



MARCH 2014

Style special

With a limited edition cover by artist Michael Riedel

SUBSCRIBE

ARCHITECTURE -

DESIGN -

ART -

FASHION -

TRAVEL -

LIFESTYLE -

GALLERIES

VIDEO

Twitter

f

rss

Gavin Turk lights up The Bowes Museum in Durham with a new exhibition of neon artworks

ART / 30 JAN 2014 / BY EMMA O'KELLY



For his new exhibition of neon works at The Bowes Museum in Durham, artist Gavin Turk has emblazoned its façade with the estimated global population of the world at the time of the show's opening

HIDE CAPTION START 1 / 9

Since 1995, artist Gavin Turk has been making neon sculptures, most of which have been sitting untouched in his studio. A recent invitation from The Bowes Museum spurred him into dusting them down and grouping them into an exhibition, which opened recently.

To those familiar with Turk's work, all 15 pieces represent a neon timeline of his career, pinpointing seminal moments and favourite obsessions. 'Neo Eggs' continues his fascination with the egg as a symbol. The artist explains, 'When I was a child, I had a magic egg that would appear in my dreams and chase away anything bad'. He has used the childhood talisman frequently, most famously in his 1997 work 'One Thousand Two Hundred and Thirty Four', in which he carved out his signature in a field of white eggshells stuck to a canvas.

Just under half the works in the show at The Bowes Museum are new. 'Port' is a series of nine half-open doors in different colours, which follows on from his bronze casts of ajar doorways. 'Star', meanwhile, is a double-sized version of the original, which hangs above the entrance to his East London studio.

Turk is best known for his appropriation of the identities and imagery of famous figures, among them Che Guevara, René Magritte, Sid Vicious and Andy Warhol. At his wedding the artist channeled Yves Klein, donning a black cape decorated with the Maltese cross (a neon version of which appears in the show), while 'Banana' references Warhol's 1967 album cover for the Velvet Underground and Nico. Works such as 'Lite' (a lit match) and 'Argon Candle' are 'visual puns, where neon light depicts an alternative form of light'.

The tongue-twisting title of the show, 'Seven Billion Two Hundred and One Million Nine Hundred and Sixty-Four Thousand and Two Hundred and Thirty Eight' is emblazoned across the façade of the country house and refers to the estimated population of the world the time the show opened. Inside, '4th January 2014' estimates the size of the global population twenty minutes later (it has increased by 2,175).

'When you enter the exhibition, it feels like something is being advertised. It's like a crazy game, or a strange children's toy,' says Turk. Its surreal slant chimes with the quirkiness of the museum itself. Devised by John and Josephine Bowes in 1852 to house their vast collection of treasures (among them Canaletto's and Sevres porcelain), the museum is an incongruous architectural gems and one of County Durham's most loved cultural landmarks.

INFORMATION

Seven Billion Two Hundred and One Million Nine Hundred and Sixty-Four Thousand and Two Hundred and Thirty-Eight runs until 21 April

Photography: Andy Keate

ADDRESS

The Bowes Museum
Barnard Castle
Co Durham, DL12 8NP

TELEPHONE

44.18 33689 0606

29

Like

25

Tweet

0

3-1



RELATED

MOST POPULAR



The late Richard Hamilton is feted across London in a trio of exhibitions

ART



Magnum photographer Bruce Gilden opens up his archive of 'characters'

ART



United Visual Artists' meditative 'Momentum' installation swings into action at London's Barbican

ART



London's ICA celebrates its first permanent digs at what is now Dover Street Market

ART



Artist Tauba Auerbach illuminates Wayne McGregor's new ballet at the Royal Opera House in London

ART



Dhaka Art Summit 2014: ahead of its opening this week, we talk to artistic director Diana Campbell Betancourt

ART



Architecture of Density: Michael Wolf lenses Hong Kong's teeming urban sprawl

ART



New Museum in New York unveils a simulated spaceship interior to showcase over 100 pieces of Eastern European art

ART

