

Parasol unit

foundation for contemporary art 14 Wharf Road

London N1 7RW / T +44 (0)20 7490 7373 / F +44 (0)20 7490 7775

www.parasol-unit.org / info@parasol-unit.org

PRESS RELEASE

MERLIN JAMES

6 June – 10 August 2013

(Preview: 5 June 2013, 6.30 – 9 p.m.)



Left to right: *Harbour*, 2011, Acrylic on polyester, wood frame, 38 x 74 cm, Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York; *Are*, 2006 – 2013, Acrylic on canvas, 117 x 152 cm, Mummery + Schnelle, London. All images courtesy of the artist © Merlin James

Parasol unit foundation for contemporary art is delighted to present the work of painter Merlin James from 6 June to 10 August 2013. The exhibition will focus on a selection of works ranging from the start of James' career (the early 1980s) through to the present day. This will be the artist's first major solo exhibition in a London institution.

James' somewhat enigmatic paintings address a vast and eclectic range of subject matter and richly metaphoric imagery, including land- and sea-scapes, figures, architecture, interiors and erotic scenes. What they frequently have in common is their modest scale, highly-considered composition and a seeming effortless execution which belies their complexity. As particular and individual in their use of colour as they are distinctive in composition, James' works interrogate traditional approaches to painting, often actively integrating the physicality of the canvas and stretcher into the composition, as well as incorporating dust, glue or debris into the surface. Heightening a sense of intentionality, or purpose, James at times cuts holes in, or adds three-dimensional objects to, the work.

James' work often seems to comment on or make reference to modernist painting, and much that has been written about his work concentrates on his sources in art. But although he does draw on the 'golden age' of modern painting, and paintings by lesser known modern artists, to dwell excessively on James' sources would be to miss altogether the intensity of the viewing experience and the ensuing intellectual challenges his work offers.

Born in Cardiff, Wales, in 1960, Merlin James studied in London at the Central School of Art and the Royal College of Art. He currently lives and works in Glasgow, Scotland.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Admission to all Parasol unit exhibitions is free

Gallery opening hours:

Monday by prior arrangement. Tuesday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Sunday, 12–5 p.m.

Directions

Tube: Old Street or Angel

Buses: 43, 205 or 214 via City Road

Note to editors

Founded in December 2004, Parasol unit foundation for contemporary art is a registered educational charity and a non-profit institution that operates purely for public benefit. Every year the foundation organises four challenging and thought-provoking exhibitions of works by international contemporary artists working in various media, holds artistic projects and gives awards and exhibition possibility to graduating student from a UK art school. The foundation also engages with the public and the neighbouring community through a full programme of educational events. In its genuine mission to serve the public, the foundation does not bear the founder's name and its exhibitions do not derive from any particular private collections. Admission to all exhibitions at Parasol unit is free of charge. Thanks to this innovative model between private funding and public support one of London's most vibrant contemporary art spaces has come to exist and thrives.

For more information, please contact Gemma Colgan on 020 7490 7373, at gemma@parasol-unit.org, or go to www.parasol-unit.org.

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