

MIMMOSCOGNAMIGLIO ARTECONTEMPORANEA

GAVIN TURK

“*HISTORY OF ART*”

CURATED BY JAMES PUTNAM

from 23/11 to 10/02

‘History of Art’ brings together paintings and sculptures by Gavin Turk juxtaposed with a selection of works by modern masters which have been kindly loaned from private collections in Italy, the UK and Germany, including Turk’s own collection. Gavin Turk draws inspiration from and responds to the work of specific artists – Albers, Beuys, Boetti, Cesar, Duchamp, Dali, Fontana, Judd, Klein, Magritte, and Pollock – and also references Hirst’s more contemporary medicine cabinets.

The artist has played with the recycling of art history throughout his oeuvre. His responses to other artists’ often innovative works, play with the way these can be reduced to stylistic clichés or stereotypes that become their recognisable distinctive ‘trademarks’. He works with imagery and motifs, often combining two or three artist references in a single painting or sculpture. He reshapes these art historical clichés together with his own to create something new and different.

Turk’s six-panel image ‘Widower’ is inspired both by Duchamp’s ‘Fresh Widow’ (1920) and Magritte’s ‘The Key to Dreams’ (1930). The latter was used on the cover of John Berger’s influential book *Ways of Seeing* (1970), in which Berger maintained that our perception is governed by what we know and what we believe, rather than what is ‘real’. Turk has created a response to Berger’s book cover for his exhibition invitation as if to prompt questions about art and its relationship to thought and reality.

Like Duchamp, Turk makes puns and wordplays in his titles as a central element within his work. Adopting the principle of the *readymade*, he often uses discarded ‘found objects’, thereby transforming the valueless into the precious. He is also fascinated with the validating function of the artist’s signature as a means of bestowing both aesthetic and commercial value on the artwork, rather like a brand or logo.

Turk’s carefully considered appropriations or borrowings critique the notion of originality and our perception of the historic avant-garde. ‘History of Art’ raises issues about the ‘myth’ of the artist, the iconic work of art, and the ‘originality’ of its authorship and its subsequent market value. Turk’s imaginative homages to other artists’ work are intended to provoke serious thought into deeper questions about identity and authenticity. They both reanimate and challenge the old avant-garde myths and re-instate the critiques of authorship proposed by Duchamp as well as artists who use appropriation, such as Sherrie Levine. He excavates the foundations of art history and questions how the appraisal, originality and commodity value of works of art affect their meaning.

Gavin Turk (b 1967) lives and work in London and has had an active international career spanning over 25 years. He first came to public attention in 1991 with his degree show from The Royal College of Art. His work is a series of assisted readymade objects that seem commonplace but are détourned or transformed in often unexpected ways. A prominent figure of his generation of artists, he has pioneered many forms of contemporary British sculpture, including the painted bronze, the waxwork, the recycled art-historical reference and the use of rubbish in art. Turk’s installations and sculptures also deal with issues of authorship, authenticity and identity. Concerned with the ‘myth’ of the artist and the ‘authorship’ of a work - as well as the more contemporary crises of class, tribes and national identity - Turk’s engagement with this modernist, avant-garde debate stretches back to the ready-mades of Marcel Duchamp. Turk’s work is held in important collections around the world and he has exhibited widely, with more than 50 solo shows and numerous group museum shows in America, Asia, Australasia and Europe.

Selected Recent Solo Exhibitions

2016 *Who What When Where How and Why* Newport Street Gallery London, *GT JMM* Gallery Knokke Belgium, *Petroleum* Baldwin Gallery USA

2015 *Wittgenstein’s Dream* Freud Museum London v *A Vision* Galerie Krinzinger Vienna Austria v *Yard* CCA Andratx Mallorca Spain, *Now* Somerset House London

2014 *We Are One* Roche Court Salisbury *A Ben Brown* Fine Arts Hong Kong, *Liqueur d’Expédition* Christian Larsen Stockholm Sweden, *Seven Billion...* The Bowes Museum County Durham (cat), *Pense Bete* LARM Galleri Copenhagen Denmark

2013 *L’Amour Fou* David Nolan Gallery New York USA, *The Years* Ben Brown Gallery London. *Vanacular* The Gervasuti Foundation 55th Venice Biennale Venice

MIMMO SCOGNAMIGLIO S.R.L.

SEDE LEGALE: VIALE GRAMSCI, 16 - 80122 NAPOLI ITALY

SEDE OPERATIVA: VIA GOITO, 7 - 20121 MILANO TEL. +390236526809

MILANO@MIMMOSCOGNAMIGLIO.COM - INFO@MIMMOSCOGNAMIGLIO.COM

P. IVA/COD. FISCALE 06964680638 - ISCRIZIONE REA NAPOLI 542939 - ISCRIZIONE REA MILANO 1980837 - CAPITALE SOCIALE € 10.200,00