

Sweet Glazing

The difference between sugar and glass is, to some extent, a matter of degree. Both are made from coarse granules that, when heated to high temperatures, turn first to liquid and then to clear, shimmering but brittle solids. It is certainly a comparison design studio Cipla acknowledges with its new 'Caramella' collection of lamps. Indeed, this striped example, appropriately named 'Humbug' (shown below; from £1,400), is made in much the same way as its striped-mint namesake. Using the *zanfirico* technique that yields traditional Murano pieces, makers fuse together rods of coloured glass, which are then spun into spheres of swirling stripes. Similar to 'trifle', the sweet is named after the 18th-century word for a practical joke – and, like the sugary counterparts they imitate, these lamps are just as sweet and playful. Visit cuplastudio.co.uk DL

Alloyed Powers

The earliest-recorded example of pewter was found in an Egyptian tomb from around



1450BC. From there, the metal travelled north, where it became especially prized. One of Sweden's most prestigious home-ware brands still inscribes

the alloy in its name: Svenskt Tenn (Swedish Pewter). The cultural exchange continues today. The company, founded by interiors doyenne Estrid Ericson in 1924, has launched a new design collaboration entitled Her(e)itage. The partnership with Southnord, champions of Afro-Nordic art, seeks to celebrate the ties between the two highly contrasting regions. This 'Sandra' platter (shown above; £590 approx), for example, made of fused recycled Ghanaian glass, was designed by Ugandan/Finnish designer Lincoln Kayiwa. Its palette responds effortlessly to the famous bright colours of Svenskt Tenn's fabrics, and proves that, like magnets, north and south attract. Visit svensktenn.com DL

Snuff of Dreams

A pinch of snuff, found arch ambassador Prince Talleyrand, was the ideal lubricator of international relations. No wonder, then, that the snuffbox served as a staple of consular gifts for centuries. Emblazoned with enamel portraits of the head of state, they were seen as valuable communicators of national identity; they had their origin in the bottles of Qing-era China used for the same purpose. Today, Singaporean/British artist Hannah Lim has found in them an exciting way to explore her own sense of identity. Her 21st-century snuffboxes interrogate historic chinoiserie: especially that blend of East Asian aesthetics with 18th-century European taste. Using humour and a puff of kitsch, she has awoken them with lively faces, claw-footed furniture and the playful pastels of the Singapore shophouse – itself a legacy of British colonialism. Huge ideas contained in tiny sculptural works; the cross-cultural legacy of these bibelots is not to be sniffed at. Shown below: 'Jewelled Dewdrop' snuff bottle, £1,980. Visit hannah-lim.co.uk DL

