Atomic Bomb Experiment', mounted newspaper clipping with date stamp '6\* JUL 7-1946', mounted caption on gelatin silver print, measures and numbers in pencil and ballpoint pen.

7 1/8 x 8 7/8 in. (18 x 22,5 cm)

AE-51



*explosion de la bombe H, 1952*

gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1952

v AP press stamp, newspaper caption typewritten

7 1/8 x 9 3/8 in. (18,1 x 23,9 cm)

AE-17



*Atom cloud 20 minutes after blast, Las Vegas, Nev, Mar 7, 1955*

gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1955

v various notations and press stamps, newspaper caption affixed with date-stamp and stamp 'Journal'

7 1/8 x 9 in. (18,1 x 22,8 cm)

AE-05

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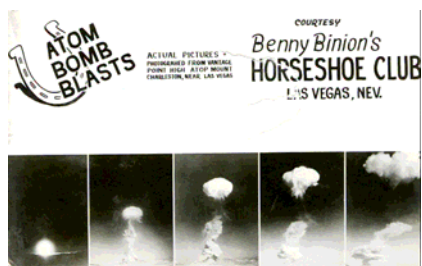
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## PETER BLUM



*AEC-53-4815/ Nevada Proving Grounds, 1953*  
gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1953  
v newspaper caption stamped , noted 'USA Atome'  
8 1/8 x 10 in. (20,6 x 25,3 cm)  
AE-08



*Untitled (Atom Bomb Blasts), Nevada, 1951-53*  
gelatin silver print, printed ca. 1951-53  
v stamped, noted  
3 3/8 x 5 3/8 in. (8,7 x 13,8 cm)  
AE-24