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Our critics' tips for the top in 2005

THE ONES TO WATCH

MARCUS FAIRS, BRUCE DESSAU, FIONA MADDOCKS, NICK HACKWORTH

ARCHITECTURE KAZUYO SEJIMA

This reticent Japanese architect is the name to drop in 2005. Her cool, purist style is a refreshing change from the current vogue for blobs and shards; her 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art at Kanazawa has just opened to rave reviews and her much-anticipated art museums in Valencia and New York will be taking shape during the year.

PLOT

The young Danish outfit were runners up in last year's Young Architect of the Year Award and produced some memorable little projects, including a boat shed with an undulating timber roof that doubled as an open-air classroom. A proposal for the Stavanger Concert Hall beat all the big names to win a prize at September's prestigious Venice Architecture Biennale.

OFFICE FOR SUBVERSIVE ARCHITECTURE

A refreshingly radical bunch in the strait-laced world of architecture, this London collective has illegally transformed a disused signal box in Shoreditch into a faux-Tudor cottage as a protest against naff housing estates in the Thames Gateway and more subversive stunts are planned for 2005. Marcus Fairs

COMEDY SIMON AMSTELL

Amstell's catty celebrity chats on C4's Popworld have made him a cult among kidults. Onstage you get the uncut version of his glamorous life - the backstage diva

demands and the access-all-areas gossip. He is developing a late-night TV vehicle, but you'll have to catch him live for those unbroadcastable titbits.

ROB ROUSE

This madcap Macclesfieldian should fulfil his considerable promise in 2005. He has filmed a variety shindig, *The Friday Night Project*, co-starring Jimmy Carr. A sketch show is in the pipeline, too.

MARC WOOTTON

Some comics make an instant splash, others do it by stealth. Marc Wootton is a stand-up chameleon, aided by a wardrobe of wigs and disguises. He put a fresh spin on reality TV with *My New Best Friend* and his TV format send-up, *The Pilot Show*, has been bought by VH1 in America.

OPERA KATIE VAN KOOTEN

The 25-year-old American soprano, who studied at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama and is now a Royal Opera Vilar Young Artist, shot to attention in November when she replaced Angela Gheorghiu in Puccini's *La Rondine* at Covent Garden. Coming up: a recital in January and *Eurydice* in Phillip Glass's *Orphée* at the Linbury Studio in April.

SARAH-JANE DAVIES

Voted Young Welsh Singer of the Year 2003, the soprano has begun to make a mark with leading roles for the Royal College of Music and British Youth Opera. Her *Fiordiligi* in *Così fan Tutte* at Garsington (June 2004) won critical praise and her career continues to flourish at ENO, where she is a Jerwood Young Artist. Coming up: *Angel* in *Jephtha*, *Pamina* in *The Magic Flute* and *Romilda* in *Xerxes*.

MATTHEW ROSE

English bass Matthew Rose studied at the Curtis Institute in the US and is now a Vilar Young Artist. In 2004 he was an outstanding *Collatinus* in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* at the Linbury. Future plans include *Bottom* for the 2006 Glyndebourne

Festival and the title role in *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Welsh National Opera. Coming up: First Priest in *Die Zauberflöte*, Judge in *Orphée*, Count Horn in *Un Ballo in Maschera* and Montano in *Otello* at Covent Garden.

ART TOBY ZIEGLER

The work of 32-year-old, Southwark-based Ziegler was one of the highlights of the Royal Academy's recent show of new art, *Expander*. His painted renditions of computergenerated images of landscapes, applied to Scotchbrite, a shiny, synthetic fabric used for workwear, instead of canvas, are oddly inviting windows into an apparently clean and perfectly ordered world. His first major solo show, *Enter Desire* at the Chisenhale Gallery, E3, in February will excite critics and collectors still further.

RAQIB SHAW

Like Chris Ofili, his stablemate at the Victoria Miro Gallery, Shaw is as much a fabricator as a painter, constructing beautifully seductive, enamelled and jewel-encrusted paintings of fantastical mythological scenes whose aesthetic draws on his upbringing in Kashmir among carpet-makers and jewellers. After a sell-out solo show in London in 2004, Shaw, 29, and a Royal College of Art graduate, will be showing in New York this year and is likely to add an international dimension to his impressive London reputation.

JUSTIN COOMBES

Ruskin and Goldsmiths graduate Justin Coombes, 27, exemplifies the trend of young artists focusing on the theatrical, the aesthetic and the symbolic. His staged photographs echo the work of Americans Gregory Crewdson and Jeff Wall while recalling the richness of post-war British art in their layered literary and cultural references. A solo show of his most ambitious project to date, *Bacchanalia*, is scheduled for late 2005 and should bring his work to wider attention.