

Charles Avery

The Eidola, Pigs and Blades of the Inner Vast

February 7 - March 22, 2025

GRIMM, 54 White Street, New York, NY (US)

GRIMM is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new works by Charles Avery (b. 1973, Oban, Scotland), on view at the New York gallery from February 7 to March 22, 2025.

This is the artist's third exhibition in New York with GRIMM.

The Eidola, Pigs and Blades of the Inner Vast can be read both as an epilogue to his twenty-year project, 'The Islanders'— a detailed portrayal of the inhabitants, topography, and culture of a fictional island — and an introduction to an entirely new body of work: 'The Eidolons'.

The central theme of this show is, quite literally, the horizon line, a continuum that sears through each painting — the smallest example of which is a few inches wide, the largest, almost eighteen feet in breadth.

For the Islanders the horizon has always held a magnetic attraction. It represents a conundrum: it is visible, yet is constituted of nothing, and so they are drawn to this intangible enigma.

In these pictures the horizon acts as a dividing line through the whole show, a mirror or Rubicon that stands between one realm and the other: that below the line is human, beast, plant and mineral, above, an untouchable world of vanishing clouds and frolicking spirits.

In *Untitled (Forest with yellow sky)*, a wall sized work arranged in a grid of nine panels, the sense of the unreachable is articulated in a mathematical game. The first impression is of a dead forest of gnarly twisted boughs, primitive fungi emerging from the decay. A closer look reveals that middle panel of the composition is a repeat of the whole picture, and on until scale and mist obscure the central conceit.



Charles Avery | *Untitled (Eidolon with horizon)*, 2024

One is reminded of Friedrich Nietzsche's notion of The Eternal Return, of Zeno's paradoxes, and of a question that appeared on a test the artist recalls taking as a twelve-year-old Schoolboy: 'How far can a dog run into the woods?' (The answer is halfway, by which point the dog is running out of the woods).

Untitled (Figure 3 with horizon) is a similar oddity. It can, like a playing card, be turned upside down with the same impression, yet there is a nagging feeling that the axis of the universe will be flipped with it. Who's to know?

In another composition, *Untitled (Encampment with three Eidola)*, three strange glowing forms (Eidola) are manifest on the horizon; beneath, on the earthly, rocky, dusty plain, a group of six people make camp whilst admiring the show in the sky.

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Their demeanor suggests appreciation and curiosity but not surprise, like Northerners witnessing the Aurora Borealis. Perhaps the group have come to this place with the specific intention of experiencing the phenomena.

These large works are punctuated by a set of smaller oil paintings on board capturing cranky, ever-shifting cloudscapes, beneath their trail occasional figures and non-descript grazers subsist.

This is a show of contrasting moods, both playful and melancholy. Mathematical games are backlit by nuclear skies, ghosts abound where humans eke sustenance and recreation in a dusty landscape of dead trees and discarded bottles.

About the artist

Charles Avery lives and works in London and on the Island of Mull (UK). Selected solo exhibitions include *The Nothing of the Day*, GRIMM, London (UK), 2023; *The Hunter returns / goes away from*, GRIMM, Amsterdam, (NL), 2022; *Zoo, Hat, Bridge, Tree: Architectural Propositions of Onomatopoeia*, Vistamarestudio, Milan (IT), 2021; *a wall, a bridge, an arch, a hat, a side-show, a square circle, a group of friends, and two one-armed snakes*, GRIMM, New York, NY (US), 2021; *The Tail of the One-Armed Snake*, GRIMM, Amsterdam (NL), 2020; and *The Gates of Onomatopoeia*, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh (UK), 2019.

Selected group exhibitions include *Size Matters / Monument Drawing Now*, Museum MORE, Gorssel (NL), 2024; *Positions, part three*, Alma Pearl, London (UK), 2024; *My World*, curated by Hans den Hartog Jager, Singer Museum, Laren, (NL), 2024; *Self-Portraits*, GRIMM, New York, NY (US), 2024; *GLASSTRESS: Venetian Glass Today*, Millesgården Museum, Lidingö (SE), 2022; *Cubitt 30th Birthday Fundraising Exhibition*, Victoria Miro, London (UK), 2022; and *Planet B. Climate Change and the New Sublime*, curated by Nicolas Bourriaud, Palazzo Bollani, Venice (IT), 2022.

His work is part of numerous public collections, including: AkzoNobel Art Foundation, Amsterdam (NL); Arts Council England Collection, London (UK); The David and Indre Roberts Collection, London (UK); Deutsche Bank Collection, Frankfurt am Main (DE); FRAC Île de France, Paris (FR); Kunstmuseum, The Hague (NL); THE EKARD COLLECTION; KADIST Art Foundation, Paris (FR); Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam (NL); Museum Voorlinden, Wassenaar (NL); National Galleries Scotland, Edinburgh (UK); and Tate Modern, London (UK), among others.

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