



Kevin Cooley's Stunning Photographs Of Fire And Smoke

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Kevin Cooley_creates Controlled Burns, a series of striking images that showcase swirling and imposing clouds of black, white, and gray smoke. Inspired by the communicative purpose of smoke signals during Papal conclave, the series focuses on ideas and actions dealing with communication, specifically human interactions with nature.

Cooley creates and manufactures the images himself, the smoke is real, and so is the fire creating it, but the artist here is rendering an image, controlling it and taking charge of something that can potentially be uncontrollable. The project is indicative of something we are well aware of, particularly our impotence yet possibility to control natural, powerful elements in our world. The paradox makes us contemplate on something we know, but do not really think about often.

Fire is a powerful natural force that we harness for greater good, and it is the only Classical element that we can create on demand. Yet, when out of control, it has the potential for grave destruction. Controlled Burns is a visual representation of this inherit duality, symbolic of our desire to conquer and control, reminding us that sometimes we must fight fire with fire.

Beginning January 11th, 2014, the Kopeikin Gallery will present Cooley's work in UNEXPLORED TERRITORY, an interdisciplinary exhibition that explores "the limits of human exploration and our desire to conquer and control nature." Themes range from colonial exploration of the American West, harnessing fire in the form of combustion to launch rockets into space, to anthropomorphic actions of everyday objects such as box fans, and helium balloons.





