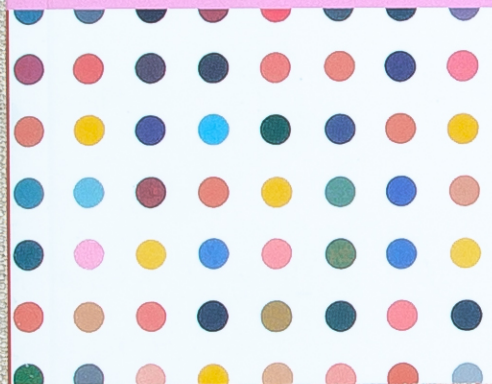


Virginia Button

THE TURNER PRIZE

Revised Edition





Glenn Brown
1966 Born in Hexham
1984–5 Norwich
School of Art
1985–8 Bath College of
Higher Education
1990–2 Goldsmiths'
College, London

expectations is at the core of Tillmans's work, and integral to this is the way he presents his images. They exist as posters and postcards, in magazines and artists' books, and he views each as an equally valid means of communicating his view. In a gallery installation, he defies the predictable, linear presentation of standard formats that characterises photography displays, and instead brings together an array of images, pinning or taping them to the wall in a rich variety of combinations. He mixes different types and surfaces – small C-type prints, postcards, magazine pages, and large inkjet prints – preferring the purity of the unframed image. He also combines old images and new, often rediscovering photographs taken years earlier. This seemingly informal, ad-hoc presentation is again highly deceptive, for each juxtaposition is rigorously thought through. The connections and networks Tillmans constructs with each collage across a gallery wall summon different narratives and meanings, reflecting his own trains of thought and inviting the viewer to project their own.

That the same images exist in multiple formats and contexts ensures there can be no one way of reading them: Tillmans's work is continually changing. This diversity also suggests that he is concerned less with the material or medium used, and more with the actuality of the image he has created. He is an artist first and foremost, he uses photography to convey his view of contemporary life, but ultimately, he wants us to peel away this framework to feel the purity of direct experience.

Glenn Brown

Glenn Brown deftly and thoughtfully mixes fine art with popular culture, reanimating the historical within the contemporary to create paintings and sculptures of baffling complexity.

Head of JYM (1973), a portrait by Frank Auerbach, first caught Brown's attention in 1991 and marked a turning point for the artist. Brown made a work based on it, entitled *Atom Age Vampire*, in which he captured Auerbach's expressive impasto in an ingenious *trompe-l'oeil* manner: the effect was

immaculately smooth. The glossy finish obliterated Auerbach's brushwork so that the painting resembled a photograph, which was in fact the source from which Brown had worked.

Brown's lengthy process of working from reproductions reflects how we often experience an artwork second-hand, through photography. He has adapted the styles, palette and imagery of such varied artists as Georg Baselitz, Jean-Honoré Fragonard and Salvador Dalí. But for Brown, the original image is merely the point of departure. He adds further twists by selecting reproductions that are not always faithful to the original in colour or tone, and by distorting, manipulating, rotating and cropping the image as he desires. 'I re-enliven it into something completely different. Something that makes personal allusions to my own life.'

In any one painting, centuries may collide. This is demonstrated by *The Marquess of Breadalbane* (2000), for example, one of the works in the series of heads based on that original Auerbach portrait. The figure is set against an empty sky, within an oval. Both features situate the work firmly in the tradition of historic portraiture. The colour scheme adds another layer of history, having been inspired by Edwin Landseer's *The Monarch of the Glen*, dating from 1851 (a painting originally commissioned by the Marquess of Breadalbane, hence the title).

In *The Tragic Conversion of Salvador Dalí (after John Martin)* (1998), Brown brings together his interest in the imaginative distortions of Surrealist imagery and the fantastical representations found in science-fiction illustrations. He inverts John Martin's nineteenth-century vision of the apocalypse, transplanting a futuristic city onto the horizon. The act of placing an airbrushed fantasy within a vast history painting is more than a little ironic, although it is difficult to identify whether the irony is directed at the source from popular culture or at the high-art style in which it is reconfigured. Characteristically, the title of the painting adds another layer of meaning, with its reference to Dalí and his conversion to Catholicism, which for Brown signalled the demise of his painting.

Glenn Brown
The Marquess of Breadalbane 2000



Glenn Brown
The Tragic Conversion of Salvador Dalí (after John Martin) 1998