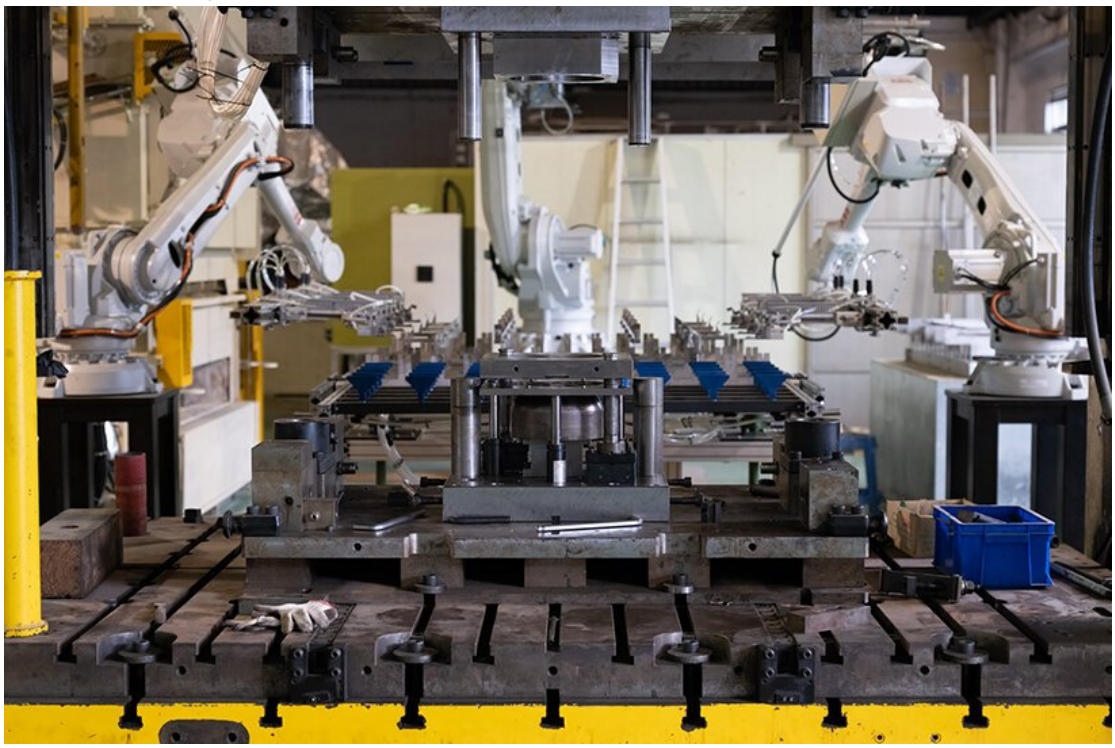
NTCRI and yung-ling tseng explore the future of metal art crafting

fusing materials and making as well as local creators and international collaborators, national taiwan craft research and development institute' s (NTCRI) neo-taiwanese craftsmanship exhibition showcases the latest of the country' s craft artworks online on maison & objet and more. it highlights the work of metal art, which has become increasingly diverse over the last decades. metalsmiths embrace and experiment with different technologies, mixed media and contemporary influences. on the MOM platform, one innovative yet traditional crafter and her work – 'the commotion in the back garden' by yung-ling tseng – epitomizes this bright artisanal future.

