

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS



Gavin Turk, *Borsec Mineral Water, Squeeze It Orange Drink, Stainswick Rapeseed Oil, The Original Small Beer*, 2024, oil on linen, 30 x 40 cm. (11 3/4 x 15 3/4 in.)

GAVIN TURK

THE CONSPIRACY OF BLINDNESS

15 March – 10 May 2024
Private view: Thursday, 14 March

Ben Brown Fine Arts is thrilled to announce '*The Conspiracy of Blindness*', our fifth solo exhibition of British artist Gavin Turk at the London gallery (15th March – 10th May). The exhibition will reveal a recent series of still-life paintings that pay homage to early 20th century Italian artist Giorgio Morandi. In typical Turk style he has subverted Morandi's serene arrangements of vases and handmade vessels, by replacing the models with quotidian product packaging.

Looking at the precious and overlooked nature of product packaging, I have become a domestic anthropologist, attempting to uncover the conspiracy of blindness imposed by ideological perspectives.

- Gavin Turk

The paintings in this anachronistic series are meticulously executed in a restricted tonal palette against a monochrome ground, some of the objects are highlighted in accents of colour, inviting a close study of rhythmically arranged lines and forms. The audience is encouraged to explore this curious juxtaposition, as empty containers from used products are elevated to classical models, while simultaneously reminding us of our consumer driven culture.

Turk began this project by preserving and cataloguing used disposable packaging, in what the artist refers to as 'an exercise in self-portraiture'. The artwork titles list the products depicted in each composition, Turk offers a

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glimpse into his consumption habits, prompting reflection on the significance of these mundane artifacts as traces of human presence over time. As Turk aptly states, "*We are what we throw away.*" Each work is set within a bespoke frame, suggesting a distinctive historical journey for each piece, culminating in their convergence for this exhibition.

Through this exploration, the viewers are challenged to reconsider the implications of their daily consumer choices and draw awareness to the nostalgia and branding of consumer products. Turk is renowned for transforming banal, overlooked objects – refuse bags, apple cores, matchboxes, Styrofoam cups, shipping containers, candle – into intricately constructed works of fine art, whether through his hand-painted bronzes or masterful canvas paintings, overthrowing art historical conventions, disrupting the canon, questioning authorship, and imploring critique of human behaviour and our relationship to relics of our time. This ingenious new body of work is at once tongue-in-cheek, visually, and technically compelling, familiarly nostalgic, and provokes imperative reflection.

ABOUT GAVIN TURK

Gavin Turk was born 1967 in Guildford, England, and attended the Royal College of Art in London. In his 1991 MA exhibition, *Cave*, he presented a whitewashed studio space containing a single blue heritage plaque commemorating his presence. Though refused a degree, his subsequent notoriety attracted the attention of Charles Saatchi, and he became part of a group known as the 'Young British Artists' (YBAs). He has since been represented by many major galleries throughout the world and is known for pioneering many forms of contemporary British sculpture now taken for granted, including the painted bronze, the waxwork, the recycled art-historical icon, and the use of rubbish in art. His work is included in numerous international collections including the Tate, London; Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London; and Museum of Modern Art, New York. Turk lives and works in London.



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In 2004, Ben Brown Fine Arts opened its first location in the heart of Mayfair, London. The gallery quickly established itself on the international art scene with exhibitions of long-term gallery artists Tony Bevan, Candida Höfer, Claude & François-Xavier Lalanne, and Heinz Mack, amongst others, as well as momentous exhibitions of 20th century masters including Alighiero Boetti, Lucio Fontana and Gerhard Richter. In 2009, Ben Brown Fine Arts opened an exhibition space in Hong Kong, becoming the first international gallery to move to the city that would soon become a major international art hub. In 2021, Ben Brown Fine Arts opened a third location in Palm Beach, Florida, with an inaugural exhibition celebrating the legacy of American and European 20th century, following with notable exhibitions of the gallery's roster of modern and contemporary artists. The galleries regularly exhibit and develop programming for our renowned stable of international, multi-disciplinarian artists, including the aforementioned as well as Yoan Capote, Awol Erizku, Vik Muniz, Nabil Nahas, José Parlá, Enoc Perez, Ena Swansea, Gavin Turk and Jan Worst. The gallery is recognized for our depth of expertise and inventory in 20th century European and American art. Ben Brown Fine Arts participates in major art fairs worldwide, including Art Basel, Art Basel Hong Kong, Art Basel Miami Beach, Frieze Seoul, The Armory Show, Frieze Masters, TEFAF New York and West Bund Art & Design.

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