

Gavin Turk On my radar

On my radar: Gavin Turk's cultural highlights

The British artist on east London's Institute of Light cinema, Michael Clark's Bowie tribute and Jarvis Cocker's flair for radio

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Sunday 13 November 2016 10.00 GMT



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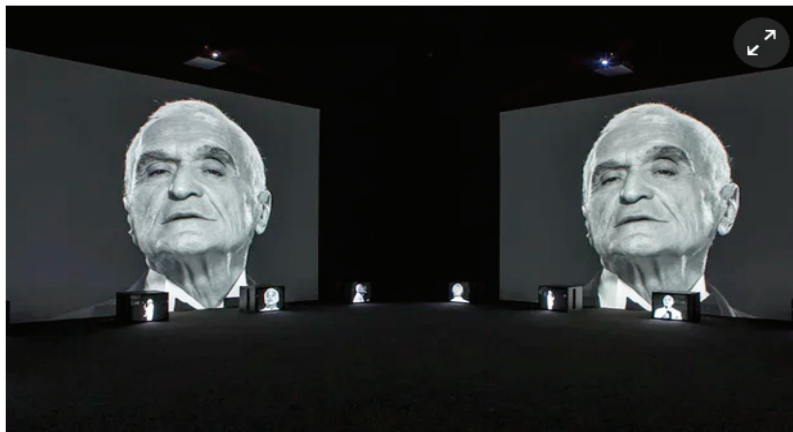


Gavin Turk: 'Jarvis Cocker makes really, really good radio'. Photograph: Richard Young/Rex/Shutterstock

Artist Gavin Turk, 49, found fame in the 1990s as a key figure in the [Young British Artist \(YBA\)](#) movement. Born in 1967 and raised in Surrey, he studied at the Royal College of Art but was refused his postgraduate degree because his final show, *Cave*, comprised a whitewashed studio featuring a single blue heritage plaque that read: "Gavin Turk, sculptor, worked here 1989-1991." This brought him to the attention of influential collectors including Charles Saatchi. He has since won international acclaim for his sculptures and installations exploring authenticity and the myth of the artist. *Pop*, a [life-size waxwork of himself as Sid Vicious](#), is a case in point. Fellow YBA Damien Hirst began acquiring Turk's work in 1998 and will present *Who What When Where How and Why*, Turk's first solo exhibition since 2002, at his [Newport Street Gallery](#), London SE11, from 23 November to 19 March 2017.

1 | Art

[The Infinite Mix at The Store, London WC2](#)



'The video flashes from one screen on to the next... It's exciting': Ugo Rodinone's Infinite Mix multiscreen installation. Photograph: Victor Frankowski



I'm not sure I fully understood or fully identified with all of the things I saw in this [video installation show](#) staged by the Hayward Gallery in a temporary space, but I liked the idea of it. It's a strange collage of different artists making quite specific works - it was a bit like flicking through YouTube. You walk around a building which is split up into different floors and different areas. There's an amazing black and white multiscreen piece by [Ugo Rondinone](#) - a film of a beat poet, John Giorno, reading one of his poems, dressed in a tuxedo. The video flashes from one screen on to the next, the tuxedo flicking backward and forward, as the poem is delivered. It's exciting. There's also a piece by [Jeremy Deller](#) that's quite like a pop video. I went to the show at an interesting time to see art, too, after dark. The venue was hosting the after-party for the launch of [David Shrigley's Really Good sculpture](#), his [big thumb on the fourth plinth](#) in Trafalgar Square. I thought the thumb was fun but I was slightly distracted by the pop-up shop selling *Really Good* merchandise right next to it. The piece is such a large, stand-alone, bombastic joke and it seemed slightly compromised by the strange little shop.

