

Show and tell

COLLECT drew the crowds again this year with an eclectic and provocative mix of old favourites and newcomers

There aren't many places where you can taste 3D-printed sculpture made from honey while gazing on a 3m-high cotton and monofilament textile inspired by fan vaulting. Or take in a chronology of chairs by Tord Boontje at the same time as celebrating textile artist Ann Sutton's birthday. But this year's COLLECT offered these and much more besides.

Returning to the Saatchi Gallery in May, the fair achieved a record attendance of 12,000 visitors with sales on track to hit £1.7 million. While the main pull continued to be the 35 international galleries and their stables of artists, satellite displays from Boontje and Sutton, plus a dance collaboration from Caroline Broadhead and Angela Woodhouse, provided additional energy.

Firm favourites presented new work, notably Jacob van der Beugels and Steffen Dam both showing with Joanna Bird Contemporary Collections, Louis Thompson and Hanne Enemark presented the results of their promising collaboration, while Adam Buick's series of jars offered delight, each one made using the clay cut from the last, like a set of Matrushka pots.

Newcomers from Lithuania, Art-Cart, brought a head-turning embroidered car door from Severija Incirauskaite-Kriauneviciene. Gallery Ten showed plenty of new blood in the shape of Hazel Thorn, Ed Byrne and Graham Muir.

COLLECT Open, the experimental space for installations, offered a broad and persuasive view of contemporary craft. Rita Parniczky and Andrea Walsh

both pushed their practices to more beautiful places while Katrin Spranger's edible sculpture looked to a future in which bees become a luxury. Newly formed collective Making Enhanced injected some enthusiasm into proceedings, the feeling was of work in-progress with pieces presented in, and on, a plywood shed.

As in previous years, the fair attracted curators from museums and public collections. The V&A purchased seven pieces in total including Andrea Walsh's *Small Faceted Boxes* and Sachi Fujikake's pillow like glass work.

This was the inaugural year for the Crafts Council's Museum Purchase Fund, a scheme for public collections in the UK to select work for long loan. One of our favourite pieces was purchased into this scheme from Gallery S O for Bury Art Museum: Joe Sheehan's *The Quick and the Dead*, a series of remote controls beautifully carved from stone as though anthropological evidence uncovered from a lost civilisation.

As Rosy Greenless, executive director of the Crafts Council, commented: 'COLLECT continues to set a gold standard and this year sales and visitor attendance reflect the huge public interest in craft.' She added her 'congratulations to all the exhibitors' artists and makers who work with the Crafts Council to make the show such a resounding success'.

COLLECT returns to the Saatchi Gallery February 2017. www.collect2015.org.uk



Adam Buick
Buick's *Outcrop Derivatives* (left) shown by Ruthin Craft Centre brought a new aesthetic to his jars. Having constructed the largest pot, the ceramist then cuts away at the form, using the removed material to make the next pot, and so on. ruthincraftcentre.org.uk



Joe Sheehan
Gallery S O displayed New Zealand artist Joe Sheehan's jade carvings *The Quick and the Dead* (left). The pieces, purchased for Bury Art Museum by the Crafts Council Museum Purchase Fund, come from a series of meticulously carved contemporary objects from AA batteries to a working lightbulb and even a pounamu cassette tape which plays a recording of the river where the stone was found. www.galleryso.com



Rita Parniczky
One of the most striking pieces in COLLECT Open was Parniczky's 3m-tall textile hanging (left). Inspired by the fan vaulting in the Houses of Parliament, Parniczky uses monofilament threads to explore and expose the structures within textiles. www.ritaparniczky.com

Hanne Enemark and Louis Thompson
We've been fans of both Hanne Enemark and Louis Thompson as solo glass artists so were thrilled to see their collaborative series, *Penumbra* (right), on the Gallery at London Glassblowing stand. www.londonglassblowing.co.uk

