

PRESS COVERAGE



Sarah Pickering: Incident Control

April 9 — June 20, 2010

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Sarah Pickering: Incident Control

April 9 – June 20, 2010

Forthcoming book co-published by the MoCP and Aperture

MoCP Columbia
Museum of Contemporary Photography COLLEGE CHICAGO

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Electric Radiator, 2007
Courtesy of Moissen De Clercq Gallery, Brussels

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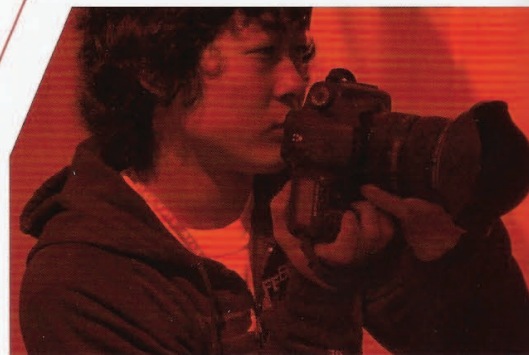
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Sarah Pickering: *Incident Control*

April 9–June 20, 2010



Sarah Pickering, *Makeshift Cooking*, 2007

Geissler/Sann: *the real estate*

April 9–May 23, 2010



Geissler/Sann, from *the real estate*, 2009

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Eggleston's America: Dyed, heavenly

By Lauren Viera, Tribune reporter

May 14, 2010

Like rediscovering an old photo album that's been boxed away for decades, browsing William Eggleston's nostalgia-drenched photographs at the Art Institute of Chicago reveals long-forgotten snapshots of backyards and hotel rooms and vacations past, minus that stale-attic smell.

Organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art and Munich's Haus der Kunst, "William Eggleston: Democratic Camera, Photographs and Video" is billed as a retrospective from 1961 to 2008, smartly split here between the Modern Wing's Abbott Galleries and the smaller Buckbaum Gallery across the hall. The most memorable images date from the late '60s and early '70s, the height of the Mississippi-born photographer's obsession with the dye imbibition (or dye transfer) process of photo making.



"I don't think anything has the seductivity of the dyes," Eggleston is quoted here. To understand that seduction is to acknowledge the courtship between the photographer and the process — one that, until Eggleston took a shine to it, was primarily used for print advertising and other lucrative work. It was both expensive and labor-intensive: From a single image, three separate negatives are required (from red, green and blue filters) to make three respective gelatin matrices, capable of absorbing and releasing dyes of those primary colors. Lined up just so onto gelatin-coated paper, the matrices release the dyes yielding a full-color image.

Imagine the possibilities of being able to manipulate those colors as individual layers before putting them to print, as opposed to putting your faith in a single sheet of light-sensitive paper washed in a bath of chemicals.

Eggleston was hooked, and viewers are the beneficiaries. A stationary tricycle waits patiently on a suburban sidewalk, the rust on its handlebars so gritty in color, you can almost feel it against your palms. Single blades of grass glow with late-afternoon sunlight next to a girl sprawled in a faded floral dress, her eyes shutting out the light. A woman with her face made up just so glowers from her perch on a dirty curb, its tire-smudged yellow paint offsetting her cobalt-blue knit dress.

These are the images captured by Eggleston's lens — "democratic," he has suggested, because in looking around for what to shoot, "nothing was more important or less important." A cluster of bowling trophies on a jukebox is treated in the same light as Elvis' piano at Graceland. Despite weighty assignments, including one for Rolling Stone magazine that sent the photographer to Jimmy Carter's hometown on the eve of his election, the resulting images are everyday Americana. The distinction? In the dye.

"William Eggleston: Democratic Camera, Photographs and Video: 1961-2008," at the Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Ave., 312-443-3600; artic.edu. Through May 23

'the real estate' at Museum of Contemporary Photography

For those of us who hope to capitalize on the local housing market's current doldrums, shopping for a home is both exciting and heartbreaking. From all those foreclosures are reaped a bounty of affordable down payments — and along with it, the bad karma of someone else's shattered Great American Dream.

That tension — between the potential comfort of a new home and the emptiness of a house left abandoned — is the focus of photographers Beate Geissler and Oliver Sann's aptly titled "the real estate" exhibit at the Museum of Contemporary Photography.

