

Elise Blue
atom bomb series

Operation Buster-Jangle, Operation Crossroads, The Manhattan Project, these are the names of the projects that developed the worlds first atomic bombs. The individual blasts have their own names, such as Trinity, Charlie, and Dog. The period from 1945-1963 witnessed dozens of nuclear tests that were all well documented by the military. Clouds scatter across the sky as the blast sucks the earth up into a vacuum and the mushroom cloud billows forth. These are stunning apocalyptic images. The sky recedes like a scroll....

My work had previously dealt with mortality, disaster, the apocalypse, and impending doom. It was only a natural progression for my work to stumble upon the nuclear age. There is no more tangible and certain threat than that of atomic weaponry. This is a self-imposed Armageddon with credible consequences in the current political climate.

The focus of my work is the atomic cloud itself. Actual footage of the blasts vary greatly. Some images take the shape of the classic mushroom formation while others such as underwater tests appear to be giant exploding sea monsters. My interpretations connect the explosions by a common visual thread. The images in the installation range from loosely rendered sketches in earth tones to the sweet, candy-colored washes that dominate the current series. The individual panels vary in hue and sharpness, but there is a succinct implied mockery of the subject matter or

perhaps it is a lighthearted attempt to contemplate an otherwise unthinkable fate.