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Artist captures controlled explosions in photography

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Photo courtesy of Laney contemporary
"Exploded View Sunset" by Kevin Cooley.

Los Angeles-based artist Kevin Cooley exhibits his photography and video installation “Exploded Views,” a series of controlled explosions in the desert, in at Laney Contemporary in Savannah from July 1 through September 18.

The exhibition opens Thursday with an artist talk Cooley led by Lisa Jaye Young, Ph.D., from 5 p.m.-6 p.m. Engage in a socially distanced artist reception with refreshments from 6 p.m.-9 p.m. throughout the lawn and gallery.

Cooley, School of Visual Arts, 2000, is an inspiration to photographers and patrons alike, with his vividly intense and intimate photos of controlled explosions and wildfires examine the underlying behavior and physics of fire. His photographs were recently published in a 16-page spread in Harper’s Magazine. His commissioned work appears frequently in the pages of The New Yorker, The New York Times, and many other notable publications.

“One of his ‘Controlled Burn’ images was on the November cover of Wired Magazine last year; they’re just gorgeous,” said Art Director Susan Laney. “In the same vein of the Exploded Views, these images stop time for an event that you normally think of so differently, that happens so quickly; it changes the way you think about things, it’s beautiful.”

Cooley’s photography and installation work has been exhibited in solo exhibitions at galleries and museums including Kopeikin Gallery, The Museum of Photographic Arts, Pierogi, Ryan / Lee Gallery, The Savannah College of Art and Design, and Catharine Clark Gallery. His work is in prominent public collections including The Guggenheim Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 21c Museum, The Nelson-Atkins Museum, and The Museum of Photographic Arts.

“We’re very excited to bring his work to Savannah,” Laney said. “I’ve worked with Kevin a number of times such as showing his work at art fairs with Kopeikin Gallery out of LA, organizing a solo exhibition of his work, High Water Mark, in Atlanta, and an incredible installation, Smoke and Mirrors, in Savannah a few years back.

Exploded Views is an exhibition of his most recent photography.” The “Exploded Views” debut coincides with Independence Day, but unlike the Fourth’s explosive booms, Cooley’s images depict a silence represented by the stillness. In this collection of documented photos, he is conveying a subversive magnitude that can’t be silenced.



Photo courtesy of Laney contemporary

Controlled explosions in the desert under the guidance of a master pyrotechnicist, "Exploded View Desert" by Kevin Cooley.

"'Exploded Views' is part of an ongoing photographic study of the physical properties of fire, its connection to nature, and to our culture," explained Cooley. "I intend for the work to be considered within the context of climate change to examine our collective relationship to a planet that we are slowly destroying. I am particularly interested to see how this work is perceived in Savannah, far from the increasingly flammable landscape of my home state of California."

"Kevin's work is striking and he is extremely driven," Laney said. "Right after his installation here in 2018, the volcano was erupting in Hawaii and he was getting calls from different publications. He was immediately on his way there to capture an incredible moment in history."

View Kevin Cooley's "Explosive Views," a photography exhibition of controlled explosions in the desert, and three channel videos in the gallery's upstairs, mirrored room, July 1 at Laney Contemporary. "The majority of artists that we exhibit are regional, but this is an artist we are passionate about and well connected to because of Paul Kopeikin, who will be here for the opening, and his incredible gallery out in LA," Laney said. "I think

it is kind of perfect to have this particular body of work on exhibition at this time of year, too.”

Learn more about the artist at kevincooley.net or through his Instagram [@kevincooley](https://www.instagram.com/kevincooley).

<https://www.connectsavannah.com/savannah/artist-captures-controlled-explosions-in-photography/Content?oid=16722900>

