



Ernesto Caivano  
*Union and Offerings (detail)* 2004  
 ink on paper  
 triptych drawing installation  
 21.3 x 224.4 cm each  
 Private Collection  
 Courtesy carlier | gebauer

#### ERNESTO CAIVANO

“The one thing I really admire about Blake’s endeavour is how he was able to build a self-enclosed system of meaning in such a poetic way – I think that is why people keep going back to him ... I feel Blake is trying to unravel a master narrative of his universe – culturally, politically, psychologically, personally, autobiographically and romantically.”<sup>8</sup>

Ernesto Caivano’s mural-length ink drawings depict the flora, fauna and cosmic implications of an epic love story that the artist has created entitled ‘After the Woods’. In the narrative, the woods symbolize an alternative reality informed by folklore, fairytales and contemporary technology. Centred on the reunion of a young man and

woman after a separation of 1,000 years, the fantasy depicts the man becoming a knight, intimately in tune with the natural world. Meanwhile, the woman transforms into a spaceship – a metamorphosis that represents the advancement of intelligence culminating in technological development. The series of drawings portray in exquisite detail the forest’s eco-system of plants and creatures, particularly the birds known as ‘philapores’ which function as conduits of communication between the separated lovers. This self-existing universe of renewal and restoration supporting the faculties of fallen man was an underlying narrative that Blake also illustrated in much of his work.

Kerstin Kartscher  
*die sabinerin/the sabine*  
 2005  
 marquee, mixed technique, coat, wood  
 Courtesy Galerie Giti Nourbakhsch, Berlin



#### KERSTIN KARTSCHER

“Vision is important and it is important that it is more than what is visible.”<sup>9</sup>

Kerstin Kartscher’s drawings are powered by the free flow of the imagination, offering infinite landscapes, boundless oceans and expansive skies that pull you into her dreamscapes of prophetic tourism. Rhythmically flowing lines, ornamental shapes and geometric graphs mirror the nature of Blake’s art, even down to an authorial figure or a ‘Sera-phim’ – a solitary female protagonist who appears in Kartscher’s ever-changing exotic and brooding surroundings. Like Blake’s admiration for literary imagination, Kartscher’s work derives from the apocalyptic vision of H.G Wells, the emotive fiction of Virginia Woolf through to the travel logs or uncharted adventures of Jules Verne. ‘Die Sabinerin/

The Sabine’ is an installation titled after the ancient tribe abducted by the Romans to populate their newly built city. An awning forms a tent-like shelter whose roof is protected by barbed wire and that is further enclosed by caged sections from which hangs a gypsy crown. Inside, an array of fur rugs are laid out invitingly on the ground and there is an image of a young woman set amidst an exotic background of plants drawn directly on the canvas structure of the awning. This figure, taken from Joseph Losey’s film ‘Eve’ (1962), clutches a bundle of oversized notes whose formation resembles a feather fan and parallels that of the awning. Vent-like slots in the top of the awning suggest an added vantage point or lookout from within the safety of this idyllic summer hideaway cum shelter.

**CHARLES AVERY**  
 Born 1973, Oban, Scotland. Lives and works in London.  
**Solo exhibitions:**  
 2008: Parasol Unit, London  
 2007: Galerie Arquebuse, Geneva  
 2006: Galleria S.A.L.E.S., Rome; Cubitt Gallery, London; Galleria Sonia Rosso, Turin  
 2005: doggerfisher, Edinburgh; Galleria Archimede Staffolini, Nicosia, Cyprus  
 2004: Man in the Holocene, London  
 2003: Sleeper, Edinburgh  
**Selected group exhibitions:**  
 2007: Scotland in Venice, 52nd Venice Biennale; Biennale de Lyon; Athens Biennale

**DIRK BELL**  
 Born 1969, Munich, Germany. Lives and works in Berlin.  
**Solo exhibitions:**  
 2006: Modern Institute, Glasgow; Kunsthalle Bremerhaven; Gavin Brown’s enterprise, New York (with Kitty Kraus & Ulrich Wulff)  
 2005: BQ, Cologne  
 2002: Gavin Brown’s enterprise, New York  
**Selected group exhibitions:**  
 2006: Model Arts and Niland Gallery, Sligo, Ireland  
 2005: Glucksman Gallery, Cork, Ireland; Art: Concept, Paris  
 2004: Saarland Museum; Caves Sainte Croix, Metz

**HEIKO BLANKENSTEIN**  
 Born 1970, Rheidt, Germany. Lives and works in Berlin.  
**Solo exhibitions:**  
 2007: Box, Berlin  
 2006 & 2005: Galerie Alexandra Saheb, Berlin

**Selected group exhibitions:**  
 2007: Stephanie Sacco Gallery, Miami  
 2006: Galerie Arndt+Partner, Berlin; New Jersey Center for Visual Arts, Summit, New Jersey; Kampagne, Berlin  
 2005: Lombard-Freid Fine Arts, New York  
 2004: 1.Berliner Kunstsalon, Berlin; Rocketshop, Berlin

