

FANTICH & YOUNG

Mariana Fantich, born and raised in the Ukraine, is an artist and digital media specialist and Dominic Young is an English musician and artist. Since 2008, they have collaborated under the name Fantich & Young and are currently based in London's East End. The duo juxtaposes and manipulates symbolic ready-made objects—including Saville Row suits and Jimmy Choo shoes—in order to parallel both natural and social evolution, calling into question the theory of natural selection with nods to ceremonial ritual and the supernatural—a concept they term Darwinian Voodoo.

Their Apex Predator project, an outgrowth of Darwinian Voodoo, was inspired by the 2008 financial crisis. Luxury consumer goods augmented with ritualistic items such as teeth, bones, and hair represent the banking community and its escape from criminal prosecution. Darwin's notion of "survival of the fittest" is called into question when society is faced with banks whose criminal actions went unpunished. The financiers thus become the titular Apex Predator—topping the food chain, facing no real threat, and possessing perhaps a touch of the supernatural.

Fantich & Young's works critique the tenets of Social Darwinism, challenging the idea of human supremacy by emphasizing our animalistic natures. As an alternative, they advocate for a greater focus on collaboration rather than competition. Despite the highly academic theories underpinning their work, however, the pair encourage viewers to derive their own meanings, citing Duchamp's statement that the viewer adds an important dimension to the creative act. The strong public reaction to Apex Predator, and the plethora of interpretations that resulted, showcases Fantich & Young's ability to effectively merge the creative disciplines of fine art, design, and fashion.

Website: www.fantichandyoung.co.uk