2 | Dance

[To a simple, rock'n'roll... song](#), Barbican, London EC2



📷 A scene from [To a simple, rock'n'roll... song](#) by the Michael Clark Company. Photograph: Tristram Kenton for the Guardian



I was bowled over by [Michael Clark's new show](#). It was gorgeous and the Bowie tribute breathed a new energy, a new dynamic into *Blackstar*. Then, afterwards, I wondered whether I liked it because it seemed familiar - I'm a fan and it was good old-fashioned Michael Clark. When I looked around the audience and saw lots of people from the 90s, I found myself thinking, "Where's the new audience?", "Where's the new dancing?" But maybe that's not Michael's job. When I would first go to his work it seemed to be really avant garde and now it seems almost establishment. That's an accusation that's levelled at lots of the artists that came out in the 90s - Tracey Emin or whoever - "Oh, they're just art establishment now, they're not really out-there any more".

3 | Venue

[The Institute of Light](#), London E8



📍 'A place where people can hang out and go for a drink or see a film': the Institute of Light in Hackney. Photograph: www.the-institute-of-light.com



This is a very bijou cinema with a bar and a restaurant in an archway round the corner from my house in east London. I think the idea behind it was, if you could get a cheap railway arch, what could you do with it? You could set up a place where people can hang out and go for a drink or food or see a film. They've also got a big record collection. It's all very local and casual somehow. I just went to a Halloween event there where they had all sorts of spooky art films and archive footage playing on a loop. There was [Loie Fuller's *Serpentine Dance*](#), from 1897, in which she's wearing a dress that changes colour and moves up and down, almost like a flower or a bird. It's quite hallucinogenic. Then there was [The Cabinet of Dr Caligari](#) CORR, bits of [Nosferatu](#), stuff like that. The venue has bank seating with aeroplane chairs and sofas and things. You could sit in the cinema or there was a party going on next door.

4 | Theatre

[Paper Music by William Kentridge](#), the Print Room, London W11



📍 'It pushed the boundaries of both theatre and art': a still from William Kentridge's Paper Music film cycle. Photograph: www.the-print-room.org



The Print Room stages small-scale theatre performances at the Coronet theatre in Notting Hill. It holds a very small audience, so you feel like you're part of the action. I've seen a few things there. This [show by the artist William Kentridge](#) tied in with his [exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery](#). Kentridge himself actually got out of his seat at one point and did a reading but otherwise there were two singers on stage, a pianist and an animated film. It pushed the boundaries of both theatre and art at the same time. Kentridge's work is generally very theatrical anyway, and I think some of that can get lost in an art gallery.

5 | TV/Streaming

[HyperNormalisation on BBC iPlayer](#)



📺 'I like how he shows parallel histories': HyperNormalisation by Adam Curtis. Photograph: Courtesy of Adam Curtis



I tried to get through [Adam Curtis's HyperNormalisation](#) in one sitting. I really liked his [Bitter Lake documentary](#), I enjoyed his ability to join up bits of cultural history happening in different parts of the planet, and how they affect one another. It's all very clever. *HyperNormalisation* does that too, but it's nearly three hours long and quite heavy. I got slightly bugged that he kept talking about the problem of oversimplification but he was also possibly suffering from oversimplification. But I'll go back to it. I like how he shows parallel histories and asks you to look at your own historical compass and readdress it.

6 | Radio

Jarvis Cocker's Sunday Service on BBC 6 Music



📷 'I do think he has a great talent for making radio': Jarvis Cocker. Photograph: Agencia EFE/Rex



Yes, we're friends, and yes, I've been on his show, but I do think Jarvis has a great talent for making radio. He gets an amazing range of people on as guests, people from very different walks of life. The one that comes to mind is Richard Hines, the brother of [Barry](#), whose experiences with kestrels inspired Barry's book *A Kestrel for a Knave*. The interview explored the idea of northern identity; it brought back something from Jarvis's past and, in a way, our shared cultural past. I'm incredibly impressed that he has kept going with the show because it's not easy to keep finding content every week and it's not really "pop starry" stuff. It's just about him following his nose, and it makes for really, really good radio.

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