Collaborating under the name Geissler & Sann since the mid-1990s, the wife-and-husband team relocated from Germany to Chicago in early 2008 and began their house hunt. As this exhibit's literature tells us, the foreigners found themselves feeling even more displaced in their new city, traipsing through homes hastily left for collectors, unearthing eerie remnants of residences left for dead.

Before long, they turned to their cameras for comfort.

The 60 color photographs selected for the exhibit are plucked from different homes but are arranged in a fashion that tricks the eye into thinking some of those dirty, paint-peeled walls were once shared with one another. While I'm not sure I like the effect, it adds a layer to this collection that might otherwise look too stringent.

The most arresting photos are those of rooms that offer more than a cursory glimpse into the past — representational of a broader theme commonly explored by this pair of artists. One pristine series of images, clearly taken from upper-market homes, are spotless save for footprints worn into dust on the hardwood floors. Another room's wood paneling is pristine save for a single K-Swiss sticker in its center. The oddest, and weirdly saddest: a perfect-pink bedroom vacant save for a tidy, magazine-clipped wall shrine to Paris Hilton.

Geissler & Sann, "the real estate" at Museum of Contemporary Photography, 600 S. Michigan Ave., 312-663-5554; mcp.org. Through May 23.

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GALLERY GUIDE

CHICAGO | MIDWEST



APRIL 2010 \$45.50
Sarah Pickering at the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, IL

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THE MONTHLY GUIDE TO
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LEFT:
Geissler/Sann "the real estate
#54, #55, #56," 2009, ink jet
prints, 31 x 39 inches each,
courtesy of Frieder Taubert
Contemporary, Berlin

BELOW:
Sarah Pickering "Glue Sniffing
Kids," 2007, chromogenic
development print, 48 x 39
inches, courtesy of Meessen
De Clercq, Brussels, Belgium

ON THE COVER:
Sarah Pickering "Shot," 2009,
chromogenic development
print, 47 x 54 inches, courtesy
of Meessen De Clercq, Brussels,
Belgium



WWW.ARTINFO.COM



ON THE COVER

SARAH PICKERING: *INCIDENT CONTROL* April 9 - June 20, 2010

GEISSLER/SANN: *THE REAL ESTATE* April 9 - May 23, 2010

The Museum of Contemporary Photography
600 S Michigan Ave, IL, 60605
312-663-5554 fax 312-344-8067
mcp@colum.edu
www.mocp.org
mon-wed 10-5, thurs 10-8, sun 12-5,
free admission

The Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP) is pleased to present two exhibitions opening in April 2010: Sarah Pickering: *Incident Control* and Geissler/Sann: *the real estate*.

Incident Control is a monographic exhibition featuring the work of British artist Sarah Pickering. While appearing to exist between reality and illusion, Pickering's images are actually documents of simulation. The exhibition will present photographs from four recent series of Pickering's work, spanning from 2002 to the present: *Explosions*, *Fire Scene*, *Incident*, and *Public Order*.

"Sarah Pickering's photographs jar our sense of security and illuminate the ways in which we cope with traumatic events that are beyond our control," says MoCP curator Karen Irvine. "Her pictures depict environments and events crafted for the purpose of training policemen, firemen, and soldiers for calamities such as terrorism, civil unrest, fire, and war. By exposing the absurdity and controlled nature of these environments, Pickering's images reveal our predilection to deflect fear by trying to anticipate and plan for it—and our tendency to process it by turning it into narrative."

The photographic series *the real estate* (2008/2009), by Chicago-based artists Beate Geissler and Oliver Sann, depicts homes in foreclosure, evoking the absence and loss of former homeowners with unembellished portraits of empty living space. Oliver Sann and Beate Geissler moved to Chicago from Germany in 2008 just as the economic downturn hit and home foreclosures became widespread across the economic spectrum. Sann and Geissler document homes in Chicago, usually after they have been vacated, in a straightforward manner, capturing both the stark emptiness and the traces of human occupation, from structural architecture to decorating choices.

Support for the exhibition and publication *Sarah Pickering: Incident Control* is provided by The Lannan Foundation and the British Council. Support for the exhibition *Geissler/Sann: the real estate* is provided by the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany, Chicago.