**ERNESTO CAIVANO**  
 Born 1972, Madrid, Spain. Lives and works in New York.  
**Solo exhibitions:**  
 2008: White Cube, London  
 2007: carlier | gebauer, Berlin  
 2006: Richard Heller Gallery, Santa Monica; Guild & Greyshkul, New York  
 2005: carlier | gebauer, Berlin  
 2004: Richard Heller Gallery, Los Angeles; P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York

**KERSTIN KARTSCHER**  
 Born 1966, Nuremberg, Germany. Lives and works in London.  
**Solo exhibitions:**  
 2007: Galerie S.A.L.E.S., Rome  
 2006: Galerie Giti Nourbakhsch, Berlin  
 2005: Tate St Ives; Tanya Bonakdar, New York  
**Selected group exhibitions:**  
 2005: Overbeckgesellschaft Luebeck, Germany  
 2004: Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg; Museum Haus Esters, Krefeld  
 2004: migros museum, Zurich; doggerfisher, Edinburgh; Galleria Continua, San Gimignano, Italy  
 2003: Stephen Friedman Gallery, London



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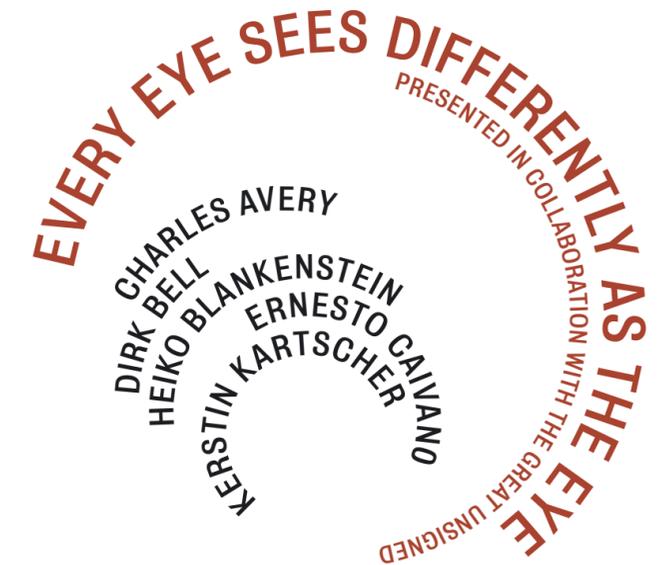
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# THE DRAWING ROOM



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Tuesday 27 November 19.00  
 Charles Avery and Heiko Blankenstein  
 ‘In Conversation’ with Martin Myrone  
 (Curator ‘Gothic nightmares: Fuseli, Blake and the Romantic Imagination’, Tate Britain, 2006)  
 Admission free. Booking essential.

EVERY EYE SEES  
DIFFERENTLY AS THE EYE

by Irene Bradbury

“Artists have a unique privilege, which is that of solitude, and the opportunity to imagine. Given this freedom from quotidian responsibilities, many reflections and ideas will naturally ensue, often of a metaphysical nature. In being a visionary artist one channels that into working in a very direct way.”<sup>1</sup>

William Blake, the poet, painter, engraver and infamous visionary once said “Every Eye sees differently. As the Eye – Such the Object...”<sup>2</sup>, with reference to his own spiritual perception of mystical experiences and the power of the imagination. To mark the 250th anniversary of Blake’s birth, *Every Eye sees differently as the Eye* brings together an exhibition of contemporary visionaries.

Los, Blake’s alter ego, cries out ‘I must Create a System or be enslav’d by another Mans’<sup>3</sup>. This exhibition includes five individuals who similarly create their own highly imaginary and allegorical worlds that are very much controlled and empowered by them. From differing countries and backgrounds, drawing – manifested variously in the form of long scrolls, delicate works on paper, intricate installations and light

boxes – is the favoured medium. Although not followers of Blake’s work necessarily, the artists all share his romantic stance and interest in Gothic medievalism, spiritual mysticism, outsider art, fairy tales and ancient mythologies.

By devising their own lyrical or narrative universes, these artists create a personal and descriptive iconography that is often highly complex and incomprehensible to reason and reading. The scale, detail and ambition of the worlds created by them pulls us into their orbit and yet deny us full access to their preconceived prophetic systems and eccentric customs.

Blake seemed intent on mythologizing and obscuring his own illustrations with a deeper psychological truth or ancient wisdom – such that each encounter with his work is revelatory; similarly the hermetic and elusive visions evoked by these contemporary artists weave complex tales we are compelled to follow. Certain of these hand wrought images are tightly controlled in conception and execution whereas others derive from a more gestural and spontaneous approach.

