

»Talents« is one of four international special exhibitions annually organized by the Chamber of Crafts and Trades for Munich and Upper Bavaria for the International Crafts Fair in Munich. Within this series it plays the role of a competition for young, talented designers up to 33 years of age, and in technical fields up to 35 years. In its over 40-year history, »Talents« has long since become one of the most desirable international competitions in the field of crafts design. An especially great interest in being represented in Germany was shown by countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Taiwan. For young designers, Munich is apparently an attractive venue to present their pieces to an international public. Of special interest to them is the fact that »Talents« encompasses a broad range of fields and the entries may oscillate between crafts, design and art. The juxtaposition of diverse pieces reflects a variety of current design approaches, as well as the tendencies and strengths of individual training institutions. On the other hand, the special show provides the Munich audience with fascinating insights into contemporary international approaches, and can provide orientation for young people looking for an appropriate form of training. Not least, for the participants »Talents« is a platform for finding recognition among experts in the field. The opportunity of appearing in the annual catalogue, in which all entries are documented, is thus of crucial importance. The »Talents« Prize, awarded by an international jury each year, further contributes to the support of talented young designers and to publicizing their work. This year's »Talents« presents submissions by 98 young designers from 28 countries, working in eleven different fields. Thanks to an international network of mentors, more than 600 entries from 30

different countries were received this year. Selected were entries from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, South Africa, South Korea, Taiwan, and Venezuela.

Especially gratifying were the many interesting contributions in the field of glass received this year, supplementing the special show »Exempla«, which is devoted to glass. Much the same can be said of the jewellery entries for »Talents«. The number of jewellery submissions for this show increases year by year, a fact that likely must be seen in connection with the special »Schmuck« show. These synergies among the special shows can also contribute to their annually changing emphases and focus on certain fields.

A striking feature in the case of glass, as well as other fields represented in »Talents«, has been for some years now an involvement with nature and its diverse forms. This year as before, we found a clear emphasis on exploration of materials. The combination of various materials such as glass and wood, or extreme figurative experiments and new manufacturing processes such as those used in the magnetic stools from the Netherlands, are fine examples of this. An interesting range of textiles came from Norway this year, reflecting the special emphasis placed on this discipline in the Scandinavian countries. In the case of ceramics, sculptural pieces stood out especially. On the whole, great interest in the past, memories and traditions and their great relevance for the present day, could be observed.

The technical contributions to »Talents« likewise evince innovative employment of materials and con-

struction types. This is seen in a suspended tent, stools, bicycles, sleds, a children's bike convertible into three versions, and the baby protector, an intelligent solution for carrying infants strapped securely to the body while cycling. »Talents« is organized on behalf of the Association for the Furtherance of the Crafts by the Chamber of Crafts and Trades for Munich and Upper Bavaria. We are extremely grateful to the Association of Trades Fairs for the funding and publication of the catalogue. The exhibition enjoys generous support from the Federal Ministry of Commerce and Technology, and the Bavarian State Ministry of Commerce, Infrastructure, Traffic and Technology.

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»Point of Rupture«; 20-teilige Installation; Glas, geblasen, Glaspaste, Pâte de verre, gegossen, abgesenkt, Glasplatte, Plexiglas, Eisen; 80×125×75 cm

Damien François

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2006-2007
Engelshom Højskole,
Bredsten, Dänemark: Glas

2007-2010
Royal Danish Academy
of Fine Arts, Bornholm,
Dänemark: Glas

2009
Rhode Island Design School,
Providence, USA: Glas

Damien François beschäftigt sich mit den Materialeigenschaften und Verarbeitungsweisen von Glas. Dabei bearbeitet er Glas unterhalb seiner Schmelztemperatur, um chemische Prozesse deutlich werden zu lassen, ohne das Glas zu seinem Schmelzpunkt zu führen. Sein Anliegen ist dabei durchaus didaktisch, in dem Sinne, dass die Arbeiten das unterschiedliche und vielfältige Erscheinungsbild von Glas präsentieren sollen. Das Thema der Erkundung und des Experiments in seinem Umgang mit Glas, die erstaunlichen Qualitäten des Materials versinnbildlicht Damien François durch das Motiv der Wunderkammer und des Naturalienkabinetts: Glasgefäße und Reagenz-

gläser mit geheimnisvollem Inhalt, der in den Behältnissen schwebt und dessen Seltsamkeit durch eine Beleuchtung von unten noch gesteigert wird; kleine Glasstückchen, die wie Schmetterlinge oder Käfer in Sammelrahmen gezeigt werden. Die Mischung von Faszination und Wissenschaft, von Emotionalität und Rationalität wird aufgegriffen. Die Verwunderung über die Naturformen, wie sie im 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert geläufig war, wird auf diese Weise mit dem Erstaunen über die Möglichkeiten des Materials Glas parallelisiert.