

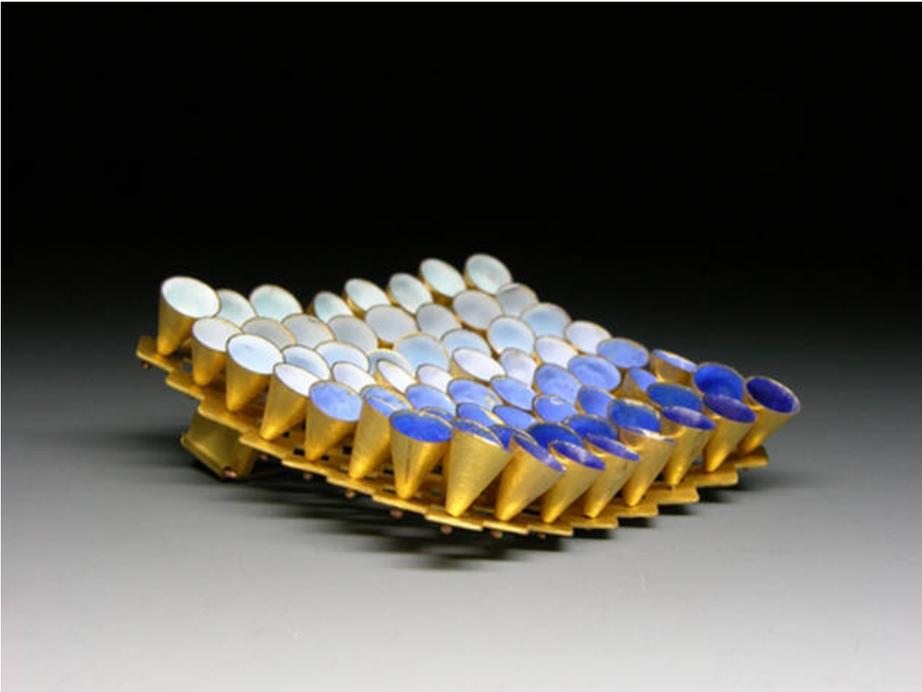
MAKINGIT

Artists Turn A Craft Fair Into A Laboratory For New Materials

AT THIS YEAR'S COLLECT: THE INTERNATIONAL ART FAIR FOR CONTEMPORARY OBJECTS, IN LONDON, FEW THINGS ARE WHAT THEY SEEM.

Translating an artist's vision into logic, or even plain English, is difficult. Modes of self-expression work in mysterious ways. So it would follow that the recent Crafts Council's COLLECT: The International Art Fair for Contemporary Objects show would be a house of riddles. Instead, it was a veritable greenhouse of experiments with new materials. The show comprised of 32 international galleries, hailing from nearby, in the U.K., Scandinavia, Belgium, Germany, and The Netherlands, as well as far flung countries such China, Japan, and South Korea. Whereas other concurrent art fairs, like this year's Frieze, showcase provocative images, COLLECT focuses on provocative *craft*.

For example, the artist and silversmith David Clarke, distorts how we perceive everyday tools such as cutlery. By upcycling metal materials, and creating decorative, but typically less functional pieces, he's created an *Alice in Wonderland* scene of objects that have personality but don't quite work.



Jacqueline Ryan's *Booch*, made from blue shaded enamel cones

Or take, for instance, the Brazilian and Italian artist Paulo Goldstein. Goldstein concentrates in model-making and stop-motion animation, and worked on Wes Anderson's *Fantastic Mr. Fox* and Tim Burton's *Frankenweenie*. His pieces turn tools in need of repair into entirely new sculptures, in which the strings and wooden pieces that are fixing the objects look instead like intriguing new additions, rather than casts, or bandaids for tools.

Some artists are asking fewer questions about the utility of materials, and more about the meaning we assign to some physical elements and not others. Japanese artist Hotomi Hosono's vases, bowls, and sculptures all trick the eye into seeing flowers where there are feathers, or fruits where there should be a bowl.



Limo by David Clarke

Other artists play with our notions of knitting, or subvert traditional ideas about where you wear jewelry on your body (see Évelie Mouila for an elegant example). Others are pushing the boundaries of 3-D printing into intricate and delightful places.

[h/t It's Nice That]



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