For more information about the exhibitions and events at the MoCP visit mocp.org.

the **BIG COLOR** April 2nd 6pm-10pm
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APR 26

Review: Sarah Pickering/Museum of Contemporary Photography

Photography, Museums

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RECOMMENDED

British photographer Sarah Pickering has devoted herself to documenting in color and black-and-white the sites where first responders train for disasters and civil disorders in environments constructed for the purpose of simulating the dangers that they might have to confront in the real world. Pickering has a special taste for shooting modest rooms that have been set on fire for her and controlled explosions and gas clouds in the fields, but her premier endeavor is her series on Denton, England, a stage-set microcosm of a mid-size city existing only to be the scene of riot training for SWAT teams. When Pickering is around, Denton is depopulated, but signs remain of what the police are meant to control; a barricade of shopping carts, tires and construction boards blocks off an alley framed by dismal working-class flats that are simply facades. Although she has a socially critical intent, Pickering's images turn out to be politically neutral; those who support the state will be happy that the security forces are sharpening their skills, and opponents of the ruling order will detect the mechanisms of malign power. (Michael Weinstein)



Through May 23 at the Museum of Contemporary Photography, 600 S. Michigan.

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Art review
Sarah Pickering
By Lauren Weinberg

TOC Blog
Gogol Bordello at Congress Theatre: Photo gallery
8:10am
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TOC Poll
We want to know what you think. Click here to answer this week's poll question.

"Incident Control," Museum of Contemporary Photography, through Jun 20.



Pickering, River Way (Roadblock) from "Public Order," 2004.

No bedrooms or living rooms were harmed in the making of "Fire Scene" (2007), but that doesn't make Sarah Pickering's photos easier to confront.

The English artist created the series at the British Fire Service College, which constructs detailed domestic interiors in shipping containers, then torches them—kids' toys, overstuffed chairs and all—to teach students how to identify the causes of fires. Pickering captures these fake tragedies just as the fires catch. While we know real people won't be hurt because they forgot about a cigarette or tried sniffing glue, the sets are so realistic the flames frighten us anyway.

The artist isn't congratulating us on our empathy, though. Her powerful work forces viewers to consider their delight in disaster porn. The "Explosion" (2004–present) series turns the smoke clouds and sheets of flame generated by napalm and land mines into stunning objects for aesthetic contemplation. Curator Karen Irvine's wall text explains that the companies demonstrating the explosives cater to both the film industry and the military, which makes us feel guilty about enjoying the fictional destruction.

Pickering's simulated settings are at their most uncanny in color. (A black-and-white series, "Incident" from 2009, is the show's weak link.) "Public Order" (2002–05), which depicts the fake cities where British police officers learn to cope with soccer hooligans (among other threats), introduces a class consciousness that the artist develops in "Fire Scene," as she focuses on cramped rooms strewn with discarded beer cans. Irvine asks what Pickering's work says about security and preparedness, but it prompts us instead to consider how easily other people's problems become entertainment.

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Time Out Chicago / Issue 269 / Apr 22–28, 2010

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Art & Design blog

Five things to do today: April 26
8:00am
Five things to do Monday, including Hedwig Dances Movement Development Intensive, Don't Knock the Rock, Boom Boom Room, Jakob Dylan with Neko Case and Kelly Hogan and "Tadanori Yokoo: Recent
More Art & Design posts

Get listed
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Reviews and features

Ongoing exhibitions and more
"Matisse: Radical Invention, 1913–17"
We provide a cheat sheet for the Art Institute of Chicago's brainy Henri Matisse blockbuster, on view through Jun 20.

"Fair Use"
Info sharing and piracy is artists' and designers' bag at the Glass Curtain Gallery, through Apr 30.

"Recession"
The South Side Community Art Center and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago celebrate a decades-old partnership in this group exhibition through May 2.

Center for Book and Paper Arts

FREE Columbia College, 1104 S Wabash Ave, second floor (312-369-6631, bookandpaper.org). El: Red, Orange, Green to Roosevelt. Bus: 1, 3, 4, 12, 29, 62. Mon–Fri 10am–6pm.