'the commotion in the back garden' containers by yung-ling tseng

all images courtesy of national taiwan craft research and development institute

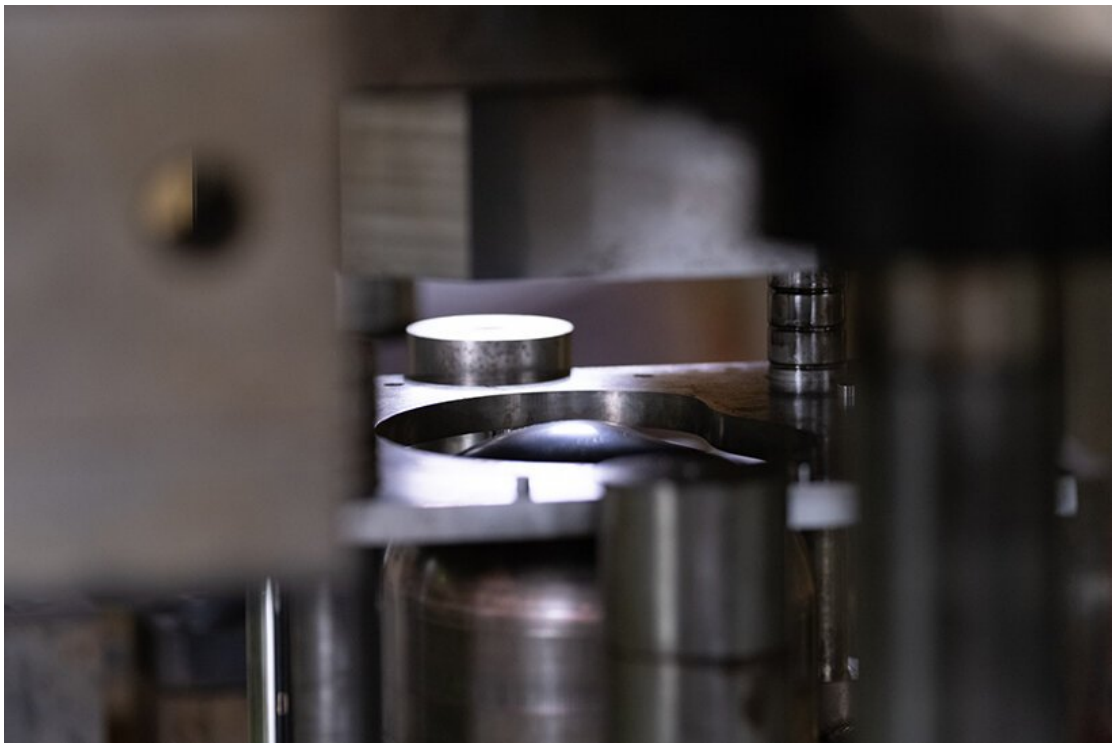
yung-ling tseng has been devoted to the practice of metal art for over 20 years; she creates, teaches, writes and presents curatorial projects related to metalsmithing. she is also an assistant professor at the department of industrial design, chaoyang university of technology. as part of the NTCRI' s metal industries research and development centre (MIRDC) – as well as online on MOM – **she created 'the commotion in the back garden' designs as a series of stainless steel and copper containers.** they showcase her wild use of imagination as well as ambition to interplay digital crafting when it comes to metal art. vibrant in color and soft yet powerful in appearance, the designs overthrow stereotypes of metalwork. they use techniques such as stamping, raising and sinking, and metal coloring.

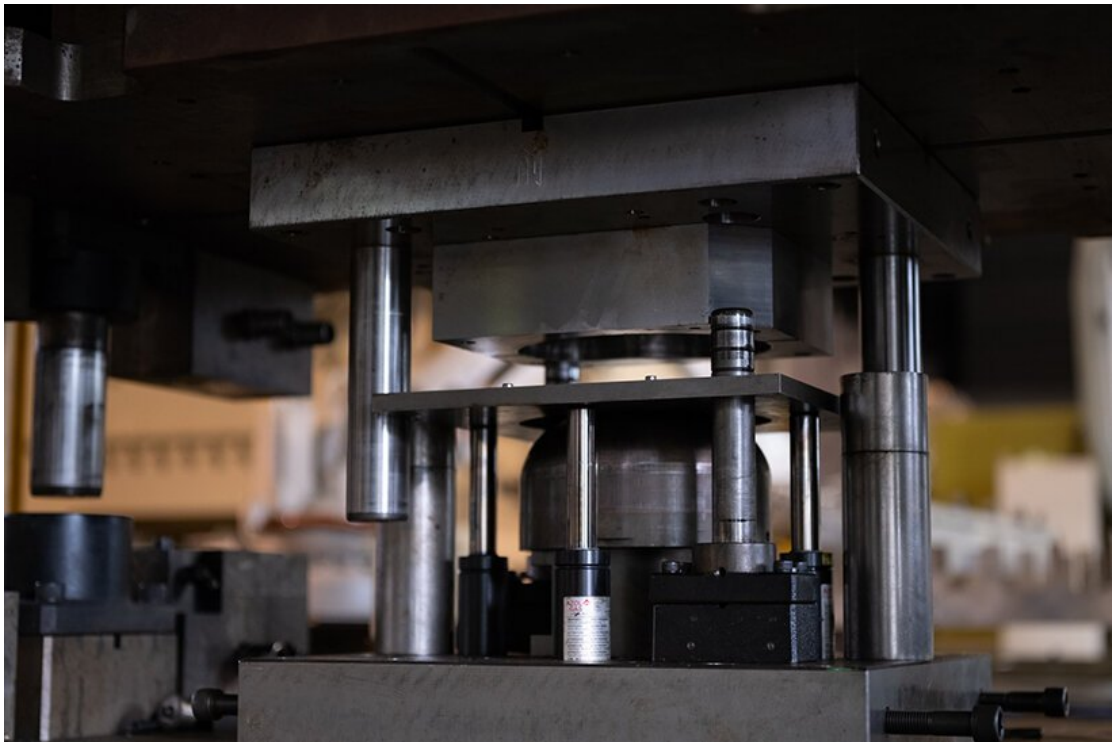


'I really enjoy seeing ink flow and bleed in water,' tells yung-ling tseng about aluminum anodizing. *'aluminum is more reactive than other metals. once aluminum is electrolyzed, tiny holes appear on its surface, and they can absorb dyes and create an effect similar to ink wash painting. although*

