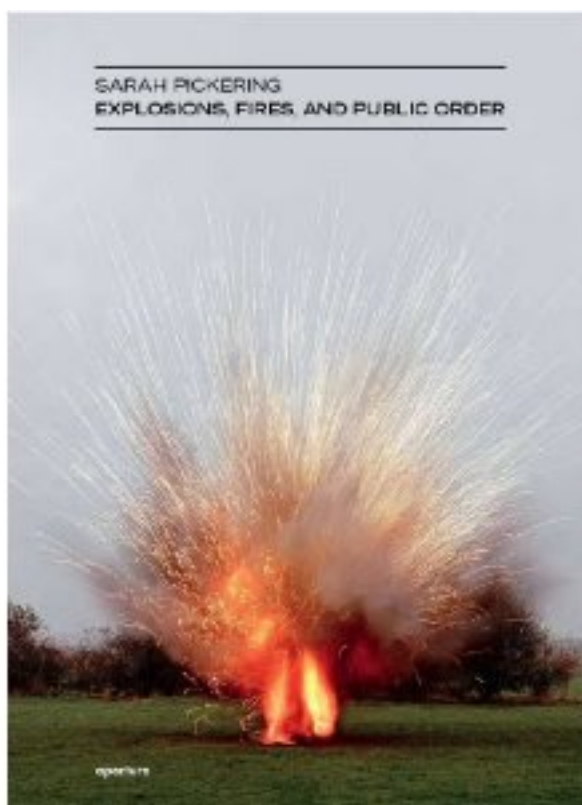


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Sarah Pickering, Karen Irvine

Sarah Pickering : Explosions



Sarah Pickering's Explosions, Fires, and Public Order is a visually arresting glimpse into the secret world of civil defense by one of today's up-and-coming artists.

Combining four series, Explosions, Fires, and Public Order begins with Public Order, a project exploring the Metropolitan Police Public Order Training Centre, a simulated urban environment where officers rehearse responses to civic unrest. The Explosions series documents the tactical use of controlled explosions by the British military to add realistic stress to training exercises.

The Fire Series and Incident, Pickering's most recent work, were produced while she was an artist in residence at the UK Fire Training College. There, she photographed blazes set inside meticulously and elaborately constructed home interiors, as well as the stark, charred remnants of fake urban settings.

Pickering's projects reflect an aspect of the current zeitgeist : terrorism matched with omnipresent anxiety. "My work explores the idea of imagined threat and response, and looks at fear and planning for the unexpected, merging fact and fiction, fantasy and reality," she states. While the images in Explosions, Fires, and Public Order have a transcendent formal beauty, they are a disquieting reminder of the delicate balance between order and chaos.

Sarah Pickering (born in Durham City, England, 1972) finished her MA in photography at the Royal College of Art, London, in 2005. She is the recipient of several awards, including the Photographers' Gallery Graduate Award and a Jerwood Award. She has exhibited internationally and within the UK, where her work was part of How We Are : Photographing Britain, at Tate Britain.