

Patricia Low Contemporary is pleased to present Me As He, a solo exhibition of Gavin Turk.

In Turk's works from his Warhol, Elvis, Gavarra, and new Transit Disaster series, themes of authorship, authenticity, and celebrity are mere starting points for seduction and its deviant reconstruction. Surpassing appropriation, Turk's canvases are pure simulation – in every aspect from their making to Turk's artist-as-legend role play. In confronting the 20th century's pop culture legacy, the hangover nostalgia of newness, Turk hijacks 1960s future-thrust aesthetics as a template for contemporary anxiety: his retro chic effigies are a mirror of the global, the virtual, of cannibalistic capitalism – encapsulated in the hyper-enterprise form of the knock-off.

Turk's silkscreen prints – their compositions, iconic subjects, smudged newsprint style – aren't simply lifted from Warhol, they are the product of perpetual re-enactment of modern mythology, its entropic decadence, optimism, and heroics. His self-portraits play a double/triple/multiplicity game of substitution and homogenisation, as each star's lionised image becomes victim of economic privatisation, owned first by Hollywood's public, then Warhol, then Turk himself. They're a prophetic homage, delivered with punk arrogance and wit, of an exhausted golden age of originality and genius; its obsolete aura and allure, tantalising desire, vampirically distilled, compounded, and multiplied in Turk's generative mutable hybrids.

Styled on Warhol's car crashes, Turk's most recent Transit Disaster works exceed Warhol's transfixing horror of banality. Substituting Warhol's road side wrecks with the image of a torched transit van, Turk entwines ideas of social decline into Warhol's glamorous oeuvre. In Britain, white vans are the archetypical symbol of white working class men; pictured in flames, the implication is violence or vandalism. Drawing on stereotype, the repeated image underscores both a vanishing way of life and increasingly hostile social divide, updating Warhol's mass media format with 21st century consequences of capitalism and desensitisation.