



painstaking process involves coloured glass crystals being poured into plaster moulds, then fired in ovens and finished, all at the hands of Daum's highly trained artisans. Bringing further design pedigree to the house, artistic director Jean-Baptiste Sibertin-Blanc is the driving force behind the brand's creativity.

HONG KONG TATLER: *How do you conceive of the numerous themed collections at Daum?*

JEAN-BAPTISTE SIBERTIN-BLANC: Every year, we issue almost four or five collections, but we have two main collections. Two years ago, we created a well-structured collection with Chinese contemporary artists and referenced pieces from the Asiatic Museum in Paris, and I have created this collection about Africa in the same spirit.

HKT: *The Afric'Art collection features limited-edition, collaborative pieces with contemporary African and European artists. Why did you choose to focus on Africa?*

JBSB: Africa in the context of art is today very important. Every big artist in Europe during the 20th century was

involved in African art. Picasso, Matisse, Braque, Fernand Léger have all looked to African art as a source of inspiration. The second reason is the opening in 2006 of a very important African art museum in Paris, the Musée du Quai Branly. And the third is that African contemporary art is more well recognised today. The 2007 Venice Biennale was the first time African art was represented, so it's an opportunity for us to have this focus.

HKT: *How does the collaborative process work?*

JBSB: Part of my job is to bring these artists into my trust. If I don't have their trust, I cannot work with them. When I worked with [Béninese artists] Romuald Hazoumé and Cyprien Tokoudagba [on the Afric'Art collection], they gave me their sculptures and we had to make a lot of small adaptations to transform a bronze piece into a crystal piece. Very often the artist has no idea about the colours we use, so we propose which colour to do [the piece in].

HKT: *How do you divide your time between Daum and your independent projects?*

JBSB: I have my own design studio but I'm not a workaholic. If I have five to 10 new, independent projects a year, that's enough. Daum is a very artistic brand and as we produce so many different collections and so many different objects, it's better that it's not all done by one person. My role at Daum is mainly as a conductor [of the orchestra], more than as first violin. **T**

Pleasure Daum

FRENCH LUXURY HOUSE **DAUM** IS EXPLORING NEW ARTISTIC AVENUES WITH ITS SIGNATURE GLASS SCULPTURES, WRITES OLIVIA TOTH

VIEWING A DAUM SCULPTURE IS an experience not unlike finding a precious, sand-beaten glass pebble twinkling away on a beach.

Smooth to the touch, translucent and conveying an inner light via subtle gradations of colour and tone, Daum's sculptures have been charming collectors since the French house was founded in 1878. Historical collaborations with modern art's pioneers, such as Georges Braque, Salvador Dalí, Claude Lorraine, Paloma Picasso and Manolo Valdés, showcased the original *pâte de verre* technique and paved the way for a tradition of signed, limited-edition pieces.

At a time when African contemporary art is coming into its own in both global salerooms and among the art cognoscenti, Daum is adding its own twist to the story. For its Afric'Art collection, primitive African sculptures from the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris have been reworked in Daum's signature *pâte de cristal*, a modern-day adaptation of the *pâte de verre* technique. The

AFRIC'CHIC

FROM TOP
Beninese artist Romuald Hazoumé's limited edition Blue Oil Head sculpture for Daum denounces the black market traffic of petrol; Daum artistic director, Jean-Baptiste Sibertin-Blanc



THE SPIRIT OF HIGH SOCIETY

HONG KONG FATELLER

*Picture
PERFECT*
*A Portrait of
Michele Li:
Mother,
Maven
and Muse*

MAY 2009 HK\$45



891571 201127

the
Art
ISSUE