



Innovation Design Pushes Boundaries at Collective Design 2016

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by James 'Ford' Huniford

The first week of May brought me to New York's [Collective Design](#): an annual showcase highlighting the most innovative works of contemporary design. Founded with the intention of highlighting innovative new projects as well as the staggering diversity of practices in the contemporary design market, the fair features a wide range of collectible works.

Now entering its fourth year, the fair still fills me with such a sense of wonder and discovery, walking through the collections and coming upon the most pristinely curated vintage pieces as well as cutting-edge new creations. Filling the expansive space of the Skylight Clarkson Square, the 2016 design fair displayed the work of 33 exhibitors from 12 international design capitals—from Beijing to Paris.

This year's fair also included the launch of a new feature, "Collective Concept," a series of booths that allowed invited designers to exhibit their work without gallery representation. The first set of exhibitors featured the work of [Lindsey Adelman](#), [Apparatus Studio](#), [Fort Standard](#), [Calico Wallpaper](#) and [Cocobolo Design](#). The resulting work in numerous media reflects the impressive diversity of creative and aesthetic approaches in contemporary design.

I have always been enamored with the strange and elegant shapes of ceramics presented by [Hostler Burrows](#), a New York gallery specializing in Nordic and American design. I specifically enjoyed the innovative work of [Maren Kloppmann](#), who created sculptural wall installations. Her ceramic works feature a combination of techniques that include throwing, slab building and coiling. In the sculptural wall-mounted series *Deconstructed Wall Pillow III*, the works appear to manipulate light, casting striking, netted shadows. These pieces add drama to their wall setting, drawing on the juxtaposition of colored glazes and creating soft tensions and unique geometries.



"Deconstructed Wall Pillow III" by Maren Kloppmann.
Hostler Burrows.



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Another gem of the fair was a selection of works by new media artists [Jim Campbell](#), [Airan Kang](#) and [Yorgo Alezopolous](#), painter [José Parlá](#), and photographer [Stephen Wilkes](#) shown by [Bryce Wolkowitz Gallery](#). The booth presented a decidedly futuristic (and photogenic) impression, striking a dramatic contrast between its digital landscapes and nearby vintage furniture forms.

In Campbell's new LED installation *Exploded View*, a field of small round lights is projected like a cresting wave as a silhouetted, digitally generated swimmer moves throughout the space.

Stunning, too, was the work presented by [Donzella Ltd.](#), a curated gallery space that specializes in post-war design. Donzella's catalog of period furniture and lighting always sets exceptional standards of form, quality, and rarity. This year was no exception. The pieces on display, curated by Paul Donzella, were organized around themes of "sculptural forms with strong architectural references."

A particularly dramatic example was a piece by [Roberto Gulio Rida](#) titled *Compasso*, a cocktail table of solid brass legs encircling a blue-hued lens as its top. I was also taken with [Claire Falkenstein](#) *Untitled Sculpture*, a brutalist assemblage of welded and patinated copper with fused Murano glass elements and a heavy-gauge wire orb form in the center.



"Compasso" by Roberto Gulio Rida. Donzello LTD.



"Untitled Sculpture" by Claire Falkenstein. Donzello LTD.

In addition to my perennial favorites, I was particularly taken with the [Calico Wallpaper studio](#) located in Brooklyn, presenting a dazzling array of large scale works experimenting with the capacities of both craft and form. The studio expanded its repertoire in the creation of custom, large scale, hand marbled wallpaper with a series of designs.

The Calico installation, *Satori*, explored the craft of *kintsugi*, a traditional Japanese craft of rejoining damaged pottery using a sophisticated lacquer technique and gilded finishing, highlighting the repair as inseparable from the object. In *Satori*, the process of kintsugi is interpreted through a series of massive, handmade wallcovering panels playing off the tension of light and dark—heavy and light—echoing the contrast of kintsugi ceramics' play of earth-toned clay and bright gold

gilding.

Each year offers something new. Collective Design is for both the knowledgeable and the curious. Around each corner lies a new discovery, with work that pushes the boundaries of both design and craft.



Satori "Fir", Calico Wallpaper.

BASIC FACTS: Collective Design 2016 was held May 4 - 8, 2016 at Skylight Clarkson Square in New York City. The 2017 edition will be held in May 2017 at Skylight Clarkson Square, 550 Washington St, New York, NY 10014. Visit www.collectivedesignfair.com for more information.

James "Ford" Huniford is a residential and commercial interior designer with a penchant for pure materials, clean lines and subtle details. He creates spaces that feel both inspiring and livable with his work appearing in Elle Decor, Architectural Digest, The Wall Street Journal, Vogue, W, House Beautiful among others. He is the founder of [Huniford Design Studio](#) and [Huniford Collection](#), a line of lighting, upholstery and case goods. Ford has also co-authored the book [Dwellings: Living with Great Style](#). Huniford Design Studio is based in New York City.

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