

Plenty of smashing new talent in store

Some of the art world's biggest names have nominated their favourite rising stars for an exhibition at Selfridges. They tell Charlotte Cripps why they chose them



Rising stars of the art world have been hand-picked by a panel that includes Sir Peter Blake, Kevin Spacey and Tracey Emin to exhibit their work at London's Selfridges.

The store's first ever pop-up exhibition of new talent was the brainchild of the curator Flora Fairbairn, who co-directs the Concrete and Glass arts festival in Shoreditch. She has collaborated with the online contemporary art gallery murmurART.com, which gives talented up-and-coming artists a platform to sell and exhibit their work without the overheads associated with traditional galleries. "The show at Selfridges is a great opportunity for the artists to get their name out there and for us to engage a wider audience in contemporary art," says murmur ART director and co-founder, Will Conibear. "It is a great place for us to have the first of what will be regular exhibitions in different spaces around London."

On show is the conceptual artist Hugo Wilson, nominated by Kevin Spacey. The actor snapped up much of Wilson's end-of-year MA show at City & Guilds in 2008, including his Tornado in a Box sculpture, which was exhibited recently in Tunnel 228, an art-theatre collaboration between the Old Vic and Punchdrunk underneath Waterloo railway station.

The artist Conrad Shawcross has nominated Charles Danby, whose intimate drawings of fashion models laid over inkjet prints both connect with and distance the viewer. And the architect Zaha Hadid has picked an installation artist, who works under the pseudonym Constantin Dubuffu. He has installed a site-specific piece in one of the glass vitrines at Selfridges which references the rest of the shop.

The works are for sale, starting at £1,000, and computers in the exhibition link through to the murmurART site, where more can be bought.

What did the curator make of the panelists' choices? "The up-and-coming artists are extremely diverse," says Fairbairn. "Tracey Emin's nomination is a very fiery, colourful painter whereas Tim Marlow's is thought-provoking and mysterious."

Tracey Emin

Artist

RISING STAR: Jo Robertson

"My friend Detmar Blow showed me Jo Robertson's work, and previously a number of people had told me I might be interested in her. Joanne's painting is very raw and expressionistic. She has the courage to just walk away at a point when the painting is most alive. I own one of her paintings; it's called 'Great Change Since I've Been Born' and it really reminds me of me. There's a woman sitting on a bed, naked, with a cat in the foreground. The room in the painting is remarkably like my old bedroom from my student days at Maidstone College of Art. Joanne has the ability to tap into things on an emotional and psychic level. Her works have an edge and a complexity but there is nothing cynical in them. You can see that she knows her art history and she uses it to her advantage."

