

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS

4 November 2022 – 14 January 2023

GAVIN TURK

KEERZE

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS  
LONDON

**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Kerze**

2019

Oil on canvas

95.5 × 82.5 cm

37<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 32<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in

**KERZE** is the German word for candle, and also the title of a series of candle paintings by Gerhard Richter from the early 1980s. Perhaps Richter's most iconic and recognisable imagery, the *Kerze* works are sublimely elegant and somewhat haunting photorealist paintings of lit candles, singular and in groupings up to three, arranged in hazily lit interior spaces, the still lifes framed by the horizontal lines of tabletops and verticality of obscured curtains or windows in the background.

'I first came to notice this painting [*Kerze*, 1983] in 1988 when it was used on the album cover of *Daydream Nation* by Sonic Youth. It seemed to extend the mood of the music and got lodged in my subconscious; now more than 30 years later, this feeling of pathos has started to reappear in my work.'

**GAVIN TURK** works with objects connected to the psyche and signatures of the surreal: candles, pipes, eggs, doors, windows, clouds and smoke appear and reappear in his body of work. He consciously incorporates art historical references into his artwork, layering them mischievously like clues.

For the last year Gavin Turk has been painting his own series of *Kerzen*. In his iteration, the candles have recently been snuffed out, their curly trails of waxy smoke climbing up the canvas, illuminating the air as they travel, and now forever captured in the artist's frame.

'The candle is a metaphysical symbol, it is a clock, it is a guide, the lit flame is a burning energetic sprite; extinguishing it creates smoke, an afterlife, a holy ghost, a veil, a messenger.'

This body of work oscillates between a romantic or tragic dialogue with history and a puckish rhetoric questioning authenticity and identity. These *memento mori* works can be approached through a labyrinthine set of interpretations, nodding to the 'tubism' of Fernand Léger and graphic juxtapositions of Surrealist René Magritte, to the powerful symbolism evoked by Richter in depicting candles, a charged motif that has been referenced throughout art history. The question now building from the narrative of the paintings: *Why have the candles gone out?*

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**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Kerze v Kerze**  
2022  
Oil on canvas  
125.5 × 165.5 cm  
49 3/8 × 65 1/8 in

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**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Eine Kerze**  
2022  
Oil on canvas  
85 × 90 cm  
33½ × 35⅝ in

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**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Erlöschene Kerze**

2022

Oil on canvas

100 × 100 cm

39<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 39<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in

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**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Kerzen (Grün und Blau)**

2022

Oil on canvas

80 × 60 cm

31 1/2 × 23 5/8 in

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**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Kerzen (Grün und Grau)**

2022

Oil on canvas

100 × 60 cm

39<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 23<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in



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**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Kerze (Hellblau)**

2022

Oil on canvas

80 × 60 cm

31½ × 23⅝ in

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KERZE  
GAVIN TURK

It's out it's out  
When it was lit  
Light is out  
Just freshly out  
Out of time  
Out of here  
Gone up in smoke  
Missed the moment  
Missed the  
When it's out it's out  
When it's gone it's gone  
Who can bring back  
The missing light  
Turn smoke back  
Into fire  
Turn back time  
And the hour  
Make it all light again  
Kerze kerze kerze  
Against the changing times  
First there was light  
And it was good  
In ritual or in the dark  
Something to come home to  
Something to see on a hill  
In the night  
When the sun is gone  
And the moon's not out  
But now maybe the gods  
Have done it  
Or we are the gods  
That did it to ourselves  
Just did it within  
The motions  
Of the clock  
Where they are no shadows  
Just the kerzesmoke  
Where once there was flame  
Or the absent flame  
In the ghostly presence  
Flame is concentrated  
Smoke wavers and drifts  
Sometimes the fire wavers  
But throws its light  
Into the far corners  
All the smoke can do is be  
A ghost, a wisp, a regret  
Nostalgia, a wish undone,  
Sometimes even an arch  
Of floating spirits  
Where the flames die together  
In empty rooms

