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Elemental force



On the face of it, putting a historical chair on the top of a building in Peckham to face the icy extremes of a London winter, then transporting it to a scorching Californian desert, may not seem the most expedient way of imbuing it with new life. But that's just what London duo [Clarke & Reilly](#) have done with eight chairs for an exhibition at [Gallery Libby Sellers](#) next month, with fascinating results.

Clarke & Reilly, AKA David Grocott and Bridget Dwyer, are known for reinterpreting 'lost' pieces of furniture, and describe their style, which is informed by historical knowledge and craftsmanship, as 'unashamedly romantic and tirelessly imaginative'.

Each of the eight chairs chosen for the project was selected for its specific character, and has been reinvented, usually with antique fabrics, before being exposed to the elements first in Peckham, then California. Each chair then underwent a final process back in the studio before being deemed ready to be displayed at the gallery, alongside film and photography documenting its journey.

Tying in with the experimental nature of the exhibition, Clarke & Reilly have also collaborated with the perfumer Azzi Glasser, who has devised a signature scent for the exhibition based on the environments in which the chairs have been placed, and the consequences of these conditions on fabric and structure.

The exhibition runs from March 14 to April 27 at Gallery Libby Sellers, 41-42 Berners Street, W1.

Works courtesy of Gallery Libby Sellers and Clarke & Reilly; prices on application

Photo credits, from left: Clarke & Reilly; Laurence Passera; Laurence Passera; James Ostrer