

CRAFT AND CULTURE

To many of us, the word “craft” doesn’t immediately connote high art. Whatever its respectfully worded, Webster-provided definition (which is, incidentally, “an occupation or trade requiring manual dexterity or artistic skill”), the term makes us apt to envision dilapidated dollhouses made from popsicle sticks or glued and glittery Christmas tree ornaments — haute handiwork, not so much. So **CRAFTBOSTON**, organized by the **Society of Arts and Crafts** and running on April



9–11 at the **Seaport World Trade Center** (200 Seaport Boulevard, Boston), at first sounds like an expo of those summer-camp art-class disasters that Mom still keeps stowed alongside naked baby photos, presumably for the sole purpose of shaming us in front of holiday guests (and it works, every time). But CRAFTBOSTON will feature work from more than 200 talented artisans, including a positively breathtaking collection of contemporary design pieces from 16 inspired Israeli artists presented by the **Association of Israel's Decorative Arts (AIDA)**. It includes the wearable, like Nirit Dekel’s complexly detailed necklaces fashioned from strings of extravagantly arranged glass beads, as well as high-concept textiles from designer Edit Kaplan, who creates scarves, shawls, and other accessories that are essentially fantastical fiber sculptures (many featuring wild fringe effects that blossom like the bright tentacles of sea anemones). Other wow-worthy highlights include ceramic artist Yael Atzmony’s gorgeous bowls, vases, and objets d’art (which will have houseguests praising your post-Pottery Barn taste) and Talila Abraham’s ornate “metalace” works, which transform stainless steel into delicately detailed pieces (tabletop bowls, candleholders, and serving ware) inspired by lace fabric. The variety of vendors is matched by equally diverse price points — pieces range from under \$100 to several thousand, so you’ll find something that fits your budget. But all are united by a Middle Eastern aesthetic that serves AIDA’s ultimate goal: to support and promote Israeli decorative artists. A just intent, even if “craft” hardly does justice. Tickets are \$15; for hours and more info, visit craftboston.org.

— Scott Keenan

