

## Charles Saumarez Smith, Royal Academy of Arts, Chooses His Top Events

I have been interested in the Crafts pretty well all my life, not least because I am married to a Bookbinder-turned-Jeweller, who was trained at Camberwell School of Arts in the late 1970s and then worked as a bookbinder for nearly twenty years before turning to the more miniature world of fine art jewellery.

As a result, we have always followed, and as far as possible collected, the work of other craftspeople, first at the Cropredy Gallery in North Oxfordshire which was run by Ann Hartree in a barn owned by the Crossmans, later through the Crafts Council shop at the V&A and Marsden Woo, and more recently by going on annual pilgrimages to Collect at the V&A and the Saatchi Gallery.

In the early 1980s, craft was either low value and rural in the Bernard Leech rustic tradition or low value and urban in a funky Crafts Council way. What I have watched with the utmost interest is the way that Craft practice has gradually become properly accepted, as it should be, as a fine art with the emergence of practitioners who would not dream of being called craftspeople like Grayson Perry, Edmund de Waal and Hylton Nel. Just as important has been the emergence of dealers and galleries who treat the work with appropriate seriousness, like Adrian Sassoon and The New Craftsman.

London Craft Week will bring this form of practice which sits between art, traditional craft and luxury goods to a wider public.

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