The next big things

Who will be the bright young stars of 2007? Over the next 14 pages, our experts introduce the hottest new talents from the worlds of art, music, books, fashion, food, politics and sport.

The pop star
Mika
Mika is that rare thing—a singer-songwriter with charm and talent. Add to that a penchant for granddaughter Technicolor pop and you have a proper star-in-waiting. The son of a Lebanese father and an Armenian mother, Mika was born in Paris in 1982 and grew up listening to everything from folk to R&B. A series of romantic childhood experiences, including the kidnapping of his father at the American embassy in Beirut in 1991, did nothing to dampen his enthusiasm for singing and performing. When he was nine the family relocated to Paris and then to London, where, under the tutelage of a Russian video coach, Mika began to hone his craft. In 2003 a friend of his father’s introduced him to Richard Branson and Virgin Records, and Mika was signed. His first album, titled "Life is a Beautiful Dream That Will Never End," was released last year. Mika’s second album, "Dora si," is due for release in the spring. He tells us why 2007 will be a year to remember.

Plus: Katie Price on Second Life
Mark Hix’s New Year’s Eve feast
Win a case of champagne
Gourmets’ Year Quiz

The photographer
Simon Roberts
Ravina has always fascinated Simon Roberts. "As a child, I would stare at the maps of my geography lessons and was thrilled to imagine the secrets of the world. I would sketch and paint the maps and imagine the country and its geographers, the roads and rivers. By the time I was 17, I was surrounded by maps, pictures and books. I was able to see the world for myself." In 1980 he started his career as a freelance photographer and has since travelled the world to document its people and places.

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