



International Center of Photography

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media release



Hiroshima: Ground Zero 1945

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300+ illustrations
Softbound

Edited by Erin Barnett and Philomena Mariani

Essays by John W. Dower, Adam Harrison Levy,
and David Monteyne

Design by Maya Peraza-Baker

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After the United States detonated an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, the U.S. government restricted the circulation of images of the bomb's deadly effects. President Truman dispatched military personnel and civilians to record the destruction as part of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey. The goal of the Survey's Physical Damage Division was to photograph and analyze methodically the impact of the atomic bomb on various building materials surrounding the blast site, the first "Ground Zero." Over 1,100 images of the devastated city were made; some 865 were included in the government's exhaustive three-volume classified report of 1947 titled *The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima, Japan*. More than 700 of these haunting images are part of the permanent collection of the International Center of Photography.

The presentation of these once-classified photographs in *Hiroshima: Ground Zero 1945* is part of ICP's ongoing investigation into the multiple and often unacknowledged histories of photography. Created under the auspices of the U.S. government, these seemingly straightforward documentary photographs changed the physical landscape of the U.S. Originally in the possession of Robert L. Corsbie, a member of the Physical Damage Division who later worked for the Atomic Energy Commission as an architectural engineer and expert on the effects of the atomic bomb, these photographs and the accompanying analyses in the United States Strategic Bombing Survey were used by Corsbie to promote civil defense architecture and bomb-resistant construction in the United States.

Erin Barnett is ICP Assistant Curator of Collections; Philomena Mariani is ICP Director of Publications.