hit the switch

IN HIS MUCH VAUNTED INDUSTRIAL DESIGN WORK, DROR BENSHEITH IS THE DUALITY OF THE PRODUCTS THAT SURROUND US. FOR CRYSTALIZED, HE CREATES A LIGHT OF SIMPLE COMPLEXITY. ART CHEN REPORTS

Dror Bensheith takes nothing for granted. Since arriving in New York in 2002, the 28-year-old, based here in Brooklyn, has been making objects that are more than what they seem. His Showman's Taste of Nature collection, introduced by Resource in 2004, is a medley of highly lacquered, looking pieces are cast from originals that he whacked with a hammer.

His new Folding Tables, for the Italian manufacturer BB Italia, transform, become a writing desk with a flip of a top, while his collection of one-off porcelain jewels, introduced last year for Matthias and Francois Giraud, shines with spiny bobbles cast from lamps of his.

The constant theme is transformation and duality—between soft and tactile, delicate and durable, and different states of being. Bensheith combines a poetic sensibility with a designer’s love of technique, reducing intransigent forms with surprising intensity.

“I like to explore the idea of opposites,” he says, sounding like the Design Academy Eindhoven graduate that he is. (He also worked at the Paris office of Ettori, the school’s influential, trend forecasting division.) “But I do it in a simple way,” he adds. Which is precisely the case with his lamp for Crystalized. Indeed, the design begins simply: an ends, however, clear transformation, reveals a total of 8,480 crystals in gold that, pulled at measured angles, make for woe-begging pieces. From this, the crystal, broken in a sunny Sudan, forms a pattern with an almost silhouetted effect. From behind, where they’re least, they seem to be one, a single period to write.

“I was looking at how a hard-edged geometric result can become numinous and functional,” Bensheith says. He may be looking opposites, but the result is singularly dazzling.

www.cristalizd.com

Crystalized 2007
Floor Chandelier