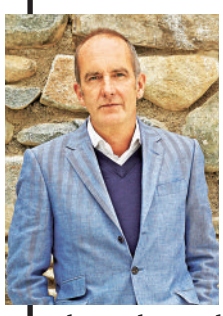
WHAT TURNS ME ON



Television

I am obsessed with minimalism, so I tune in to *Grand Designs* hoping there will be some fantasy home that you can only dream of. Kevin McCloud [left] is so bright and easy-going. The best ones are when he goes back two years later and the people don't like the dream home they spent all that time creating.

I've fallen for *Sherlock*. How they have taken that old story and knitted it into the modern world, with new technology, is extraordinary. Benedict Cumberbatch is brilliant.

Theatre

Dance has been the constant thread throughout my life. New York dance company the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre has been a major inspiration. I first saw them at Sadler's Wells in 1970 performing *Revelations* – a series of dance suites about black African slaves. I was 27 and it was such a powerfully moving piece that I left the theatre determined to go to New York and study with them. I saved up and did just that three years later.

Earlier this year I saw the perfect play – Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* – as a full-length ballet at the Royal Opera House. I could hardly get up out of my seat when it was over.

Music

Sam Smith. I could listen to his voice all day. Another big favourite is Ed Sheeran [right]. I first came across him six years ago when I was doing the choreography on *Britannia High*. Ed auditioned in Manchester, but he didn't make it through because he needed to dance as well as sing. He played guitar and sang and right then I thought, my goodness, this boy has got a bright future. It's amazing what he has done, especially breaking America.

ARLENE PHILLIPS

For the choreographer and ex-Strictly judge it's got to be *West Side Story* for the moves and Ed Sheeran for the grooves...

Film

My favourite film of all time is *West Side Story*. I saw it when it came out in 1961 and I was blown away. It is still sensational – on stage or as a film – and I never tire of it. Music by Leonard Bernstein, lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and Jerome Robbins doing the choreography as well as co-directing with Robert Wise. An incredible team.

I adored *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. An unbelievable cast with Ralph Fiennes [right], Bill Murray, Tilda Swinton, Adrien Brody and loads of others. It is a musical and visual feast and so gloriously strange. You wonder what on earth is going on half the time, but I love things that are odd and original.

Radio

I have been a fan of *Just A Minute* on Radio 4 as long as I can remember. Nicholas Parsons is extraordinary. To think, he's 91 and his brilliant brain is still whirring away as sharply as ever. Paul Merton is wonderfully witty and quick, but I heard Sue Perkins recently and she really bowled me over. I knew she was smart, but, wow, not that smart!

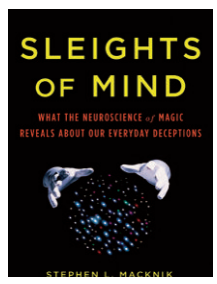
The other radio regulars for me are *Today* and *Woman's Hour* and I am increasingly fascinated by plays on Radio 4 Extra. I become engrossed in the stories and these wonderful voices.

Art

My dad was a barber, but his favourite thing to do at weekends was look at art, so from about seven I went with him to all galleries in Manchester. We used to look at the Lowrys and Dad would talk to me about the paintings and what to look for.

David Hockney [inset] has easily been my favourite contemporary artist since I met him in the Seventies. Wayne Sleep introduced me to him at a party in London and I was utterly mesmerised by hearing him talk about art.

Books



I have always loved a good autobiography – whether about great actors like David Niven, Steven Berkoff, or the wartime dancer Gillian Lynne. Currently by my bed is a very odd book called *Sleights Of Mind* by Susana Martinez-Conde and Stephen Macknick. It is about magicians and the science of how they trick you. I am fascinated by David Blaine and Dynamo.

Arlene Phillips supports the campaign Quit With Help, to help smokers stop. quitwithhelp.co.uk

BY ROB MCGIBBON

SIMON FOWLER/NIGEL NORRINGTON/CAMERA PRESS/EPA/ALAMY/WIREIMAGE

5 FABULOUS FACTS (& A MASSIVE FIB*) ABOUT... BJORK

5 SHE'S A KILLER QUEEN

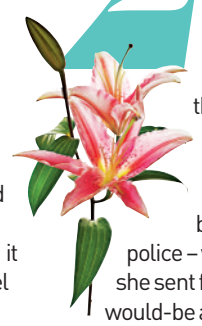
Appearing under her full name – Bjork Gudmundsdottir – the Icelandic singer acted in the 2011 Nordic Noir *Utlendingur á Miðnætti (Midnight Stranger)*, as a teacher with a sinister secret. Which we won't reveal in case BBC4 shows it.

4 SHE WEARS IT WELL

At the 2001 Oscars Bjork turned up wearing what could only be described as a swan. Draped around her neck, the giant waterfowl then appeared to lay a huge egg (actually an ostrich egg) on the red carpet. The look was not instantly copied by fashion labels.

3 TELEVISIONS TERRIFY HER

Or rather they did. The young Bjork believed an Icelandic poet when he said TV shows corrupt the brain and developed a fear of TVs, cured when she took a set apart and discovered it was 'like a little model city, with houses and streets.'



2 SHE SAYS IT WITH FLOWERS

When a crazed stalker sent an acid-bomb to her address then killed himself on YouTube, Bjork's reaction – having been saved by the police – was unusual: she sent flowers to her would-be assassin's family.

1 SHE EATS PUFFINS

The polar-bear loving songstress is known for her eccentric tastes, and it appears they extend to the dinner table: she has admitted to eating roast puffin – but draws the line at pickled shark, on the grounds that in Iceland they use human urine to preserve the meat.

'Bjork: Biophilia Live' is released in cinemas on Friday

BY STRUAN ROBERTSON

*The massive fib? No 5. In fact, she swore never to act again after 2000's *Dancing In The Dark*, which she called too emotionally taxing

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