"Marilyn Sward: Speaking in Paper." The paper art, photos, travel journals and collaborative *Treewhispers* project that Sward (1941–2008), who cofounded the Center for Book and Paper Arts, created over 40 years fill this retrospective curated by Audrey Niffenegger, Pamela Paulsrud and Stephen DeSantis. Opens Wed 9, 5:30–8:30pm. Through Aug 21.

Chicago Cultural Center

FREE 78 E Washington St (312-744-9350, chicagoculturalcenter.org). El: Red to Lake; Orange, Pink, Green, Brown, Purple (rush hrs) to Randolph. Bus: 3, 4, 6, 10, 14, 26, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 151, 157. Mon–Thu 8am–7pm, Fri 8am–6pm, Sat 9am–6pm, Sun 10am–6pm.

*** "From Process to Print: Graphic Works by Romare Bearden."** Though best known for his evocative collages—which fuse magazine clippings with patterned fabrics, the rural South with the urban North and everyday rituals with mythic events—Romare Bearden (1911–88) constantly reworked his themes and concepts in other media, studying with master printers to push the boundaries of his own innovation. This 30-year retrospective of his prints—organized by the New York-based Romare Bearden Foundation—is a little too heavy on process, but it reveals how the jazz aficionado improvised with past motifs to engage African-American culture in new, inventive ways. Through Jun 27. —*Laura Pearson*

"Diane Simpson: Sculpture and Drawing, 1978–2009." The Chicago and artist's retrospective includes more than 50 of

her sculptures inspired by architecture and historical fashion as well as drawings revealing her creative process. Through Jul 3.

Evanston Art Center

2603 Sheridan Rd, Evanston (847-475-5300, evanstonartcenter.org). El: Purple to Central. Bus: 201. Mon–Thu 10am–10pm, Fri–Sat 10am–4pm, Sun 1–4pm. \$3 suggested donation.

*** "20th Evanston and Vicinity Biennial."** Andreas Fischer, Scott Fortino, Martina Nehring and Darrell Roberts are among the 47 exhibiting artists, whom jurors John Himmelfarb (an artist) and Museum of Contemporary Art curator Julie Rodrigues Widholm selected from a pool of more than 500 applications. Through Jun 27.

Gahlberg Gallery / McAninch Arts Center

FREE College of DuPage, 425 Fawell Blvd, Glen Ellyn (630-942-2321, cod.edu/gallery). Metra: Union Pacific to College Ave, then Pace bus 715. Mon–Wed, Sat 11am–3pm; Thu 11am–3pm and 6–8pm.

*** "Deborah Boardman: A Porous Space."** Through downsizing, Boardman tracks the gallery's "energies" created by underground waterways and fault lines. She shares her findings in paintings, performance and video work. Paintings by Hans Peter Sundquist appear in the McAninch Arts Center lobby. Opens Thu 3, 6–8pm. Through Aug 7.

Gallery 400

FREE UIC, 400 S Peoria St (312-996-6114, gallery400.aa.uic.edu). El: Blue to UIC/ Halsted. Bus: 7, 8, 12, 60. Tue–Fri 10am–6pm, Sat noon–6pm.

"Andy Moore: John's Luv." Begun in 2003, Moore's almost 1,000-page handwritten

and painted book—part diary, part fiction—explores ideas about community, love and religion. Through Jun 12.

"Erin Cosgrove: What Manner of Person Art Thou?" The Bayeux Tapestry and the seven deadly sins inspired Cosgrove's 65-minute animated video about two anachronistic believers who violently punish those they deem "evildoers." So, it's about Bush and Cheney? Through Jun 12.

"Eun Hyung Kim: Designing Egos." Cartoon figures act out tableaux of "tumult, connection, confrontation and fantasy" in Kim's black-and-white floor-to-ceiling wall drawings, sculptures and animated video. Through Jun 12.

Graham Foundation

FREE 4 W Burton Pl (312-787-4071, grahamfoundation.org). Bus: 22, 72, 151. Wed–Sat 11am–5pm.

