



**From Bohemia to Britpop:
The London Artworld from
Francis Bacon to Damien Hirst**

BLIMEY!

that nobody can fathom. Brad Lochore does pale grey and white paintings of shadows, with the shadows copied from images that he generates on a computer screen. Carina Weidel does photos of frozen chickens. And Glenn Brown does photo-realist copies of reproductions of other artist's paintings, like Salvador Dali, de Kooning and Frank Auerbach. And he does copies, sometimes very big, of science fiction illustrations, like floating asteroid cities or flying glaciers.

Not passé

Glenn Brown is one of the few artists who can still do Appropriation, which was a movement of the 80s, without it seeming *passé*. Appropriation was literally appropriating, that is, copying, other artists' images, as opposed to merely being influenced by them. It was about the death of the author and it seemed profound at first but then it was out.

Van Gogh and Rembrandt

One thing Glenn Brown does quite successfully is give new titles to his copies of paintings by Auerbach. These titles subtly relocate the Auerbach image in a world of 1950s science fiction horror imagery, which is a world of kitsch that Auerbach's imagery really does sometimes seem to inadvertently relate to. A world of nuclear holocaust and human beings turned into mutants. Whereas in the official Auerbach discourse, the Auerbach world is a world pretty much continuous with the world of van Gogh and Rembrandt and timeless values.



Glenn Brown *We'll Drink Through It All This The Modern Age* 1993

PheW

What happens when you see the Auerbach translated into a Glenn Brown, when all the huge rough intractable impasto of the furiously rendered Auerbach image is re-rendered as a cool, hyper-smooth photo-realist copy, with all the glistening highlights of Auerbach's original surface carefully copied using tiny brushes, and the title changed from, say, *Portrait of J.Y.M.*, to, say, *The Day The World Turned Auerbach*, is that you feel a great sense of relief.



Glenn Brown

Phew, the unconscious thinks, I'm glad I don't have to go around feeling slightly resentful about the official Auerbach discourse any more. And so, in a spooky way, Glenn Brown provides a health aid, like an antihistamine drug, that decongests the system. So the next time you see a real Auerbach you can think, Hmm, that's nice, without sneezing.

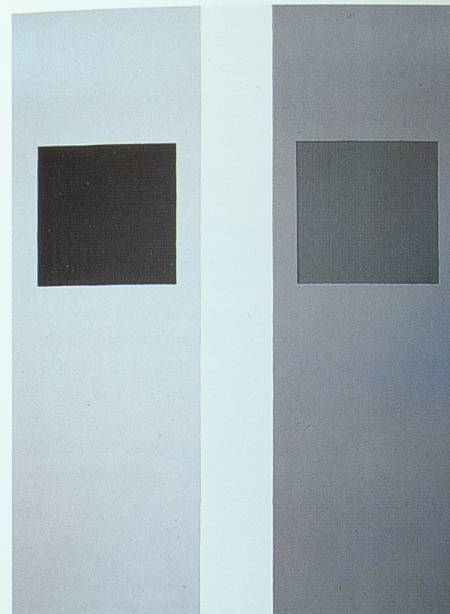
Gary Hume

Gary Hume is another artist of now, who was on the Goldsmiths BA, rather than the MA. In fact most of the Goldsmiths stars were on the BA rather than the MA, except for Mark Wallinger.

Mark Wallinger does multi-media art about the English class system, often using the world of race horning as a metaphor. He is one of the few stars of now who does art about class issues. But you can't always tell that's what they are and that's good because otherwise it would be boring.

Gary Hume has always made a big effort to live down the reputation that painters have of being dull, which is an idea that goes back to Marcel Duchamp, who said, *Bête comme un peintre!* He had noticed that after a certain point the revolutionariness of, say, Picasso or Matisse or Braque, just became institutionalized and was more about bourgeois loveliness than revolutionariness. So he cleverly invented readymades, like his real urinal called *Fountain*. And that started off the idea we now have quite strongly, of modern art being divided into two main streams. One main stream is Expressionism, which always has a threat of creeping loveliness. The other one is Conceptualism, which has a threat of dryness and boredom.

At first Gary Hume painted abstracts that looked like hospital doors. They were parodies of Minimal art, but with the faint outlines of hospital doors looming through the apparently blank off-white surfaces. Then he had a crisis and came out the other side doing paintings in bright colours of lots of things from pop culture, using pictures from magazines. Teddy bears, hands and feet, big eyes, flowers, silhouette people, pictures of popular media stars like Tony Blackburn or Patsy Kensit. He found unexpected ways of making these images. Like making the face of Tony Blackburn look a bit like a four-leaf clover. And now he's the top painter of the Young British artists.



Gary Hume *More Fucking Values* 1991



Gary Hume *Kate* 1996