

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS

4 November 2022 – 14 January 2023

GAVIN TURK

KEPRZE

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS
LONDON

KERZE
GAVIN TURK



Kerze

2019

Oil on canvas

95.5 × 82.5 cm

37⁵/₈ × 32¹/₄ 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 He consciously incorporates art historical references into his artwork, layering them mischievously like clues.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
33 1/2 × 35 5/8 in

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KERZE
GAVIN TURK



Erloschene Kerze

2022

Oil on canvas

100 × 100 cm

39 3/8 × 39 3/8 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 × 80 cm

39 ³/₈ × 31 ¹/₂ 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 tock tick tock
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

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LONDON

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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KERZE
GAVIN TURK



Kerzen (Schwarz und Weiß)

2022

Oil on canvas

90 × 100 cm

35 ³/₈ × 39 ³/₈ in

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KERZE
GAVIN TURK



Kerzenmalerei
2022
Oil on canvas
120 × 100 cm
47 1/4 × 39 3/8 in

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KERZE
GAVIN TURK



Kirchenkerze
2022
Oil on canvas
100 × 100 cm
39 3/8 × 39 3/8 in

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KERZE
GAVIN TURK



Zwei rauchende Kerzen

2022

Oil on canvas

80 × 60 cm

31½ × 23⅝ in

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KERZE
GAVIN TURK



Drei Kerzen
2022
Oil on canvas
100 × 120 cm
39 3/8 × 47 1/4 in

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KERZE
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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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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, Kunsthau Baselland, Basel, Switzerland
Piss Off, Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna, Austria

2007 *Me as Him*, Riflemaker, London (cat.)
Negotiation of Purpose, GEM Museum for Contemporary Art, The Hague, Netherlands
Negotiation of Purpose, Magasin Centre National d'Art Contemporian, 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 Contemporian, 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

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