Turk scoops art prize with candle carved from a broom

By Jonathan Brown

Gavin Turk has come a long

awarded one of the art Hockney, Marc Quinn and cians Gary Hume, Fiona world's most prestigious Jake and Dinos Chapman. Rae and Basil Beattie. They prizes yesterday.

way since being denied his rapher won the £25,000 the shape of an extinguished the themes of light by prodegree by the Royal College Charles Wollaston Award for candle, was praised for both fessional and amateur of Art. A leading light of the his work Dumb Candle after its simplicity and subtlety. artists presented at the ex-Young British Artist move- it was singled out by judges The 15cm sculpture brought hibition, a landmark of the ment, a Royal Academician as the most distinguished comparisons with Magritte artistic summer season. and one of the most col- work in the Royal Academy and Duchamp. It was selectable and critically ac- Summer Exhibition. Previ-

The sculptor and photog-broom handle carved into 1,161 works created under lected from a shortlist of six believed the work was too claimed in his field, he was ous winners include David including fellow Academi- small to win. "Financially,

Dumb Candle, a sawn-off were whittled down from

Turk said he had initially



Gavin Turk with Dumb Candle, made out of a broom handle HELEN ATKINSON

this is like winning the Turner Prize. But what makes it even better is that it is open to the public so it is one of the more democratic exhibitions that takes place each year."

With works by YBAs now commanding vast sums at auction - a steel cabinet by contemporary Damien Hirst sold for more than £9m at auction in London on Thursday night -Turk said the interest gen- itself has no value." erated was helping bring art to new audiences.

'It is a work with subtle undertones that pick up on moments'

culate around. Money in

chaired the judging panel, "There has always been said: "Dumb Candle is an as a down and out. a discrepancy between art imaginative work with suband money. But if huge tle undertones that pick up ed controversy with a seprice tags can get people on several significant art ries of works dedicated to who might not otherwise historical moments. The Che Guevara, including one have looked at an artwork simple candle form is one in which he posed as a dead

necessary. Art is about dis- headlines since his RSA one critic as a "work of tran-

1991, which featured a single blue English Heritage plaque with the inscription "Borough of Kensington Gavin Turk Sculptor Worked Here 1989-1991".

He soon gained a reputation, exhibiting at the ultratrendy White Cube galery art historical and was collected by Charles Saatchi. He contributed Pop, a waxwork of himself dressed as Sid Vicious as part of the notorious 1997 Sensation exhibi-Bill Woodrow, who tion to which he turned up to the private view dressed

In later years, he courtor thought about it then it of the oldest symbols of life." waxwork of the celebrated is a case of by any means Turk has been in the revolutionary, described by cussion and ideas that cir- masters degree show in scendent stupidity".



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