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## Fog Design + Art Fair Celebrates 10 Years With Swift Sales and Artist-First Programming

This year's edition introduced FOG Focus to spotlight young and underrepresented artists.

**Min Chen** (<https://news.artnet.com/about/min-chen-26579>), January 19, 2024



Opening night of FOG Design+Art, 2024. Photo: Nikki Ritcher.

**FOG Design+Art Fair** (<https://www.fogfair.com/>) has hit its 10-year milestone—and its stride. The 2024 edition of the fair opened on January 18 at San Francisco's waterfront Fort Mason Center to a buoyant mood, buzzing crowd, upwards of 40 booths, and, more to the point, brisk commerce.

Reports of robust sales rolled in following a sold-out preview gala the night before the fair's public opening. David Zwirner sold a raft of pieces by the likes of blue-chip artists Yayoi Kusama, Wolfgang Tillmans, and Ruth Asawa; Hosfelt Gallery moved three [Jay DeFeo](https://news.artnet.com/art-world/beyond-the-rose-a-new-monograph-shines-a-light-on-abstract-expressionist-jay-defeos-unseen-photography-2388131) (<https://news.artnet.com/art-world/beyond-the-rose-a-new-monograph-shines-a-light-on-abstract-expressionist-jay-defeos-unseen-photography-2388131>), works. Over at Gladstone Gallery, a Jim Hodges canvas was bagged for \$115,000, as were several kelp-based sculptures by Anicka Yi for between \$50,000 to \$100,000 each.



Installation view of Tina Kim Gallery at FOG Design+Art 2024, featuring works by Pacita Abad, Ha Chong-Hyun, and Kibong Rhee. Courtesy of Tina Kim Gallery. Photo by Johnna Arnold.

Meanwhile, the opening evening saw Tina Kim Gallery sell works by South Korean artists including Kim Tschang-Yeul and Ha Chong-Hyun. Two Pacita Abad works were also acquired—one at \$80,000–\$100,000 and another at \$200,000–\$250,000—sales that Kim, in an emailed statement to Artnet News, linked to the late Filipino artist’s [current retrospective](https://www.sfmoma.org/exhibition/pacita-abad/) at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

“San Francisco is a key location for many of our artists, as it was the place of so much creative activity, ripe especially for artists of color,” she added. “Our artists are very well-placed in that context.”



The David Zwirner booth on the opening night of FOG Design+Art, 2024. Photo: Nikki Ritcher.

The city itself has come into focus at this year's FOG, which leads with the theme, "A Love Letter to San Francisco." The message is intended to highlight "the many ways FOG contributes to and supports our vibrant ecosystem," said Douglas Durkin, one of the fair's steering committee members, in a statement. It's hard to argue otherwise as FOG, while not boasting the scale of a San Francisco Art Fair or Art Market San Francisco, has left quite the imprint on the city's cultural landscape.

For one, SFMOMA, with help from the FOG Forum Fund, has long acquired works at the fair for its permanent collection (the opening gala benefits the museum as well). And you can't miss the institution's latest purchases: little red cards identify the pieces it has on hold or has snapped up.



Katie Stout, *Pink Jill* (2023). Photo courtesy of R & Company.

This year, SFMOMA has affixed its red labels on works ranging from legendary French designer Maria Pergay's iconic stainless-steel *Chaise Anneaux / Ring Chair* (1968) to Chinese artist Duyi Han's *Oxytocin Cabinet* (2023), an elongated, pagoda-shaped cupboard with a lushly embroidered silk skin. At [R & Company \(https://r-and-company.com/\)](https://r-and-company.com/), a vessel by New York-based sculptor Katie Stout, titled *Pink Jill* (2023) and featuring her signature non-traditional florals, made the cut, too. "I could have sold these pieces 20 times over," the gallery's principal Zesty Meyers told me about the work.

FOG's twinned emphasis on art *and* design further made for wonderfully textured presentations. There were hard-edged, geometric designs by Berlin-based artist Claudia Wiesner at [Jessica Silverman \(https://jessicasilvermangallery.com/\)](https://jessicasilvermangallery.com/)—which sold two of her wooden sculptures for \$12,000 and \$18,000; and two stainless-steel and ceramic works at \$35,000 each—and organic offerings at Sarah Myerscough Gallery, where SFMOMA acquired British studio Full Grown's tree-grown *Storm Chair*.



Installation view of Jessica Silverman at FOG Design+Art, 2024. Courtesy of Jessica Silverman, San Francisco. Photo: Phillip Maisel.



Installation view of Sarah Myerscough at FOG Design+Art, 2024. Photo: Johnna Arnold.

"I have to say the Bay Area audience is always really responsive to what we do," Freya McLeavy, senior director at [Sarah Myerscough Gallery](https://www.sarahmyerscough.com/) (<https://www.sarahmyerscough.com/>), told me. "I think with the landscape in this region, they immediately have quite meaningful connections to the works we're showing, which are focused on natural materials and crafting processes."



First-time exhibitors also made the most of FOG's happy coupling of art and craft. New York's [Marianne Boesky Gallery](https://marianneboeskygallery.com/) (<https://marianneboeskygallery.com/>), debuted artist Michaela Yearwood-Dan's botanically themed ceramics in a solo booth presentation, while Mexico's AGO Projects brought to vivid life a Polanco apartment, adorned with zesty furniture by Fabien Cappello, ceramics by Myungjin Kim, and richly-hued photographs by Yvonne Venegas.

