



## Gavin Turk

Gavin Turk is one of Britain's most important and influential contemporary artists. One of the original YBAs (Young British Artists) his work is included amongst the collection of Charles Saatchi. His final show at Royal College of Art has become the stuff of legends; it was comprised of only a simple Blue English Heritage Plaque, memorializing his own presence. As an artist Gavin Turk continually investigates what it means to be an artist and many of his works deal with issues of authorship, authenticity and originality. Turk has made his own version of works by Yves Klein, Piero Manzoni, Marcel Broodthaers, René Magritte and Andy Warhol in pieces that both disguise the 'real' artist as well as reveal his horizon of influence. Concerned with the 'myth' of the artist and the 'authorship' of a work, Turk's engagement with this modernist, avant-garde debate stretches back to the ready-mades of Marcel Duchamp.

In the early 1990s, Turk made a number of works based on his own signature that comment on the value that the artist's name can confer onto a work. He has also made a number of photographic and sculptural self-portraits that often

involve some degree of disguise such as his best-known sculpture 'Pop' (1993), a waxwork of Gavin Turk as Sid Vicious in the stance of Warhol's Elvis Presley or 'Che' (1999) where he posed as the dead revolutionary Che Guevara. Turk says of his work, "A common misperception of me is that the work that I make is made primarily for some sort of self-aggrandisement, as an arrogant statement. I try to make work that is about a questioning of that process rather than just simply an acknowledgement of it."

Gavin Turk's artistic legacy has been solidified by the inclusion of his work in the collections of London's Tate Modern and V&A Museum. He has had an extraordinarily high octane career with international exhibitions too numerous to list. Significant group exhibitions include 'Dark Matter', White Cube gallery, London (2006), 'Remix: Contemporary Art and Pop', Tate Liverpool (2002), 'Century City', Tate Modern, London (2001), 'Sensation' Royal Academy of Arts, London (1997).