

Parasol unit

foundation for contemporary art 14 Wharf Road

London N1 7RW / T +44 (0) 207 490 7373 / F +44 (0) 207 490 7775

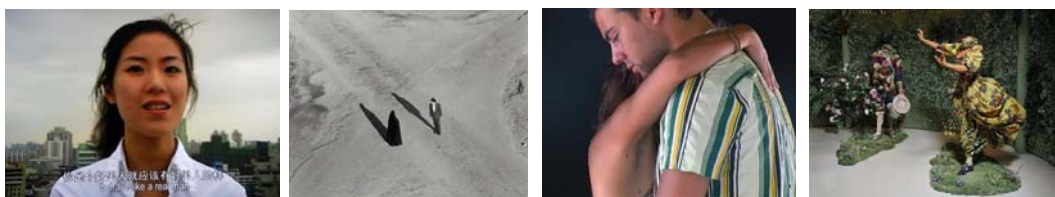
www.parasol-unit.org / info@parasol-unit.org

Press Release

I Know Something About Love

Shirin Neshat, Christodoulos Panayiotou, Yinka Shonibare MBE and Yang Fudong

9 March – 22 May 2011



Images: Yang Fudong, *Flutter, Flutter... Jasmine, Jasmine*, 2002, three-channel video installation, colour, 17min 40sec, courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris and ShanghART Gallery, Shanghai © the artist; Shirin Neshat, *Fervor*, 2000, two-channel black and white video/audio installation, courtesy Gladstone Gallery, New York © the artist; Christodoulos Panayiotou, *Slow dance marathon*, 2005, video (documentation of a performance), 4min 22sec, courtesy of the artist and Rodeo, Istanbul © the artist; Yinka Shonibare MBE, *The Pursuit*, 2007, two life-sized mannequins, Dutch waxed printed cotton, shoes, coir matting, artificial silk flowers, mixed media, male figure 162 x 161 x 200 cm; female figure: 169 x 190 x 140 cm, Rabo Art Collection. Commissioned by the Musée du Quai Branly for the exhibition 'Jardin d'Amour' 2007. Courtesy of the artist and Stephen Friedman Gallery © the artist, photography courtesy of Patrick Gries for the Musée du Quai Branly.

'I know something about love', sing The Exciters in their first hit record 'Tell him' in 1962. This reoccurring lyric lends the multimedia group exhibition at Parasol unit its title. **Shirin Neshat, Christodoulos Panayiotou, Yinka Shonibare, MBE and Yang Fudong** investigate the theme of love in different times and cultures through the spectrum of their personal experience, observation and commentary.

Yinka Shonibare, MBE has re-created the installation *Jardin d'amour* (Garden of Love), which he originally showed in 2007 at the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris, albeit in a different configuration. In this work Shonibare applies a playful, yet a political perspective to his exploration of the theme of love in the eighteenth-century Rococo period in France. He creates scenes that resemble those familiar to us from paintings of that period. Set in a maze of ivy covered trellis, the installation includes secret hideaways and walks, along which wandering visitors discover *The Confession*, *The Pursuit* and *The Crowning*, three sculptural tableaux of beautifully dressed and affectionately engaged couples. Modelled after paintings by Jean-Honoré Fragonard, these tableaux of headless couples reflect this British-Nigerian artist's relationship to and observation of historical events.

The Chinese artist, **Yang Fudong** uses the medium of moving image to explore the theme of love in one of his early works, the 3-channel video installation *Flutter, Flutter... Jasmine, Jasmine*, 2002. In it, Yang Fudong – known for his critical view on contemporary life in the rapidly changing society in China – looks into the private world of a young Chinese couple. Confused between traditional Chinese values and a modern way of looking at their relationship they question their feelings for one another.

Shirin Neshat examines the theme of love through the lenses of gender, probably as established and enforced since the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran. In her two-channel video work, *Fervor*, 2000, Neshat seems not only to highlight the frustration and helplessness of Iranian women in this paradigm, but also to demonstrate how the negative view of love within the revolutionary culture affects natural human feelings.

Slow dance marathon, 2005, by Cypriot artist **Christodoulos Panayiotou**, explores the social construction of love through pop music and the form of slow dancing. In this video documentation of a 24 hour long performance, a human chain is formed by strangers who slow dance to the music of well-known love songs.

The exhibition is accompanied by a new publication with essays by Ziba Ardan and Eva Illouz. It is distributed internationally by Koenig Books.

Visitor information

Gallery opening hours: Monday: By appointment, Tuesday–Saturday: 10 am–6 pm; Sunday: 12–5 pm
Admission: Free

Directions:

From Old Street Tube station, leave via Exit 1 and walk up City Road for five minutes. Turn right into Wharf Road after passing the Texaco petrol station.

From Angel Tube station, turn left and walk down City Road for ten minutes before turning left into Wharf Road at the Texaco petrol station.

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

Note 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 contemporary work of leading and emerging international artists who work in a variety of media. In conjunction with each exhibition Parasol unit organises a series of talks and educational events. Parasol unit mounts four exhibitions a year, most of which are accompanied by a publication. To encourage the widest possible access to its exhibition programme, Parasol unit does not charge admission fees for its exhibitions. For more information go to www.parasol-unit.org

Company registration: 05299582/ Registered charity number: 1107425