Just thinking of those  
Places  
Where the shadows  
Creep closer  
And the darkness  
Is given courage  
And the spaces that  
Had presences  
Shrink and retreat  
With the formless  
Dark advancing  
Not only in rooms  
But in squares  
In hearts  
In dreams  
In parks at noon  
In parliaments  
And the stock exchange  
In school rooms  
Where teachers are not free  
In the bedrooms  
Where the dark  
Comes between  
The warm bodies  
Turning cold  
In the streets  
That used to lead  
To the hill  
But leads now  
To the crossroads  
Where lamps have gone  
Out and the rats  
Grow brave  
In the undergrowth

Can the smoke  
Bring back the flame  
Does the flame survive  
In the twisting form  
Without a name  
Can that which is out  
Be not out  
Can the dark  
Extinguish itself  
By itself?  
Can the candle  
Light itself?  
Can the heart  
Feel its own beat  
Can the feet  
Smell the socks  
Are moths  
Drawn to candlesmoke  
Can the light  
Put out  
Shine still  
From that hill  
Or among the flowers  
On the windowsill?  
Can we return  
To the source  
Can the source return to us  
Can spilt sauce  
Be unspilled  
Can spooled words  
Be unspooled  
Can the candlesmoke  
Illuminate  
The cobwebs  
Can the darkness brighten  
The walls  
Where children  
Read in silence  
While the clock  
Marks the time  
In the dark?  
Tick tick tick tick  
It's out it's out  
Keep your voice down  
Don't shout  
No one can hear you  
When it's out

When the moon looms  
And shadows  
Advance across  
The land  
Tick tock tick tock  
Listen to the clock  
Ticking in the silent  
Candle  
On the mantelpiece  
But look,  
If you can see,  
There's history  
Expiring slowly  
Slowly dancing  
Writhing  
Casting elegant  
Shapes  
In the fading  
Dancing  
Candlesmoke  
But the end  
Of things  
Can be so beautiful  
If anyone can see them

That sullen  
Wisp  
Of charm ...

Keep it lit  
While the song  
Lasts ...

Missed the moment  
Missed the

KERZE  
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**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Kerze II**

2021

Oil on canvas

125.5 × 95.8 cm

49 3/8 × 37 3/4 in

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS  
LONDON

**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Meta-Kerze**  
2022  
Oil on canvas  
80 × 60 cm  
31½ × 23⅝ in

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LONDON

**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Kerzen (Schwarz und Weiß)**

2022

Oil on canvas

90 × 100 cm

35<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 39<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in

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**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Kerzenmalerei**

2022

Oil on canvas

120 × 100 cm

47¼ × 39⅜ in

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**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Kirchenkerze**  
2022  
Oil on canvas  
100 × 100 cm  
39<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 39<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS  
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**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Zwei rauchende Kerzen**

2022

Oil on canvas

80 × 60 cm

31½ × 23⅝ in



BEN BROWN FINE ARTS  
LONDON

**KERZE**  
GAVIN TURK



**Drei Kerzen**  
2022  
Oil on canvas  
100 × 120 cm  
39<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 47<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS  
LONDON

KERZE  
GAVIN TURK

**GAVIN TURK** is a British-born, internationally renowned artist. He has pioneered many forms of contemporary British sculpture, including the painted bronze, the waxwork, the recycled art-historical icon and the use of rubbish in art.

Turk's installations and sculptures deal with issues of authorship, authenticity and identity. Concerned with the 'myth' of the artist and ontological questioning, Turk's engagement with this modernist, avant-garde debate stretches back to the ready-mades of Marcel Duchamp.

In 1991, the Royal College of Art refused Turk a degree on the basis that his final show, *Cave*, consisted of a whitewashed studio space containing only a blue heritage plaque commemorating his presence: 'Gavin Turk worked here 1989-91'. Instantly gaining notoriety through this installation, Turk was spotted by Charles Saatchi and was included in several YBA exhibitions.

Gavin Turk's work is held within public and private collections worldwide, including but not limited to the TATE; Museum of Modern Art New York; Museum MMK Für Moderne Kunst; Musée Magritte Museum; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

In 2013 Prestel published Turk's first monograph, showcasing more than two decades of his work, and in 2014 Trolley Books published *This Is Not A Book About Gavin Turk* which playfully explores themes associated with the artist's work via thirty notable contributors.

