

British artist: collectors' values are becoming our values



British artist Gavin Turk recently visited Turkey for the opening of Istanbul's Elgiz Museum of Contemporary Art's 'Elgiz 10 Istanbul' exhibition, a celebration of the museum's 10th anniversary. The museum showcased his work 'Cave Rug' for the opening



Gavin Turk
Hürriyet photo



TUBA PARLAK

ISTANBUL

Collectors' increasing power in shaping artistic production in the contemporary art scene affects a parallel increase in their responsibility to art viewers, according to British artist Gavin Turk.

"Art needs an audience because it is made by the audience and the collectors are a very important part of this process," Turk told the Hürriyet Daily News in an interview.

Turk recently visited Turkey for the opening of the exhibit "Elgiz 10 Istanbul" at the Elgiz Museum of Contemporary Art, owned by prominent Turkish collectors the Elgiz family. The museum showcased his work "Cave Rug" for the opening.

Turk is known for an earlier work titled "Cave," which he was working on for a degree at the Royal College of Art in 1991. The work consisted of a whitewashed studio space that contained only a blue heritage plaque of the kind found on historic buildings commemorating his own presence as a sculptor. Turk drew instant media attention when his supervisors refused to grant him the degree for the work, which was later bought by Charles Saatchi.

"Collectors play an important role in shaping and progressing the way art goes forth, because they choose to buy certain works and in time their values are becoming our values," Turk said. "In saying this I consider myself more like the general audience rather than an artist. Therefore art collectors have more responsibility toward the art audience than the galleries, but this is not to say the galleries do not have any responsibility at all."

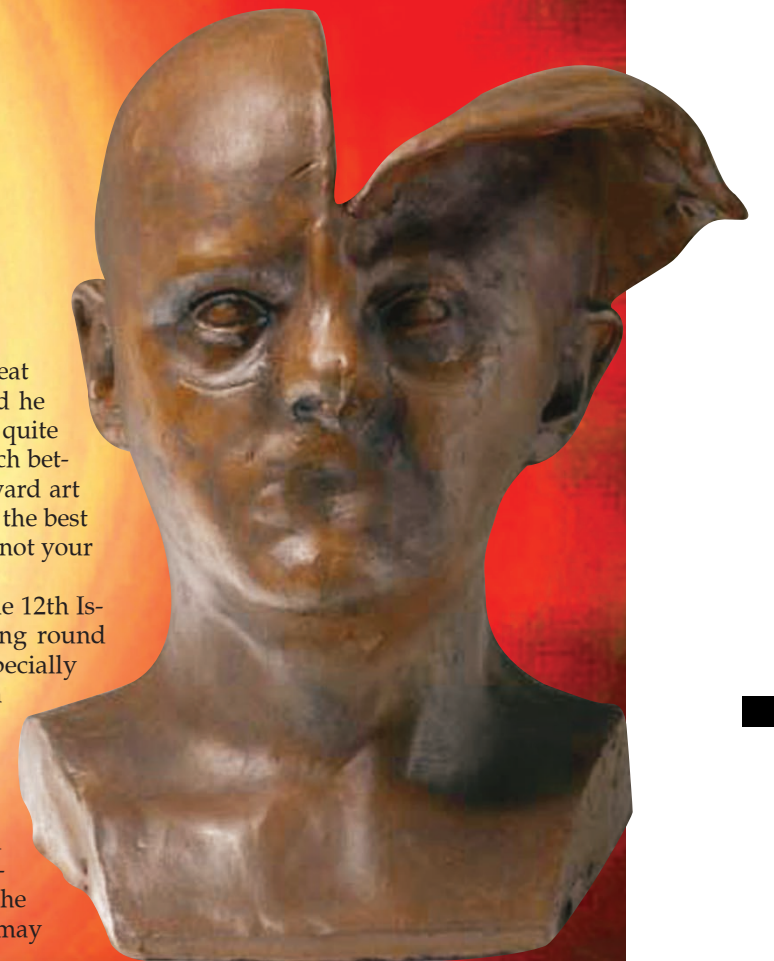
Turk asked who the audience was, and in response to his own question, he said: "I would like

to say 'everyone,' but frankly speaking the audience is those who can afford to be the audience, unfortunately. It is still very much in the domain of the more affluent part of society, although we would like to think that everybody has an opportunity to be part of the audience."

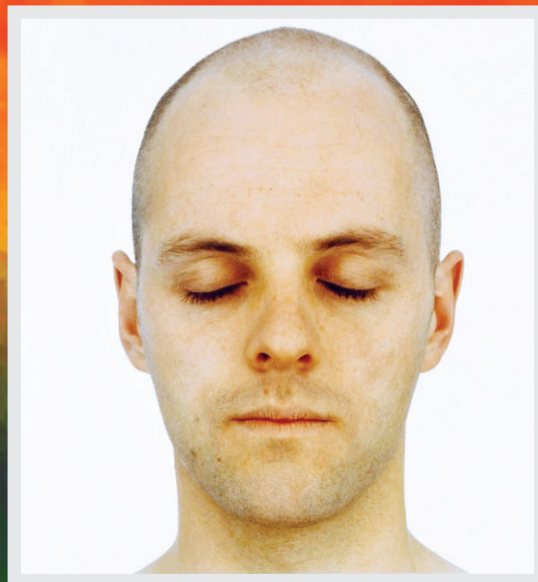
Having visited the contemporary art fair Art Beat Istanbul during his brief stay in Istanbul, Turk said he found the fair to be well organized, the stalls were quite big and the way the artwork was installed was much better than most art fairs. But his general attitude toward art fairs was more critical. "An art fair is definitely not the best place to show art for an artist, because an art fair is not your space."

