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Shonky: The Aesthetics of Awkwardness.....

- [David Pollock](#)
- 21 March 2018



credit: Jonathan Bassett

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The Hayward Gallery's touring exhibition showcases the

weird and wonderful of contemporary art

There's a disorientating sonic mantra burbling away in the background of this [new group exhibition](#) – curated by the artist John Walter and presented by the Hayward Gallery's Touring series – caused by the awkwardly colliding selection of sounds used by the artists. The most vivid comes from Plastique Fantastique's 'The Twelve Major Arcana of the Hanging Traitor Meme', in which a disembodied female voice incants the word 'traitor' over a series of human-sized, garishly painted, rope-slung religious stations and a tarot-strewn video backdrop which reveals the meme of the title.

In Duggie Fields' 'Ignore It', the Teddy Boy artist dances over a busy, semi-digital background; Benedict Drew's 'A Dyspraxic Techno' fills one side-room with strobing, swirling film patterns and the illuminated motto 'hand eye coordination fuck off'; on the floor in one corner, a twisting ball of lifelike fur has escaped from Tim Spooner's weirdly pulsing 'Natural Habitat'. The effect is at once to disorientate and to focus the mind, for the sights and sounds here are unusual and awkwardly thrown together, but they're all so vividly different that they create one huge and very compelling meta-sculpture.

Walter's purpose is to throw light upon those artists and works which don't fit the clean-lined aesthetic of the contemporary art world, to talk up those who revel in the weird and often garish. Cosima von Bonin displays two sculptural scallop shells, which open to reveal eyes; Andrew Logan has a very tacky sculptural wall portrait of the artist and provocateur Divine; Justin Favela presents 'Floor Nachos', giant cardboard nachos strewn on the floor; and there are gaudy tapestries, paintings and textile ... things elsewhere. It's all very refreshing, and if the spirit of punk rock still lives in any manner in the art scene of 2018, then it's in these rooms and their collection of artists who don't demand to fit in or be viewed with joyless seriousness.

Dundee Contemporary Arts, until Sun 27 May.

[Shonky: the Aesthetics of Awkwardness](#)

An exhibition exploring the nature of visual awkwardness through the work of artists and architects Arakawa and Gins, Cosima von Bonin, Niki de Saint Phalle, Benedict Drew, Justin Favela, Duggie Fields, Louise Fishman, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, Kate Lepper, Andrew Logan, Plastique Fantastique, Jacolby Satterwhite, Tim...

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