

**PRESS RELEASE**

**ALEX WEBB  
ISTANBUL: CITY OF A HUNDRED NAMES**

**May 4 – June 9, 2007  
Opening reception with the artist, May 4, 6 – 8 pm**

Joseph Bellows Gallery is pleased to present the gallery's second exhibition of photographs by Alex Webb. The exhibition will feature photographs from Webb's new book, *Istanbul: City of a Hundred Names*, published by Aperture.

The artist first visited Istanbul in 1998 and was drawn to the city's people and complex, layered history. Webb wrote, "For thirty-some years as a photographer I have been intrigued by borders, places where cultures come together, sometimes easily, sometimes roughly." As the only major city that extends over two continents, perhaps no city in the world better demonstrates cultures existing and blending together than Istanbul. In its history, Istanbul has been a much fought-over urban center and has been the capitol of two of the most powerful empires – the Byzantine and the Ottoman. The cultures and religions that coexist in Istanbul today are as many and as varied as the names the city has had.

As a street photographer Webb has said, "I only know how to approach a place by walking. For what does a street photographer do but walk and watch and wait and talk, and then watch and wait some more, trying to remain confident that the unexpected, the unknown, or the secret heart of the known awaits just around the corner."

Webb's photographs undoubtedly reveal what only a patient and quiet observer could see. He presents a view of Istanbul as a thriving, cultural, urban city that is deeply rooted in and profoundly shaped by its past. Webb's complex compositions visually describe and allude to Istanbul's rich and fractured history, and his vibrant colors reflect the energetic, and dynamic texture of the urban landscape. The photographs suggest defining characteristics of Istanbul's culture such as its economy, its major religion of Islam, and its politics. The work also addresses the fragmentation and alienation that come with living in a highly populated urban environment such as Istanbul. As in much of Webb's work, his Istanbul photographs depict a place, how people exist in that place, and how people exist together.

Alex Webb is one of America's foremost color photographers. He was born in San Francisco in 1952 and began working as a photojournalist in 1974. Webb joined Magnum Photos in 1976 as an associate member and became a full member in 1979. He has received numerous fellowships and awards, including a recent Guggenheim

Fellowship, and his work has been widely exhibited both nationally and internationally. His books include: *From the Sunshine State: Photographs of Florida*, *Hot Light/Half-Made Worlds: Photographs from the Tropics*, *Under a Grudging Sun: Photographs from Haiti Libere*, *Amazon: From the Floodplains to the Clouds*, *Crossings: Photographs from the Mexico Border*, and the limited edition, *Dislocations*. Webb's work is represented in the collections of International Center of Photography, National Museum of American Art- Smithsonian Institution, the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston among others. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

---

For more information or to request images please contact:

Carol Lee Brosseau  
carollee@josephbellows.com