*** "Felipe Dulzaid: Utopia Possible."** In 1961, Fidel Castro commissioned five new National Art Schools for Cuba. Three architects designed the free institutions, on the site of the former Havana Country Club. But, in 1965, their modernist masterpieces were abandoned to the jungle. Cuban artist Dulzaid's fascinating, moving installation investigates what's happened to the mysterious landmarks since, highlighting two of the architects' 45-year quests to finish their projects. Through Jul 17. —*LW*

Hyde Park Art Center

FREE 5020 S Cornell Ave (773-324-5520, hydeparkart.org). Bus: 6, 15, 28. Metra: Elec Main to 51st/53rd St. Mon–Thu 9am–8pm; Fri, Sat 9am–5pm; Sun noon–5pm.

*** "Ps and Qs."** Carrie Gundersdorf, Jessica Labatte and five other artists explore color, form and materials through abstract painting, sculpture and photography. This show was curated by Jeff M. Ward and three walls director Shannon Stratton. Through Jun 6.

"Stan Chisholm: Things That Never Really Happened." Imaginary land masses populated by cartoon mascots challenge the accuracy of human perception in St. Louis artist Chisholm's life-size diorama. Through Sun 6.

*** "Spatial City: An Architecture of Idealism."** French architect Yona Friedman's utopian ideas about urban space inspired this traveling exhibition of sculptures, videos and other works by 40-plus artists including Monica Bonvicini, Maurizio Cattelan, Cao Fei and Chicagoan Sara Schnadt. Through Aug 8. See "Brutalist truth," page 54.

"Jennifer Mannebach: Pantheon Wave." Mannebach incorporates the HPAC's glass facade into her large-scale installation of graphite drawings on masking tape, which are inspired by Italian monastic architecture. Through Aug 22.

*** "Pelot Gonzalez Rios."** Chicago artist Josué Pellot presents new sculptures and paintings inspired by his family and his hometown of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, to consider the meaning of cultural identity in a globalized world. Through Aug 22.

International Museum of Surgical Science

1524 N Lake Shore Dr (312-642-6502, imss.org). El: Red to Clark/Division. Bus: 151. Tue–Sun 10am–4pm. \$10, seniors and students \$6. Tuesdays free.

*** "Carolyn Bernstein: Yew Tree Project."** Bernstein investigates the network of institutions and individuals who participated in developing the anti-cancer drug Taxol (derived from the Pacific yew tree's bark) in this installation of paintings, drawings, X-ray films and other materials. Opens Fri 4, 5–8pm. Through Aug 20.

*** "Patrick Nagatani: Chromotherapy."** The practice of healing through colored light, staged in Nagatani's 25 photos, inspires the New Mexico-based artist to reflect on contemporary medicine and society's interests in personal

transformation and belief. Opens Fri 4, 5–8pm. Through Aug 20.

Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art

756 N Milwaukee Ave (312-243-9088, art.org). El: Blue to Chicago. Bus: 56, 66. Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat 11am–5pm; Thu 11am–7:30pm. \$5, kids under 12 free.

"Life Lines: The Drawings of Charles Steffen." Forced to leave IIT in the 1940s due to a mental breakdown, Steffen (1927–95) began making art during the 15 years he spent at Elgin State Hospital undergoing treatment for schizophrenia, and continued his practice while living with his family on Chicago's Northwest Side. Opens Fri 4, 5–8pm. Through Aug 28.

Lincoln Park Conservatory

FREE 2391 N Stockton Dr (312-742-7736, chicagoparkdistrict.com). Bus: 77, 151, 156. Daily 9am–5pm.

"Max Alexander: Half-Steps Are Okay." Experimental Sound Studio's "Florasonic" series continues with Alexander's fusion of field recordings, overheard conversations and musical interludes, which the composer doesn't try to weave into a cohesive whole. Opens Sun 6, 3–5pm. Through Aug 31.

Loyola University Museum of Art (LUMA)

820 N Michigan Ave (312-915-7805, luc.edu/luma). El: Red to Chicago. Bus: 66, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 151. Tue 11am–8pm, Wed–Sun 11am–6pm. \$6, seniors \$5, students and kids under 14 free. Tuesdays free.

*** "New Icon."** Pamela Fraser, William J. O'Brien, Sze Lin Pang and six other Chicago artists explore contemporary iconography in a show curated by Britton Bertran. Opens Fri 4, 5:30–7:30pm (\$15, free for LUMA members). Through Aug 1.

"Jessica Gondek: A Decade in Print." Gondek exhibits digital and traditional prints exploring technology, geometry, machine aesthetics, nature and architecture through abstraction. Opens Fri 4, 5:30–7:30pm. Through Sept 19.

