

**BLACKSTON**  
**29C Ludlow Street**  
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Blackston is pleased to present *Bagatelles*, a series of recent C-Print photographs by Reuben Cox. A reception will be held on Sunday, April 18th, 2010 from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

In Cox's latest series of work, explosions of smoke are generated by detonating black powder (traditional gunpowder) and photographed with manual shutter release and high-powered flashes in both studio and outdoor contexts.

The resultant ambiguous smoke forms exist for a few seconds at most before dissipating into a shapeless mist. Given the volatile and evanescent nature of the subject matter, shutter control is key -- and largely reflexive. The element of chance in the process is further accentuated by experimental gunpowder arrangements and variable environmental conditions.

Cox's reliance on his instincts to capture the images invokes an echo of surreal automatism, a flash of subconscious expression -- the product of which, in turn, is solicitous of free association like that of a Rorschach blot, which creates a subjective bridge of subliminal resonance between artist and viewer.

The fleeting vigor, the inherent appeal of an unrepeatable and seemingly random and short-lived phenomenon and the violent connotative associations of the explosions make for compelling images which, given the brief window of their existence, can only be captured on film.

The title of the exhibition is a reference to music compositions that typically connote a lighthearted and fleeting simplicity and playfulness. The images in *Bagatelles* demonstrate all of these qualities and, indeed, convey a certain lyricism, whilst alluding to the familiar images of conflict that have become so much a part of our consciousness.

Cox recently relocated to Los Angeles from New York City. He was born in Highlands, North Carolina in 1972 and graduated from The Cooper Union in New York, NY. His work is included in collections of The Ogden Museum, The New Orleans Museum of Art, The Center for Documentary Studies, The Alice Austen House Museum, and Howard Stein's Cameraworks. His work has been featured in *Blindspot*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Magazine* and many other publications.

Cox's photographs have been exhibited in numerous solo shows: *Portraits of Musicians* in 2008 at Midway in New York, NY, *The Work of Joe Webb* in 2007, *The Scholar's Stones of Lethe Gardens* in 2006 and *What a Woman Wants* in 2005, all at Bespoke Gallery in New York (the predecessor of Blackston), *X-Ray Dreams* at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in Cold Spring, NY and *The 2003 Contract Bridge World Championships!* at The Captain's Bookshelf in Asheville, NC in 2005.

Cox's work has been included in numerous group shows and publications and he was a finalist for the Discovery Prize at the 2005 *Rencontres Arles* festival in Arles, France.

Cox's monograph *The Work of Joe Webb: Appalachian Master of Rustic Architecture*, a book comprising Cox's photographs of the cabins constructed by architect Joe Webb and an essay authored by Cox was published in 2009 by The Jargon Society and distributed by The University of Georgia Press.