## EDUCATION

1986–89 Chelsea School of Art

1989–91 Royal College of Art

## SELECTED PUBLIC SCULPTURES

- 2022 *Ariadne Wrapped*, painted bronze, Cambridge Station Square, Cambridge
- 2019 *L'Âge d'Or*, painted bronze, Fenix Movers Museum, Sculpture International Rotterdam
- 2018 *The Spirit of Painting*, painted aluminium, The Coronet Theatre, Kensington, London
- 2017 *Aris Mundi*, patinated bronze and stainless steel, Paddington Basin, London
- 2016 *L'Âge d'Or*, painted bronze, Here East, London
- 2013 *Ajar (Highbury)*, painted bronze, Highbury, London
- 2011 *Nail*, patinated bronze, One New Change, St Paul's Cathedral, London

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 *KERZE*, Ben Brown Fine Arts, London (cat.)  
*Cave Drawings*, Canning Town, London (cat.)  
*In Search of Ariadne*, The Heong Gallery, Cambridge (cat.)
- 2021 *Artist's Piss*, Bateman Street, London
- 2020 *Eggshibition*, Canning Town, London
- 2019 *En Oeuf*, Maruani Mercier, Brussels (cat.)  
*Letting Go*, Reflex Amsterdam (cat.)
- 2018 *White Van Man*, IvoryPress, Madrid  
*White Van Man*, Paul Stolper Gallery, London  
*Gavin Turk Works*, Maruani Mercier & Hadida, Paris, France  
*God is Gone*, Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna, Austria
- 2017 *History of Art*, Mimmo Scognamiglio artecontemporanea, Milan, Italy (cat.)  
*Give In*, Ben Brown Fine Arts, London
- 2016 *Who What When Where How and Why*, Newport Street Gallery, London (cat.)  
*GT*, Jablonka Maruani Mercier Gallery, Knokke, Belgium (cat.)  
*Petroleum*, Baldwin Gallery, USA  
*Water Biscuit*, The Box, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London
- 2015 *Wittgenstein's Dream*, Freud Museum, London  
*A Vision*, Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna, Austria  
*Yard*, CCA Andratx, Mallorca, Spain  
*The Mechanical Turk*, Metropole Hotel, Venice  
*Gav, Bruchium – Al Forno: Historical Bakery*, Venice  
*Now*, Somerset House, London
- 2014 *We Are One*, New Art Centre, Roche Court, Salisbury, UK (cat.)  
A, Ben Brown Fine Arts, Hong Kong  
*Liqueur d'Expédition*, Christian Larsen, Stockholm, Sweden  
*Seven Billion Two Hundred and One Million, Nine Hundred and Sixty Four Thousand And Two Hundred and Thirty-Eight*, The Bowes Museum, County Durham, UK (cat.)  
*Seven Billion Two Hundred and One Million, Nine Hundred and Sixty Four Thousand And Two Hundred and Thirty-Eight*, New Art Centre, Roche Court, Salisbury, UK  
*Vestige*, Foundation Frances, France  
*Pense Bête*, LARM Galleri, Copenhagen, Denmark

