

**T**he dark and mysterious stone Obsidian is particularly extraordinary when sourced from Armenia, where it is known for its unique translucency and high sheen. Michel der Agobian was the first to tap these reserves in 2004 and in collaboration with

the curator Jean-Baptiste Sibertin-Blanc, who has a particular fascination with the glass, commissioned 13 artists to look at obsidian with contemporary eyes. We showcase these striking creations that are on show at Galerie Pierre-Alain Challier, Paris.

"Born millions of years ago on the slopes of Mount Ararat in Armenia, obsidian was first created when a lava flow met with water and suddenly cooled. In a day when what we make is governed by advanced technology and complicated economic structures, why go back to one of mankind's earliest raw materials? I love materials; and obsidian is a mineral, a stone, a perfect glass that I find fascinating. A few years ago, in an exhibition I called "La Matière des Lieux" ("A Sense of Place"), I attempted an unlikely showcase of ten projects from France and abroad in which not just local culture but local living matter contributed the broad strokes of my drawings. When I met Michel der Agobian of cub-ar, I told him how I wished to present and explore this particular material from added points of view, calling on friends and artists from a rich variety of professions—goldsmith, architect, sculptor, designer—people whose work and purpose are also all about material and craft. Prehistoric man made use very early on of obsidian for tools, for living. And there has been such a thing as design ever since we became human. "Visions of Obsidian" is thirteen intersecting tales that invite us to rediscover this material, through different cultures that open like so many doors into the museum of our imaginations.

*-Jean-Baptiste Sibertin-Blanc, Exhibition Curator*



# Jean-Baptiste Sibertin-Blanc, Designer

Vase: "Nearly Perfect Chaos" / Obsidian and gold-plated bronze

"Anyone who has seen lava flow down the sides of Mt. Etna will remember the power of the flames and earth's guts spilling out. But after the flood—balance is restored."

