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The view from The New Yorker's photo department.

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IN FOCUS: FOURTH OF JULY!

Posted by Jessie Wender

In the spirit of Independence Day, a selection of contemporary images inspired by Fourth of July festivities.

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Gil Blank photographs fireworks at municipal displays, where he “can record single bursts being detonated at a time.” He then isolates the explosion, replaces the night sky with a flat black background, and surrounds the image with a wide white border, “like a specimen on a slide.” Sometimes he combines bursts from different places and different nights into a single image. “The images are perfectly factual—the explosions did in fact happen—but not necessarily the way you see them,” he writes. “The compounding and suturing process of which is, in any event, much more akin to memory anyway. You weren’t there—you didn’t see these particular fireworks—but none of that matters, because the subject is still immediately identifiable in that generically yearning way as a plausible placeholder for those non-existent memories.” Blank’s work is currently included in a group exhibition *Endless Bummer / Surf Elsewhere* at Blum and Poe, Los Angeles.

Courtesy LaMontagne Gallery, Boston.