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KERZE  
GAVIN TURK

- 2013 *L'Amour Fou*, David Nolan Gallery, New York, USA  
*The Years*, Ben Brown Gallery, London (cat.)  
*GT*, The Monaco Project for the Arts, Ecole Supérieure d'Arts Plastique de la Ville de Monaco (cat.)  
*Vanacular*, The Gervasuti Foundation at the 55th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy
- 2012 *Transit Disaster*, Paul Stolper Gallery, London  
*Türk*, Galerist, Istanbul, Turkey  
*Gunslinger*, Patricia Low Contemporary, St. Moritz, Switzerland  
*Gavin & Turk*, Ben Brown Gallery, London (cat.)
- 2011 *Jack Shit!*, Aeroplastics, Brussels, Belgium  
*Before The World Was Round*, Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna, Austria  
*En Face Vienna*, Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna, Austria  
*Me As He*, Patricia Low Contemporary, Gstaad, Switzerland
- 2010 *Something Like This*, Park Ryu Sook Gallery, Seoul, Korea (cat.)  
*En Face*, Galerie Almine Rech, Paris, France  
*Les Bikes de Bois Rond*, Artconnexion, Lille, France  
*Les Bikes de Bois Rond*, Fleet: Art In The Haven Ports, UK  
*En Face*, CAC Malaga, Spain (cat.)
- 2009 *The Mirror Stage*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa  
*Turkey Foil*, Aurel Scheibler Gallery, Berlin, Germany  
*Gavin Turk Ltd*, Paul Stolper, London  
*Jazzz*, Sean Kelly Gallery, New York, New York, USA
- 2008 *Gavin Turk*, Aeroplastics Contemporary, Brussels, Belgium  
*Burnt Out*, Kunsthaus Baselland, Basel, Switzerland  
*Piss Off*, Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna, Austria
- 2007 *Me as Him*, Rifle-maker, London (cat.)  
*Negotiation of Purpose*, GEM Museum for Contemporary Art, The Hague, Netherlands  
*Negotiation of Purpose*, Magasin Centre National d'Art Contemporain, Grenoble, France
- 2006 *Waste Not Want Not*, Galleri Veggerby, Copenhagen, Denmark  
*Wanted*, The Suburban, Illinois, USA  
*The Font Project*, Fine Art Society, London (cat.)  
*Last Year in Eggenberg (The Paradise Show)*, Schloss Eggenberg, Graz, Austria
- 2005 *Ha ha ha!*, Galerie Almine Rech, Paris, France  
*White Elephant*, Sean Kelly Gallery, New York, New York, USA  
*Melange*, Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna, Austria
- 2004 *Gavin Turk Faces*, Edinburgh Print Makers, Edinburgh, Scotland  
*Faces: A Print Portfolio by Gavin Turk*, Badcocks, Cornwall, UK  
*The Golden Thread*, White Cube Gallery, London
- 2003 *Subsistence*, Galleri Veggerby, Copenhagen, Denmark  
*Et in Arcadia Eggo*, New Art Centre Sculpture Park & Gallery Roche Court, Salisbury, UK  
*Gavin Turk in the House*, Sherborne House, Dorset, UK (cat.)  
*Spare Change*, Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin, Germany
- 2002 *Gavin Turk Oeuvre*, Tate Britain Sculpture Court, London  
*Copper Jubilee*, The New Art Gallery, Walsall, UK (cat.)
- 2001 *The Che Guevara Story*, Foundry, London
- 2000 *More Stuff*, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland  
*Fig-1: 50 Projects in 50 Weeks*, Fig-1, London (cat.)
- 1999 *The Importance of Being Ernesto*, Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna, Austria
- 1998 *The Stuff Show*, South London Gallery, London
- 1997 *Gavin Turk Studio Show*, Charing Cross Road, London
- 1996 *Unoriginal Signature*, Habitat, Kings Road, London  
*British Art in Rome*, Galleria D'Arte De Crescenzo & Vesti, Rome, Italy
- 1995 *Turkish*, Aurel Scheibler, Cologne, Germany
- 1993 *Collected Works 1989–1993*, Jay Jopling, Denmark Street, London  
*A Night Out With Gavin Turk*, Victoria Public House, Bipasha Ghosh, London and Schiefer Haus, Cologne, Germany  
*A Marvellous Force of Nature*, White Cube, London
- 1992 *Signature*, Bipasha Ghosh / Jay Jopling, London

#### AWARDS

- 2010 Honorary Doctorate in Arts, University of East London  
2007 Charles Wollaston Award, Royal Academy of Arts  
2001 Jack Goldhill Sculpture Prize, Royal Academy of Arts

#### JURY PANELS

- 2018 Sculpture in the City, London  
2009 National Open Art Competition  
2004 John MoojSres Painting Prize  
2000 New Contemporaries

# BEN BROWN FINE ARTS

## LONDON

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