Charles Avery  
*Time Watchers*  
2007  
pencil and gouache on paper  
56 x 56 cm  
Courtesy doggerfisher, Edinburgh



CHARLES AVERY

“What I feel I have most in common with Blake is that his work was a means of exploring his mind, rather than of making art-work. The art-work was something he did to fund his dreaming but what he sought was something far more exotic and immaterial.”<sup>4</sup>

Charles Avery is in the midst of developing his epic project, ‘The Islanders’ in which he illustrates his own vision and philosophical system for an imaginary world. In his last body of work, Avery created a pantheon for this island which includes an aged bather, a large number 2, a gnarled beast named Aleph Nul, a bottomless hole and a platypus-like monster called Mr Impossible – to play out scenarios which question the nature of the island and, by extension, our own world. In his new

series of drawings, Avery shifts his attention from the Plane of the Gods to the ‘Time Watchers’ – a group of nomads who exist at the lower echelons of the Island’s society. Whilst these ‘low-lives’ are dismissed by locals as time wasters, Avery is suggesting that an attention to the passage of time inherent in their inactivity constitutes a capacity to alter the trajectory of time passing. Avery has said: “At the basis of my world there is a logical philosophy which guarantees the coherence of everything that happens therein.”<sup>5</sup> However this system is obscured by the complexity of everyday life. Avery’s insistence on rationalist principals is at odds with Blake’s mysticism and yet both artists share an interest in hard-lined Euclidean geometry, shifts in scale and an overall philosophical realisation of the divine.

Dirk Bell  
*On End*  
2006  
Mixed media on paper  
146 x 90 cm  
Courtesy BQ, Cologne



DIRK BELL

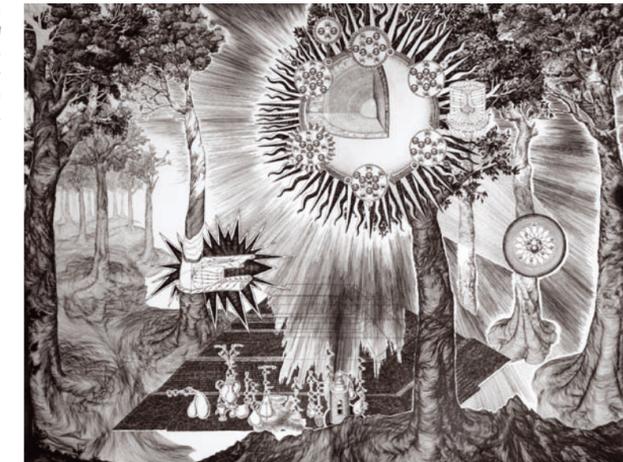
“Blake’s illustrations are urgent, powerful and loaded with the drama of life. Every picture I know by Blake looks like it needed to be painted, like it needs to be seen.”<sup>6</sup>

Dirk Bell’s drawings, photograms and sculptures are strange, terrifying and mesmerising. Deeply romantic, and apparently without irony, his images are soporific and dreamlike, as if the artist is murmuring his reveries to a confidante at twilight. Bell’s sensuous utterances are countered by a

quality that he identifies in Blake’s works as “anti-luxurious, like a sign hanging, or a bell banging”. In the photograms Bell combines negative mirrored images of heraldic symbols and abstracted shadowy figures, good contrasted with evil, as Blake combined Christian theology and Gothic art. Other more delicate works on paper allude to Greek myths such as ‘Leda and the Swan’ or Apollo’s birth at Delos. The heightened eroticism of these works imbues the classical myths with a contemporary significance.

1 Charles Avery, conversation with Katharine Stout 5 June 2007  
2 William Blake, “Annotations to The Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds,” 1798, in *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, rev. ed. by David V. Erdman, Garden City, New York, Anchor Books, 1982, pp. 645, 647-49  
3 *ibid*  
4 Charles Avery, conversation with Katharine Stout 5 June 2007

Heiko Blankenstein  
*Helioland*  
2005  
Ink on paper  
150 x 200cm  
Courtesy Galerie Alexandra Saheb, Berlin



HEIKO BLANKENSTEIN

“Blake broke with conventions of that time by adopting mysticism rather than straight forward religious doctrines, but also rebelling against a purely scientific way of approaching the world.”<sup>7</sup>

Heiko Blankenstein defines his own inner realm in strongly linear compositions that extend beyond the visual sphere and depict natural unseen phenomena. Drawn from the aesthetics of medieval printmaking and Alchemy, admired by Blake, Blankenstein also explores the cognitive

principles of humanist metaphysics, Far Eastern rules of perspective and systems of chaos theory. Yet, like Blake, he neither sets out to convey this scientific reasoning rationally nor uses it as a basis to expand his imaginative vision. A series of light boxes depict non-specific landscapes of natural elements: trees, mountains, sun, moon or planets all suspended in timelessness, interconnected and intertwined into a sinuous formation.

5 *ibid*  
6 Dirk Bell, conversation with Katharine Stout 18 June 2007  
7 Heiko Blankenstein, conversation with Katharine Stout 6 June 2007  
8 Ernesto Caivano, interview with Irene Bradbury 3 May 2007  
9 Kerstin Kartscher conversation with Katharine Stout 15 June 2007