Mary & Leigh Block Museum of Art

FREE Northwestern University, 40 Arts Circle Dr, Evanston (847-491-4000, blockmuseum.northwestern.edu). El: Purple to Foster. Bus: 201. Tue 10am–5pm; Wed–Fri 10am–8pm; Sat, Sun 10am–5pm.

*** "The Brilliant Line: Following the Early Modern Engraver, 1480–1650."** Even a genius like Albrecht Dürer struggled with the constraints of engraving, which required its first practitioners to depict biblical scenes, classical myths, sexy witches and aristocrats solely through lines and dots. Curated by the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), this survey of almost 85 works by Dürer and other pioneering Renaissance and Baroque engravers reveals how their medium increased in importance and sophistication. Wall texts about the "swelling line" and other refinements go into details only a printmaker might appreciate, but anyone can marvel at the engravers' naturalistic light, shadow and musculature. And by musculature, we mean buttocks. Through Jun 20. —*LW*

Museum of Contemporary Art

220 E Chicago Ave (312-280-2660, mcachicago.org). El: Red to Chicago. Bus: 3, 10, 26, 66, 125, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 151. Tue 10am–8pm, Wed–Sun 10am–5pm. \$12 suggested admission, students and seniors \$7, kids under 12 free. Tuesdays free.

"UBS 12 x 12: Caleb J. Lyons." Lyons's "Real Pirates" paintings and

Sarah Pickering: Incident Control

April 9–June 20, 2010



Sarah Pickering, Fireburst, 2004

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The TOC Blog

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Five things to do today: May 9

Posted in [Around Town](#), [Art & Design](#), [Dance](#), [Music](#), [Theater](#) by [Mark Bieganski](#) on May 9th, 2010 at 4:00 am

DANCE/AROUND TOWN - Celtic Fest Chicago

There are all kinds of events on tap for this weekend celebration of Celtic culture—we'll admit being stoked for the Men in Kilts contest—but the dance lineup alone is enough to keep you busy. Every 15–30 minutes on the south promenade, Irish, Scottish Highland and a handful of Spanish dance groups will storm a stage dedicated to fancy footwork. *Millennium Park, Chase Promenade, 55 N Michigan Ave. El: Pink, Orange, Green, Brown, Purple (rush hrs) to Randolph; Blue to Washington; Red to Lake. Bus: 3, 4, 14, 124, 145, 151, 157. noon–9pm. FREE!*

ART & DESIGN - "Sarah Pickering: Incident Control"

Sarah Pickering's amazing photos of fires and explosions make us consider our delight in disaster porn. *Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College, 600 S Michigan Ave. Noon–5pm. FREE.*

AROUND TOWN - Backward Spelling Bee

Hey, spelling-bee champ, this ain't the fourth grade. Think you'll get by spelling vivisepture correctly? Think again. Morseland and Strawdog Theatre team up to bring you Backward Spelling Bee. Bone up on backward words like kcrank, tsirucsoraihc and—the notorious —otatop. *Morseland, 1218 W Morse Ave; 773-764-8900; 7pm; contestants \$10, spectators \$5. Sign up in advance at [morseland.com](#).*

MUSIC - The Holmes Brothers + Harlan Terson

The Holmes Brothers, among America's greatest musical treasures, have been bringing gospel-tinged R&B to adoring secular crowds for more than two decades. Tonight, the trio is celebrating a characteristically joyous new CD, *Feed My Soul*. *Old Town School of Folk Music, 7pm. \$18–\$22.*

THEATER - *The Body Snatchers*

Jack Finney's 1955 SF novel, with its vision of friends and neighbors silently replaced by emotionless replicas, created a modern myth. In his fluent new stage version, adapter-director Paul Edwards wisely preserves the book's paranoid buzz and pulpy momentum, sparingly adding decorative touches of self-aware camp. *City Lit Theatre, 3pm. \$25.*

Tags: [Backward Spelling Bee](#), [Celtic Fest Chicago](#), [Five things](#), [Sarah Pickering: Incident Control](#), [The Body Snatchers](#), [The Holmes Brothers + Harlan Terson](#), [things to do](#)