



## New York

CRITICS' PICKS

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**New York**

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### Sarah Pickering

**DANIEL COONEY FINE ART**  
**511 West 25th Street, #506**  
**January 05–February 25**

"Explosions," Sarah Pickering's debut solo show, is both as understated and as boisterous as its title implies. The British artist's eight large-scale photographs capture the pyrotechnics of various types of bombs and explosives, suspending the fiery or smoky bursts at the moment of simulated impact. The quality of each blast—land mine, smoke burst, electric thunderflash, and so on—is distinct not only in appearance but also in tone. Napalm produces a low-slung, compact gray cloud that menaces the flat, sullen British countryside; the ground burst, by contrast, emits a brilliant flash of sun and joyful rays of light that are incompatible with the quiet grassy landscape. Detonated on the proving grounds of the British military and police, the bombs are used to prepare troops for actual combat, and Pickering's images cleverly investigate "representation" and "real," and aesthetics and death, in photography and warfare. These explosions are the illusionist's light show and the soldier's shield. More subtly, however, they point to the fusing of these qualities, to misdirection's thrilling flash.

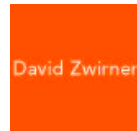


*Fire Burst, 2005.*

—Nicole Rudick

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