



3 galleries that dazzled at London's 2023 Collect Fair

PETER MARTIN · MARCH 6, 2023 · 6 MIN READ

The world's leading international fair for contemporary craft and design returned to London's Somerset House last week for its 19th edition.

Collect inhabits a singular space in the art and design world. One of the few international fairs to focus almost exclusively on contemporary objets, it remains intimate in feel, yet wears its global stature with ease. A creation of the charitable [Crafts Council](#), the fair puts artists' welfare front and centre, yet is savvy to the draw the museum-quality pieces exert on a global interior design community snapping up work for their landmark projects.

Fair director Isobel Dennis tells us: "Collect has reinforced its pivotal position as the authority for contemporary craft and design," adding: "The increasingly diverse range of galleries and artistic voices featured at this year's fair will make the show richer in content and discovery than ever before."



Cecilia Charlton presented by Candida Stevens Gallery at Collect 2023 (Photo: David Parry/PA Media)

That range comes from countries including South Korea, Lebanon and China; and themes threaded through the fair include the work of the African diaspora, K Culture, cross-cultural fertilisation and non-traditional materials.

There's a buoyancy about Collect this year – an anticipatory quality shared by exhibitors and attendees. And while every stand was carefully curated and had its strengths, here are three galleries that particularly caught our eye:

Galerie Revel



Growth Amidst Storm by Samuel Nnorom was a star turn at France's Galerie Revel at Collect Fair 2023

It was impossible to walk past Galerie Revel without being mesmerised by two large installations by Samuel Nnorom, particularly *Growth Amidst Storm* in African wax-print fabric – a wall-hung composition alive with movement, colour, texture and detail.

The gallery's Anais Auger-Mathurin described to *Effect* how the bubbles in the piece are a metaphor for the closed social structures in which our daily lives are wrapped in – closed, yet interconnected, weaved together in a single fabric. It's the Nigerian artist's first-ever showing in London, and the pieces were created especially for this year's Collect.

Galerie Revel's booth offered up further treasures, among them a pair of extraordinary vases by French artist Siquo: *Vase Ukaluu en été*; and its counterpart, *Vase Ukaluu en hiver*. Crafted from porcelain, the fur-like texture is alive with movement.



Notable exhibits by Galerie Revel at Collect Fair included L: *Vase Ukaluu en été* and *Vase Ukaluu en hiver* by Siquo; and R: *Space Monkeys* by Kartini Thomas

And *Space Monkeys* by Kartini Thomas is a collection of unforgettable, impish porcelain sculptures, laden with character, form and pattern – one part biological specimen, another part mythical deity.

Charles Burnand Gallery



Charles Burnand Gallery at Collect Fair 2023 included (far L): *Banana Tree 1* by Noa Chernichovsky; C & R: a collection of impressive works by Puerto Rican artist Reynold Rodriguez, including one of his *Gravity + Grace* chairs

There's a symphonic quality to the Charles Burnand Gallery's stand this year, so it comes as no surprise to learn that its founder, Simon Stewart, had a former life as a classical musician. Sculptural forms by Noa Chernichovsky and Binghui Song are moments frozen in time. Candlesticks by Callum Partridge reach upwards with the grace of swan's necks; *Bibliothèque Rhizome* by Pierre Bonnefille is solid, yet caught in flux. All are beautiful, but some are showstoppers. *Pier Cap 1* and *Banana Tree 1* by Noa Chernichovsky, widely trailed beforehand, don't disappoint. And *Fredrik 1* by Swedish artist Fredrik Nielsen – a melting, amorphous mass of glittering golden glass – is laden with hero energy.

"He ticks every box for us as a gallery," says Stewart of Nielsen, "because he's all about form, he's about materiality." In fact, Stewart has named this year's exhibition *Conscious Form*, and many of the pieces here were created specifically to that theme. "There's a conscious stream of thought that has gone into each of the pieces," he says. "They've all gone into this process where form is first and foremost – everything else is secondary."



Works exhibited by Charles Burnand Gallery at Collect Fair included L: *Sculpture* by Binghui Song; C: *Candle Stick* by Callum Partridge; and R: *Fredrik 1* by Fredrik Nielsen

The gallery also represents Puerto Rican artist Reynold Rodriguez, and three particularly notable pieces are on display at Collect this year: *The Table That Dreamed...(of being light)*, a table in the artist's unforgettable anthropomorphic style; *Continue* – a sinuous light packed with personality;

and *Gravity + Grace*, created, Stewart tells us, from wood felled and salvaged from 2017's Hurricane Maria – not just exceptional pieces of storied art, but “exceptionally comfortable” too.

Maison Parisienne



French gallery Maison Parisienne at Collect Fair 2023 exhibited works including L: *Strate II* by Awaré; C: *Incandescence* by Coralie Laverdet; and *Or Nature* by Aude Franjou

French gallery Maison Parisienne describes itself as a “nomadic” gallery in that they are always on the move, meeting collectors via pop-up events in prestigious or unusual venues. This year's stall at Somerset House features some exceptional wall power. Most immediately eye-catching is *Incandescence* by Coralie Laverdet – a large, circular work more than a metre (40”) across, created from folds of Lokta Nepalese paper, richly pigmented, in a lacquered wooden frame.

On the opposite wall hangs a breathtakingly beautiful diptych by Simone Pheulpin, *Diptyche Falaise* (falaise meaning ‘cliff’ in English). Gallery CEO Florence Guillier-Bernard tells *Effect* that in many ways, the piece encapsulates the gallery's own philosophy. “It's only cotton fabric,” she says, “so it's nothing precious. But the way the artist is able to make such a beautiful work from it makes the artwork precious.”

She adds: That's the common thread: whether paper, cotton, wood or linen, the materials themselves are nothing wonderful, but in the end, you have something that you have never seen before.”



Diptyche Falaise by Simone Pheulpin was one of the stand-out exhibits at Maison Parisienne's show at Collect Fair 2023

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Speaking to Guillier-Bernard, it's clear that almost two decades into the gallery's life, her drive to bring her cohort of exceptional French artists to the prominence they deserve is undimmed. "Fifteen years ago, these artists were unknown," she says, "and now they are in the V&A and in museums and collections around the world."

Collect 2023 continues on Artsy until 12 March 2023