



From Belgian diesel tanks to Ivory Coast medallions, PAD London fair offers an eclectic mix

The design fair's 18th edition enjoyed strong sales on its opening day

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Misha Khan's tapestry *The Slippery Feel of Inevitability* (2016), at Friedman Benda
Photo: Andrew Meredith; courtesy of the artist and Friedman Benda

You could be forgiven for thinking it was just chat and Chanel handbags as the VIPs flooded into PAD's tent on Berkeley Square yesterday. The design fair attracted an exuberant crowd on opening day to its 67-strong gallery line-up. But there was already some serious business

underway. The Parisian gallery Lafanour sold a Pierre Jeanneret Chandigarh console, while the London dealer Charles Burnand was in discussions over a huge ceramic wall work by the Brooklyn artist Peter Lane.

Also highly desirable were two works in unglazed white porcelain by the late Japanese ceramist Taizo Kuroda. “I went to his studio in Izu to collect these pieces, around 2019,” says the dealer Tristan Hoare. Such is Kuroda’s reputation in Japan that the atelier has been opened as a public attraction since his death.

At New York gallery Friedman Benda, a round onyx coffee table by the US artist Adam Pendleton demonstrates the increasingly porous boundary between art and design. Where his paintings deploy letters and marks, his furniture reduces form to circles and straight lines, a lesson in three-dimensional geometry. Behind Pendleton’s table hangs *The Slippery Feel of Inevitability*, a riotously coloured tapestry by the New York designer Misha Kahn, which was recently seen in *The Devil Wears Prada 2*.

Elsewhere, design carries a more explicit historical charge. Designer Sofie Middernacht creates large-scale consoles, curving benches and small stools from the steel tanks installed outside post-war Belgian houses to hold diesel for heating, on show at the Brussels gallery Objects With Narratives. She leaves the metal encrusted with mud and tar, and finishes the work with resin in jewel-like colours. At FUMI gallery’s stand was the Ghanaian ceramist Kobina Adusah’s first work in bronze, “a reconstruction and deconstruction of the Abusua Kuruwa, a traditional vessel rooted in African culture,” Adusah says.

Meanwhile, the jeweller Glenn Spiro, called back some of his most audacious creations for a retrospective display. Spiro turns historic finds—mammoth bone, sliced rubies, Mughal gems, gold baulé medallions from the Ivory Coast—into living works with additional diamonds and stones. Not for the faint-hearted perhaps, but good enough for Beyoncé, who is a fan and owner of Spiro’s work.

- [PAD London](#) ↗, *Berkeley Square, London, until 18 October*