

## Parasol unit

foundation for contemporary art 14 Wharf Road

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### Press release

16 April 2008

Charles Avery

*The Islanders: An Introduction*

10 September – 8 November 2008, preview 9 September, 6 – 8 pm

Parasol unit is delighted to present *The Islanders: An Introduction*, the latest instalment in Charles Avery's epic project which began in 2004. For the past four years, Scottish artist Avery has created texts, drawings, installations and sculptures which describe the topology and cosmology of an imaginary island, whose every feature embodies a philosophical proposition, problem or solution. Previous exhibitions have presented chapters in this ongoing endeavour, revealing individual aspects of the Island. For the first time, the whole project thus far will be brought together including several new works. This major exhibition at Parasol unit will be accompanied by a large-scale publication.

Avery's mapping of the Island, to be completed over a projected ten-year period, can be interpreted as a meditation on making art and the impossibility of finding 'truth'. The artist is characterised as a bounty-hunter, retrieving artifacts and documenting scenes from the subjective realm. Some of the works on show will focus in absurd detail, on particulars such as the sale of pickled eggs in the marketplace. Others present mysterious landscapes, such as the *Eternal Forest*, a place no one can ever reach but where a prized beast called the Noumenon is rumoured to live. A specimen of the Island's wildlife will also be on show, having been realised in the form of a large taxidermy sculpture. These vivid and intricate works invite the viewer to recreate the Island in their own minds, and to use it as an arena for exploring philosophical conundrums and paradoxes.

Avery's art is imbued with a formal beauty, humour, and a spirit of philosophical enquiry. It has roots in the work of such diverse figures as William Blake, P.G. Wodehouse, Jorge Luis Borges, Joseph Beuys, Joseph Kosuth and Ludwig Wittgenstein, but above all contains echoes of Avery's own life, such as his upbringing on the Isle of Mull. Once this sprawling project is complete, Avery plans for it to be encapsulated in several large, leather-bound encyclopaedic volumes.

Charles Avery (b. 1973) has exhibited widely both in Britain and internationally. His recent solo exhibitions include *The Islanders: an introduction – part III*, Galerie Arquebuse, Geneva (2007); *The Plane of the Gods*, Cubitt Gallery, London (2006); *The Islanders: an introduction – part II*, Galleria Sonia Rosso, Turin (2006); *The Islanders: an introduction*, doggerfisher, Edinburgh (2005); *AVATARS*, Galleria S.A.L.E.S., Rome (2005); and *The Hunter*, Man in the Holocene, London (2004). In 2007, Avery was selected with five other artists to represent Scotland at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Venice Biennale, as part of the *Scotland and Venice* exhibition. He has also participated in numerous group shows including the Lyon Biennale, France (2007); the Athens Biennale, Greece (2007); The Drawing Room, London (2007); Musée d'Art Contemporain, Avignon (2005); The Gallery of Contemporary Art, Glasgow (2003); Galleria Civico d'Arte Contemporanea di Siracusa, Sicily (2003); and Marc Foxx Gallery, Los Angeles (2003). Charles Avery is represented by Galleria Sonia Rosso, Turin; Galleria S.A.L.E.S., Rome; doggerfisher, Edinburgh; and Arquebuse, Geneva.

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Following its debut at Parasol unit, *The Islanders: An Introduction* will tour to the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh and the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam.

Parasol unit will be publishing a book to accompany the exhibition, with contributions by Nicolas Bourriaud, Tom Morton and Ziba de Weck Ardalán.

### **Visitor information**

Gallery opening times: Tuesday – Saturday, 10am – 6pm and Sunday, 12 – 5pm

Admission: Free

From Angel tube, turn left out of the station and onto City Road. Continue down City Road for ten minutes and turn left onto Wharf Road before the Texaco Service station.

From Old Street Tube, leave the station from exit 1 and walk up City Road for five minutes. Turn right onto Wharf Road after the Texaco service Station.

Buses 43, 205 and 214 all travel down City Road.

### **Notes to editors**

Parasol unit foundation for contemporary art is an independent educational charity devoted to promoting contemporary art for the benefit of the public. The core activity of the foundation is to showcase the work of the contemporary leading and young international artists in various media. Each year Parasol unit mounts three to four exhibitions in various media, and each is usually accompanied by a publication. In order to encourage the widest possible access to its exhibition programme, Parasol unit does not charge admission fees.

### **2008 Programme**

Marcos Corrales, Ângela Ferreira, Narelle Jubelin and Andrew Renton  
16 April – 29 May

Mona Hatoum  
13 June – 9 August

Charles Avery  
10 September – 8 November

YZ Kami  
21 November 2008 – 14 February 2009

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