

Press release  
Rotterdam, Monday June 21, 2021



## **FENIX marks World Refugee Day with unveiling of *L'Âge d'Or* Bronze door by Gavin Turk becomes part of Rotterdam's sculpture collection**

**Yesterday afternoon, on World Refugee Day, Ahmed Aboutaleb, mayor of Rotterdam, unveiled *L'Âge d'Or* (2019) by Young British Artist Gavin Turk. *L'Âge d'Or* is an open door over 3.5 metres tall made of painted bronze, which offers a view of the river Maas and a glimpse over the North Sea to the Atlantic and beyond. The sculpture thus refers to the three million people or more who departed from the port of Rotterdam in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, destined for the other side of the world. This will be the central theme at FENIX, which is currently being developed nearby. *L'Âge d'Or* is the first work of art that FENIX presents from its collection. By giving it on long-term loan to Rotterdam City Council's international sculpture collection it is on view for everyone.**

Anne Kremers, director of FENIX: *'Lost Luggage Depot (2001)* by Jeff Wall has been joined on *Wilhelminapier* by another sculpture. These two works together refer to the unique history of this part of the port of Rotterdam. Together with our partners CBK R'dam and the city council, we chose this location because here *L'Âge d'Or* symbolises hope, dreams and opportunity, a door that is always open. I hope that people will step through the door and imagine their own future.'

Artist Gavin Turk: *'I am really excited and looking forward about my work being presented at the end of the pier. The door might function there as a threshold, from one place to another. When we travel through a door, we go through perceptive barriers, we go through to the other side. It is a place that stimulates, or suggests a space of imagination.'*

Gavin Turk talks about *L'Âge d'Or* in this [video](#).

### **Gavin Turk**

Along with Tracey Emin, Damien Hirst and others Gavin Turk (b. 1967) is considered to be one of the Young British Artists. He elevates the commonplace to the level of art, playing with the context of the objects he presents. The oversized door now on display in Rotterdam is a good example of this. *L'Âge d'Or (Green&Red)* (2019) was acquired in October 2020 at the Frieze Sculpture art fair in London. This is the sixth door in a series of eight, each of which is a different colour and different shape and has a different handle. The door recalls the painting *La Victoire* (1939) by Magritte, which shows an open door in a landscape. The title *L'Âge d'Or* refers to the surrealist film of the same name by Luis Bunuel. Turk often refers to art history when exploring issues of authenticity, identity and myth. His cast bronze waste bin *Trash* (2007), for example, is an ode to Marcel Duchamp, who elevated found objects like a urinal to the status of art. Gavin Turk's work is collected and exhibited all over the world.

### **Art walks**

The installation of the statue is a collaboration between Rotterdam City Council, CBK Rotterdam, BKOR/SIR and FENIX. This summer BKOR and SIR will launch a new street art map, with a walking route leading from Central

Station to Wilhelminapier, part of a series of walks showcasing Rotterdam's art collection, and featuring unique works of art in public spaces, including *The Plait* by Kalliopi Lemos, which was recently installed on the sculpture terrace on Westersingel. *L'Âge d'Or* is the final stop on the walk. For more information go to: [cbkrotterdam.nl/kunstwandelen](https://cbkrotterdam.nl/kunstwandelen).

**Note for editors/not for publication:**

High-resolution images of *L'Âge d'Or* and the unveiling ceremony can be downloaded here: <https://we.tl/t-KxIMYna38Q>

For other information, contact Willemijn van Drunen: [wvdrunen@fenix.nl](mailto:wvdrunen@fenix.nl) / +31 (0)6 1583 0703

**About FENIX**

FENIX is located at the Fenix II Warehouse in Katendrecht, Rotterdam. The historic warehouse is currently being restored, and will open to the public in a few years' time. Not far from this former storage depot and transshipment facility, millions of people boarded passenger ships that would take them to a new life. FENIX will explore those movements and all the emotions associated with them. Love, hope and a sense of adventure still inspire people all over the world to pack their bags and travel to new places. FENIX is currently collecting international contemporary and older art, photographs and historical objects that bring these stories and their links to Rotterdam to life. FENIX is an initiative of the Droom en Daad Foundation.

[www.fenix.nl](http://www.fenix.nl)

