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## "Coup de Grâce"

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03.12.08-04.23.08 *Simon Preston*

Simon Preston Gallery's inaugural exhibition, "Coup de Grâce," is imbued with a sense of commotion and drama. The show brings together five artists and artist collaboratives (Touhami Ennadre, General Idea, Mary Kelly, Michelle Lopez, and Daniel Joseph Martinez) whose works, in various media and languages, communicate pugnacious, even violent, feelings. The objects express sorrow and pain and, given their tendency to conflate oppressor and oppressed, produce anxiety in the viewer. Martinez's kinetic sculpture in which red paint sprays through a rabbit onto the wall, Ennadre's somber black-and-white photographs of bull carcasses, Lopez's crosslike tree (made with both artificial and natural materials) that struggles to stand up, Kelly's postcards that speak to the historical drama of the 1967 "Mississippi burning" trial, and General Idea's appropriation (and transmutation) of an "Achrome" painting by Piero Manzoni do not put forth simple one-to-one confrontations. Rather, they interact in order to make a curatorial message based, as the exhibition title suggests, on violence and its intrinsic oppositions. "Coup de Grâce" is a smart attempt to engage the visitor with contemporary political issues by means other than the strict depiction of current events.



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