



## MEET THE ARTIST *Gavin Turk*

The former YBA artist talks to **Eddy Frankel** ahead of his book launch and show

**With a new monograph out this week celebrating two decades of your work, people are starting to use words like 'iconic' when describing you. How does that feel?**

'I feel strangely cheated. Obviously I'm flattered, but I always thought that my work was about being critical of the process of iconisation and that I was iconoclastic in as much as I subvert icons. So it seems a little wrong to have this thrown at me, and I'm not sure I'm worthy!'

**It's been 20 years since the famous blue plaque piece that caused you to fail your degree but made your name.**

'Yeah, it was '91. There was an article about the Young British Artists that called me "Old Turk", but obviously there are no YBAs now, they're all old and floundering. I've always been looking back in a way. When I make a piece, I often take something art-historical and distress it, as if I've added an extra 600 years to it. There's a time twist that interests me.'

**You've recently completed some big public sculptures. Does that signify mainstream acceptance?**

'I don't know. When I got the job for "Nail" in 2011 [a giant, rusty sculpture outside One New Change] I was a wild card. Acceptance isn't straightforward, it comes bit by bit and I think that's good. The job of the artist is to be a provocateur and the moment that disappears then you've lost something quite important.'

**Do you think your work has a strong link to London?**

'Yeah, and I think that's to do with my belief in the cultural framing that art finds itself in – that art from a certain culture has to be understood through that culture. There's an inherent London-ness to my work, whether that's explicit or not.'

**Is there any art in London that you find particularly inspiring?**

'I was asked to put in a submission for the Fourth Plinth and it didn't even get to the shortlist, but I still think it's a great idea [laughs]. I wanted to reconstruct the Natural History Museum's blue whale sculpture. It was made before they understood what a whale looked like. It's superb and surreal, and it really makes you think about your humanness.'

**'Gavin Turk', published by Prestel, £45, is out on Thu Apr 25. His new show, 'Gavin Turk: The Years', is at**



**Ben Brown Fine Arts, Fri Apr 26 ▶ Jun 14. On May 17, Turk will be in discussion with Iain Sinclair and Time Out's Ossian Ward at the V&A.**

## Alan Kane: Punk Shop

★★★

**Ancient & Modern. ▶ May 18.**

There are wigs by the door and turds on the floor. Plastic flies, stink bombs and a 'Shit in a Can' fill display cases like prized museum exhibits while, against the walls, gravestones sport Elvis-style sunglasses or a steaming poo ('Death is Shit', pictured). Alan Kane's show is called 'Punk Shop', partly in homage to Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren's 'Seditionaries' boutique on the King's Road. The vibe, though, is pure joke shop.

If you think contemporary art is one big gag, gorged on novelties and pranks, then this show could be your puerile mini-mart of proof. Yet, anyone who knows Kane's work, particularly his 'Folk Archive' created with Jeremy Deller, will recognise the bawdy



atmosphere of 'Punk Shop' as part of a more complex exploration of high and low culture and the nebulous boundaries between the two.

Therein lies a problem, for what 'Punk Shop' recalls on so many levels is upscale, saleable art by Paul McCarthy or Isa Genzken. Art historical in-jokes engulf the show. In the narrowest part of what may be the narrowest gallery in London, you are forced to squeeze past a fake-breasted totem that resembles a pneumatically enhanced version of a Giacometti stick figure. Those imitation turds, meanwhile, have been dropped as if by a demented minimalist – confusing order with ordure, perhaps. It could come across as glib but Kane treads carefully along his poo-strewn path of association, keeping it happy but leaving you happy. *Martin Coomer*

**THE BOTTOM LINE**  
Kane's no clown.

## Three art fairs and festivals on this week

**Ambika P3** 35 Marylebone Rd, NW1 5LS. 7911 5876, [timeout.com/tickets](http://timeout.com/tickets).

**The Other Art Fair 2013** The fair for artists without commercial gallery representation returns with work by around 100 practitioners, selected by a committee including Yinka Shonibare. Alongside the work for sale, a range of interactive activities includes live acoustic music, curated talks, food stalls and a bar, plus art sessions for kids led by exhibiting artists. *Fri Apr 26 ▶ Sun Apr 28.*

**Michael Hoppin Gallery** 3 Jubilee Place, SW3 3TD. 7352 3649, [www.michaelhoppingallery.com](http://www.michaelhoppingallery.com). [Sloane Square](http://Sloane Square). £2.

**Splinter 2013** This two-day event offers novice and avid photography collectors alike the opportunity to view and buy a wide variety of photography from six specialist private dealers with prices ranging from £200 to £1,000. There's even the chance to snap up a future photographic star from the Royal College of Art's Photography MA stand. *Sat Apr 27 and Sun Apr 28.*

**Royal Academy of Arts** Burlington House, Piccadilly, W1J 0BD. 7300 8000, [www.londonprintfair.com](http://www.londonprintfair.com).

**The London Original Print Fair 2013** Now in its twenty-eighth year, The Original Print Fair returns to the RA with an array of prints for sale. It covers all styles of printmaking from Dürer's woodcuts to graphic works by David Hockney and Grayson Perry; you can also expect highlights by Rembrandt, Whistler, Picasso and a collection of newly released prints by Lucian Freud. Quentin Blake will also be talking about his recent experiments in etching and lithography (Thu 6.30pm). *Thu Apr 25 ▶ Sun Apr 28.*

arts & events  
CANARY WHARF

Sculpture at Work

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London E14 5AB  
Until 24 May 2013

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Tuesday 30 April at 1.15pm.  
Curator Ann Elliott talks to Eilís O'Connell about the exhibition. Tickets are free but please contact Canary Wharf Public Art Office at [visualart@canarywharf.com](mailto:visualart@canarywharf.com) to reserve a place

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