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## EMMANUEL BABLED

"GLASS CAN ACTUALLY BE A MATERIAL FOR THE TELLING OF DIFFERENT STORIES AND THE EXPRESSION OF ATTITUDES THAT HAVE THEIR ORIGINS IN DIFFERENT KINDS OF MOTIVATION."

— EMMANUEL BABLED

You may not have heard of Emmanuel Babled yet but he is already the buzz of Europe. Lauded as a creative genius for his visionary approach to artistic glassware, Babled has developed a winning formula – melding old with new – for creating his one-of-a-kind pieces. In this case, the old is the ancient art of Murano glassmaking and the new is an artistic freestyle technique with strong modern influences. The result? Limited-edition, collector's-item glassware characterized by bold colours, opaque surfaces and minimal, organic shapes.

Ancient artisan skills such as those used by the master glassmakers of Murano may seem like an anomalous choice of techniques for such forward designs but Babled feels that they offer a perfect outlet for expression. "This kind of specialized craftsmanship is less and less visible in today's technological world," states Babled. "I want to show that glass and those who make it are not only capable of virtuous artisan quality, but also that glass can actually be a material for the telling of different stories and the expression of attitudes that have their origins in different kinds of motivation."

Having worked with glass for over 10 years now, Babled has an immense affinity to his material of choice. "There is a new iconography to glass and I would also like to bring a whole new language to it," he says. What initially attracted him to the art of glassmaking was the way in which no matter how glass is handled by a master the result is always unpredictable. In the words of Babled, "On one hand glass doesn't give you what you want, yet on the other hand it gives you more." He is referring to the glassmaster's belief that glass should not be subjected to constrictions. Molten glass has its own nature and two different pieces of glass will not expand to the same size when placed in the fire and blown. Gravity and centrifugal force also play a deciding role in the final outcome of molten glass but this is not to say that the design is random. On the contrary, it is the result of an ingenious relationship between the glassblower and the glass.

Given this, it's not surprising how important a role the glassmaster plays. "One must have a connection with the master glassblower," continues Babled. Having learnt the skill himself he knows just what to look for. With every design he personally guides the glassmaster through the procedure to get what he wants out of the glass. "This is not something you can learn on a computer," he states. "It is all in the hand."

The latest offerings from Babled include "The Happy Few Collection," a group of monochromatic pieces that use an ancient material as a backdrop for happy faces as well troubled ghosts, an interpretation of the duality of today's prosperous world and life's everyday anxieties. "The work of Emmanuel Babled is really special and you know that as soon as you see it," says Holt Renfrew Home Fashion Director David Battle. "His modern shapes with their colour and sense of whimsy are unlike anything produced out of Murano today."

— CHRISTY WRIGHT

The Emmanuel Babled Collection is available exclusively in Canada at Holt Renfrew.

**EMMANUEL  
BABLED**

Having held solo exhibits in galleries across Europe and collaborating with such prestigious names as Baccarat, Rosenthal and Wedgwood, artist Emmanuel Babled is considered to be a modern master in the art of Murano glassmaking. His collection is coveted by collector's and appreciators of beauty alike and is available exclusively at Holt Renfrew. Shown here: Semi-opaque orange glass vase with graphic white cross, \$1,200.