AGO's hot-ticket item, though? A delightful family of [five earthenware vessels](https://ago-projects.com/work/cocodrilo-xl/?from=exhibition&from_slug=ago-projects-fog-design-art-2024) ([https://ago-projects.com/work/cocodrilo-xl/?from=exhibition&from\\_slug=ago-projects-fog-design-art-2024](https://ago-projects.com/work/cocodrilo-xl/?from=exhibition&from_slug=ago-projects-fog-design-art-2024)), shaped like crocodiles and crafted by Taller Los Tepalcates, an Oaxaca-based handicraft outfit headed by "two ladies in their 60s," according to AGO's co-founder Rudy Weissenberg. "The alligators have found a home," he told me. "We could have sold five families."



Michaela Yearwood-Dan, *A Wish* (2023) (detail). Photo: Deniz Guzel. © Michaela Yearwood-Dan. Courtesy the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen.

All of the above is just one section of the fair. To mark its first decade, FOG has launched a new platform to spotlight art and design by young and underrepresented artists. Housed in the adjacent Pier 2 building, once home to the San Francisco Art Institute, FOG Focus had a smashing first outing, which arrayed nine galleries—and a pop-up bagel shop made entirely of felt.

Yes, British artist Lucy Sparrow's terrific [Feltz Bagel](https://news.artnet.com/art-world/lucy-sparrow-nyc-felt-bagel-shop-2371777) installation (<https://news.artnet.com/art-world/lucy-sparrow-nyc-felt-bagel-shop-2371777>) was an undoubted smash feature at FOG Focus, drawing an unceasing flow of visitors eager to get their hands on felted babkas, felted bags of chips, felted packs of cigarettes, felted caviar tins, and the like. Sparrow was also on hand to build customized bagels; buyers had their choice of fillings from felted arugula, lox, mushroom slices, and more. When I popped by just after noon, she was busy sewing up her 10th bagel of the day. "People are hungry!" she told me jokingly.



Lucy Sparrow at her Feltz Bagel installation at FOG Focus, 2024. Photo: Min Chen.

Elsewhere at FOG Focus, San Francisco gallery [Et al. \(https://etaletc.com/\)](https://etaletc.com/), offered a solo showcase of artist Laurie Reid's stark yet compelling paintings alongside her new endeavor, jewelry. They include rings and necklaces studded with vintage diamonds and Tahitian pearls. "She never does anything in half-measures," Aaron Harbour, one of the gallery's directors, told me about the artist. "She's been to mines where the gold comes from. The same focus that is in the paintings is in the jewelry."

Another local gallery, [CULT Aimee Friberg \(https://cultexhibitions.com/\)](https://cultexhibitions.com/), produced a downright joyous presentation of watercolor paintings and felt sculptures by Japanese artist Masako Miki. Depicting folkloric shapeshifters, they're colorful works that appear playful and spirited, while harboring deeper layers of meaning about life and death.



Installation view of CULT Aimee Friberg at FOG Focus, 2024. Photo: Min Chen.

Buyers have been responsive as well: Friberg has sold three of Miki's works, while two works by Atlanta-based fiber artist Adana Tillman were sold by [Jonathan Carver Moore](https://www.jonathancarvermoore.com/) (<https://www.jonathancarvermoore.com/>), at the gala. Schlomer Haus reported that nearly half of its display was reserved, just as long-standing Oakland gallery [Johansson Projects](https://johanssonprojects.com/) (<https://johanssonprojects.com/>) noted curator interest in one of Miguel Arzabe's woven paintings.

"Last night, I probably heard 100 times [from gala-goers] that this was their favorite section," Friberg told me. "I think it's this spacious ability to see galleries that are really thinking rigorously about what they're showing. It's FOG understanding that people want to get in a little bit deeper than just having this commercial sales platform."

Indeed, as part of FOG Focus, the fair has introduced an artist-in-residence program, throwing emphasis behind art-making as much as art-selling. José Figueroa, who has been based in Oakland since 2015, is FOG's first resident artist and has been tasked with sketching visitors and scenes throughout the fair's run (he's been posting these works [online](https://www.josejoaquinfigueroa.com/) (<https://www.josejoaquinfigueroa.com/>)). His massive mural, stitching together his various drawings of the Golden Gate Bridge, dominates the top floor of Pier 2, alongside a screen displaying video documentation of his work on site.





José Figueroa's live drawing of the FOG Talk, "Sustaining the Bay Area's Creative Ecosystem." Photo courtesy of José Figueroa.

So dedicated is Figueroa to this undertaking that he was live drawing onstage while participating in a FOG Talk panel. The piece, he showed me later, charmingly detailed audience members in his signature figurative style, with injections of text and washes of red and purple watercolors. "This is a new environment for me," he told me. "I'm teaching myself how to better represent it."

Figueroa's past in situ drawings have centered on milieus from nude beaches to gay bars and while he's attended his share of fairs, an event such as FOG makes for an "interesting," if "overwhelming," subject. Still, he's taken to the residency, characterizing it as a "free-flow experience and experiment" that further enables him to make connections throughout the fair.

And while his mural at FOG Focus reads like a love letter to San Francisco, Figueroa is quick to stress that his work—and his affections—aren't contained by geography. "It's not just with the city; it's with art," he said. "This practice is just a way of adapting to any circumstance and to be able to show artistry. I do it everywhere."

*FOG Design+Art is on view at Fort Mason Center, 2 Marina Blvd, San Francisco, California, January 18–21.*

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