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PRESS RELEASE:

Gavin Turk exhibition opens at Newport Street Gallery today

Newport Street Gallery is pleased to present 'Who What When Where How and Why', a solo exhibition of work by renowned British artist Gavin Turk, which opens to the public today, Wednesday 23rd November 2016.

'Who What When Where How and Why' (23rd November – 19th March 2017) spans twenty-six years of the artist's career and features over seventy works. The exhibition – which includes new and previously unexhibited work – is on display throughout Newport Street's six gallery spaces. The gallery was recently awarded the prestigious RIBA Stirling Prize for best new building of 2016.

Since emerging onto the London art scene in the early 90s, Turk has dedicated much of his career to exploring notions of authorship, identity and value. Engaging in the central modernist debate initiated by Marcel Duchamp, Turk's varied work appropriates both familiar everyday objects and instantly recognisable artworks by towering figures of twentieth-century art such as Andy Warhol, Jackson Pollock and Giorgio de Chirico.

This survey – the first major UK exhibition of the artist's work to be presented since 2002 – features the iconic *Cave*, a commemorative blue plaque installation Turk exhibited in his 1991 Royal College of Art degree show. A series of 'Signature' works, in which Turk uses his own name as a form of ready-made in order to examine ideas surrounding origin and authenticity, are also included. The signature of the artist, traditionally the valued hallmark of authority and provenance, recurs throughout 'Who What When Where How and Why', emerging from the canvases of Turk's Pollock paintings; the abstract expressionist artist's paint splatters exchanged for innumerable 'Gavin Turk' signatures.

Turk's deployment of his own image is similarly central to his oeuvre. *Identity Crisis* (1994), first shown in the Saatchi Gallery's 'Young British Artist' exhibition in 1995, imagines a *Hello!* magazine cover featuring the artist with his family. *Pop* (1993), meanwhile, sees a life-sized waxwork of Turk inhabiting the pose of Warhol's *Elvis* in the guise of English punk musician Sid Vicious. This complex study of celebrity icons and the commodification of culture was included in the Royal Academy's seminal 'Sensation' show in 1997.

Layers of art historical allusion and 'recycled' references inform Turk's work elsewhere, as in his interpretations of Warhol's 'Elvis' and 'Disaster' print series, and with *Pipe* (1991), a liquorice version of the traditionally-male smoking instrument – cast in bronze – that plays on

Magritte's famous *The Treachery of Images* (1929), whilst simultaneously referencing van Gogh. Influenced by artists such as Michelangelo Pistoletto, Turk's skillful manipulation of materials is evident throughout the show, for example in his exquisitely-cast bronze rubbish bags, and with the major sculptural work *Ariadne* (2006–2014). This large-scale bronze playfully casts the classical female figure, reimagined in Giorgio de Chirico's surreal paintings, as if she is made of crudely carved polystyrene, further debunking the fetishized art historical form.

Hirst first saw Turk's work – which he has been acquiring since 1998 – at his Royal College degree show in 1991.

Ahead of the exhibition, Turk said, "It is a massive compliment to have Damien as an artist, collect my work on this scale, with such intelligence and then show it to the public in this beautiful new gallery."

Hirst stated, "I started collecting Gavin's work twenty years ago. He's an incredibly powerful artist, his work is about language and the spaces between things – about identity and being somebody and nobody, he plays with our preconceptions of what's there and not there, of what art is and how it functions. He's had a major impact on British art so it's great to be able to show such an extensive collection of his work at Newport Street."

Notes to editors

Gavin Turk

Gavin Turk (b. 1967) is a British born, international artist. His work has been exhibited in over 50 solo shows internationally, as well as in numerous group exhibitions at museums worldwide, including the Morgan Library (New York), Tate Modern (London) and the Royal Academy of Art (London).

Turk was the recipient of the Royal Academy of Art's Charles Wollaston Award in 2007 and the Jack Goldhill Award for Sculpture in 2001. In 2010 he received an Honorary Doctorate in Arts from the University of East London.

Newport Street Gallery

Newport Street Gallery is the realisation of Hirst's long-term ambition to share his extensive collection of art – which includes over 3,000 works – with the public. Entry to all exhibitions is free.

Newport Street Gallery opened in Vauxhall, south London, in October 2015 and was recently awarded the prestigious RIBA Stirling Prize for Architecture for the UK's best new building.

Spanning five buildings, the gallery presents solo or group exhibitions of work drawn from Damien Hirst's extensive art collection, which he has been building since the late 1980s. Hirst's interest in curating dates back to the beginning of his artistic career and his organisation of the groundbreaking 'Freeze' exhibition in south London in 1988.

On the opening of the gallery, Hirst said: "I've always loved art and art deserves to be shown in great spaces, so I've always dreamed of having my own gallery where I can exhibit work

by the artists I love. I believe art should be experienced by as many people as possible and I've felt guilty owning work that is stored away in boxes where no one can see it, so having a space where I can put on shows from the collection is a dream come true."

Newport Street Gallery has produced a short film, available to watch on the gallery website, in which Gavin Turk discusses this new exhibition with poet and novelist Ben Okri.

For media enquiries and images please contact:

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info@newportstreetgallery.com

Newport Street Gallery
Newport Street
London
SE11 6AJ

Opening times:

Tuesday – Sunday

10am – 6pm

Closed Monday

Free entry

Open on Bank Holidays.

Please see website for details:

www.newportstreetgallery.com

<http://www.gavinturk.com>

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