He seemed to be much more impressed with the 12th Istanbul Biennial, as he said he really enjoyed going round the Biennial as it introduced him to new artists, especially some Middle Eastern artists like 21-year-old Bisan Abu-Eisheh, whom, he said, are rarely exposed in the U.K. and especially in London, as it does not have this kind of large international survey biennial platform.

"The show seemed to be very delicately curated so that subtle and sensitive works could be shown together with more spectacular pieces," Turk said. "The use of Felix Gonzalez-Torres as the context, I felt, may not have been jeopardized by the inclusion of his actual works, apart from re-uniting them with their titles/untitleds it would have set out an unequivocal context for other works in the show, which I don't think would not have lost poetic force." ● HDN



Comparing the experience of his first visit to Turkey in 1994 to his latest one, Gavin Turk, who is known for an earlier work, 'Cave' (top), says he found great change in terms of opportunities for young artists.



These photos obtained from gaviturk.com

Indian music maestro Jagjit Singh dies at 70

MUMBAI - Agence France-Press

The Indian singer and composer Jagjit Singh, who won generations of fans by reviving the traditional genre of "ghazal" music, died on Monday in a Mumbai hospital at the age of 70.

Singh, dubbed "The Ghazal King," had been in intensive care for three weeks and underwent major surgery after collapsing with a brain haemorrhage before a concert in the city.

Indian Prime Minister Manmo-

han Singh led the tributes, saying the singer's appeal came through making ghazals, a poetic form of singing that spread to India from the Middle East in the 12th century, accessible to everyone.

"He gave joy and pleasure to millions of music lovers in India and abroad," Singh said. "He was blessed with a golden voice."

Ghazals were traditionally reserved only for the elite, but Jagjit Singh popularised the form in the 1970s and 1980s by pioneering a modern sound and using Western

instruments alongside Indian classical ones.

Besides spreading the appeal of ghazals in India, Singh sang and composed for Bollywood.

He will be best remembered for his music in popular films like "Prem Geet" (Love Song) in 1981 and "Arth" (Meaning) released the following year.

Singh's classic ghazals, including "Chupke Chupke Raat Din" (Silently, Night and Day) and "Tum Itna Jo Muskura Rahe Ho" (The Way You Smile), were popular studio re-

cordings and featured often in concerts and movies.

Third-highest civilian honor

Jagjit Singh was born to a poor family in the north Indian state of Rajasthan on February 8, 1941.

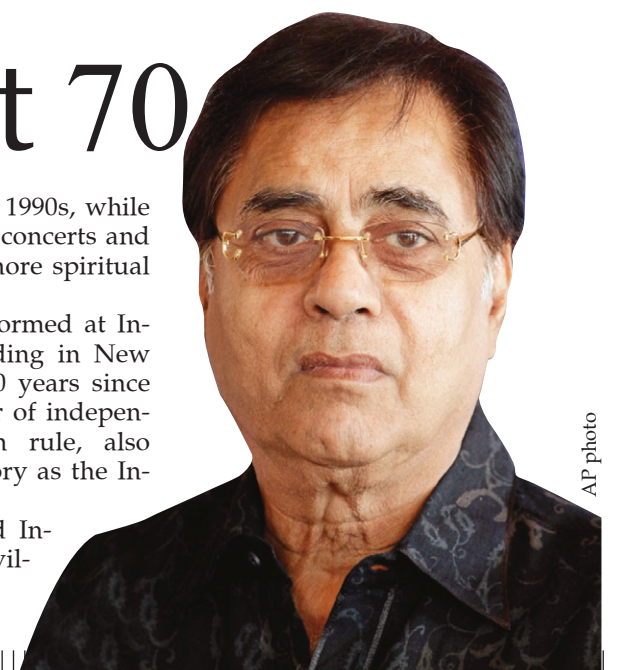
After moving to Mumbai to make his fortune, he found a foothold in regional-language and Bollywood cinema, going on to form a successful duo with his wife Chitra in the 1970s and 80s.

Chitra quit singing after the death of the couple's only son, Vivek, in

a road accident in the 1990s, while Singh sang fewer live concerts and his music took on a more spiritual and religious tone.

In 2007, Singh performed at India's parliament building in New Delhi to mark the 150 years since the country's first war of independence against British rule, also known in British history as the Indian Mutiny.

Singh was awarded India's third-highest civilian honor, the Padma Bhushan, in 2003.



AP photo

