

## Art News

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Gavin Turk,

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### Gavin Turk Explores Dreams In Sigmund Freud's Former London Residence

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***'We are asleep. Our life is like a dream. But in our better hours we wake up just enough to realise that we are dreaming.'* - Ludwig Wittgenstein**

The Freud Museum is presenting Wittgenstein's Dream, an exhibition of work by Gavin Turk in association with Ben Brown Fine Arts, curated by James Putnam. This will be the latest in a critically acclaimed series curated by James Putnam. Turk's installation and intervention in Freud's former residence investigates the intriguing conceptual dialogue between two enlightened Viennese thinkers of the 20th century, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951).

In 1900 Freud famously published 'The Interpretation of Dreams', widely considered his most important work, which introduces his theory of the unconscious. Through the analysis of the philosopher's own dreams, Freud maintained that dreams are the conscious expression of an unconscious fantasy or wish not accessible to the individual in waking life. However, the celebrated philosopher Wittgenstein claimed that Freud's views on the interpretation of dreams were flawed, believing instead that they required a more logical approach.

In the hallowed and highly charged domain of Freud's study Turk presents Wittgenstein contemplating an egg. The presence of this ghost-like figure highlights the continued tension between the theories of these two philosophical greats. Above Freud's psychoanalytic couch hangs Parapraxis (2013), a dramatic large-scale photograph of billowing smoke in which Turk explores the human tendency to instinctively associate patterns and forms with something familiar, much in the same way as we do with dreams.

Above the fireplace in Freud's library is a wooden framed version of Turk's celebrated The Mechanical Turk (2006) video. This not only references Freud's interest in the game of chess and its parallels with psychoanalysis, but also the artist's ongoing fascination with illusionism and the issues of authorship, authenticity and identity.

In the dining room Turk displays The Metamorphosis of Narcissus (2011), a work highlighting the Narcissus myth which so inspired Freud.

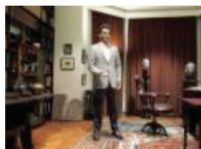
As visitors climb the staircase, Turk's three neon sculptures, Id, Ego and Super Ego (all 2015), emphasise and reiterate the three theoretical constructs that comprise Freud's structural model of the human psyche. Freud's paper from 1923, 'The Ego and the Id', outlines this theory and was of fundamental importance to the development of psychoanalysis.

In the Exhibition Room Turk has echoed Freud's iconic desk and chair by installing his own version, Gavin Turk's Desk (2002-2015). As an ironic contrast to Freud's beloved antiquities, Turk has arranged his own personal collection of intriguing, talismanic objects and keepsakes that relate to his artistic practice.

Gavin Turk was born 1967 in Guildford, from 1989-91 he attended the Royal College of Art. For his MA exhibition show Cave, Turk notoriously presented a whitewashed studio space containing only a blue heritage plaque commemorating his presence. Though refused a degree, his subsequent infamy attracted the attention of Charles Saatchi and Turk became part of a loosely associated group known as the 'Young British Artists' (YBAs). He has continued to show worldwide and has work in many national museum collections (including Tate and MOMA). His work often deals with concerns of authority and identity and has taken up many forms including the painted bronze, the waxwork, the recycled art-historical icon and the use of litter.

Wittgenstein's Dream is the latest in the critically acclaimed ongoing series of Freud Museum exhibitions curated by James Putnam that have included projects by Sophie Calle, Sarah Lucas, Ellen Gallagher, Tim Noble & Sue Webster, Mat Collishaw and Mirosław Balka.

### **Visit Exhibition**



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