



Bottoms come out tops

ART REVIEW

Turner Prize 2005 ★★★

When you reach the end of this year's Turner Prize Exhibition, there is a film about the four shortlisted artists. In it, one of the finalists, Simon Starling, offers up a list of the big ideas that apparently inform his work, each recited without any connecting words, as if their mere utterance bestows a kind of magic. Yet Starling's work is arguably the least interesting in the exhibition, paling in comparison to that of Darren Almond. In Almond's video work, separate screens, accompanied by a piano soundtrack, show two pairs of feet gliding across a ballroom, an illuminated windmill on a pitch-black background, a jerky garden fountain and an old woman. You don't have to be told a lot of unintelligible guff about Almond's

work to know that it suggests memory and loss. It's a resonant, genuinely stirring piece. By contrast, Starling supposedly invites us to meditate on nature, technology and economics with shedboatshed: a shed, dismantled, made into a boat, paddled down the Rhine and finally reassembled as a shed. This only goes to show he's one of the most irritating artists around. Much has been made of the fact that Gillian Carnegie is a painter, a skill often overlooked in the Turner's recent past. Her subjects are traditional: landscapes in black impasto trawled on like tarmac, paintings of trees with diagrammatic dabs reminiscent of Mondrian and paintings of bums. As well as being a good painter, she's also an interesting artist. Finally, there's Jim Lambie, who's popular because he offers something immediately visual and kitsch. Here he shows his signature vinyl floor and some crazy bird sculptures. But when you look ahead to the award's announcement on December 5, Carnegie and Almond seem miles ahead. *Fiona Güner*



Bum of all / its parts: Among the contenders for this year's Turner Prize is Red (2004), above, an oil on board by celebrated painter Gillian Carnegie



The Kinks 2005, a mixed-media installation by Jim Lambie

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