enameling also colors aluminum, colored powder produced with this technique is not solvable, making color mixing an impossible task when employing such colored powder'

the crafter learnt the skill of aluminum anodizing as a student but became fascinated after seeing the work of british artist jane adam. **the technique enables her to play with colors in her metal work** as well as accentuate all the reflective lights and textures of the material. it is just one of her favorable techniques alongside raising and sinking, and fold-forming methods.





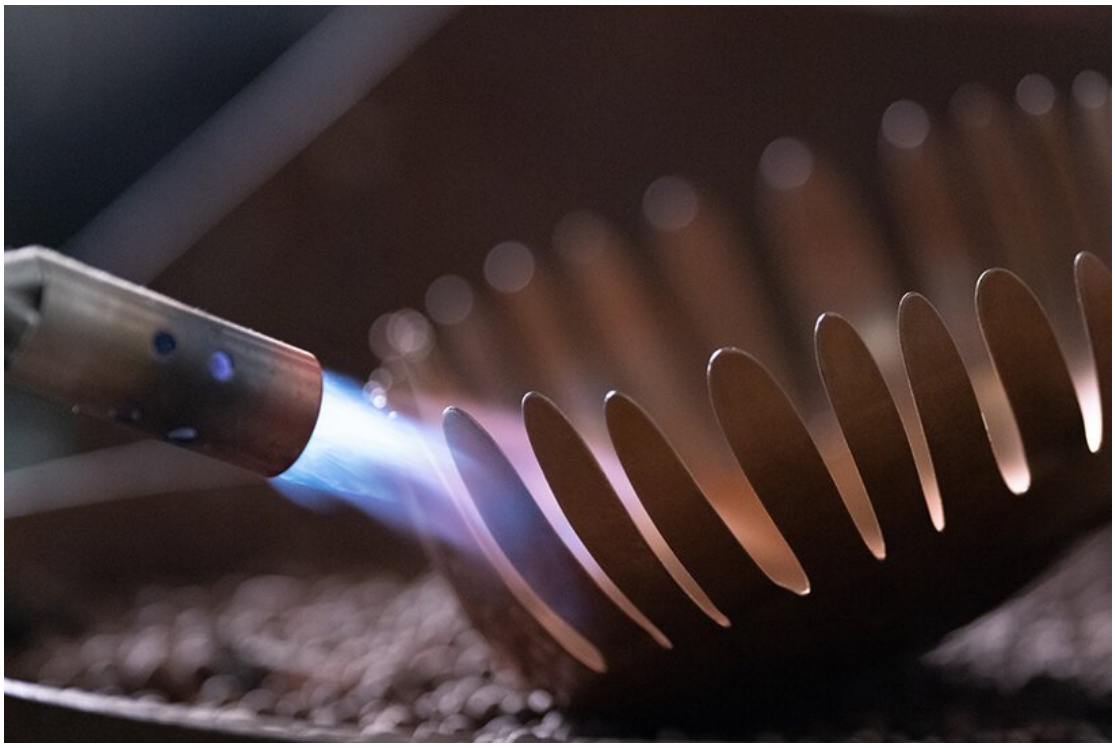
yung-ling tseng' s use of many different techniques highlights her openness to transdisciplinary practices. for her, it all depends on 'what you need' . she does not see a differentiation between crafts, arts of design, but producing is a must for all. that is why she is always looking at embracing technology – to help push boundaries and improve efficiency. rapid prototyping and 3D printing are just two digital technologies that the crafter is experimenting with in the making of metal works.

'preparing yourself for transdisciplinary practices is more important. young artists have to figure out the most important values as human beings and work harder on basic skills since they are receiving a greater amount of information. you have to produce lots of works to know which forms of art you favor. to fly, you have to stand first,' states tseng.

tseng does have hesitations for new technologies, though, especially the over-reliance on 3D printing. it is a tool that cannot yet replicate the texture of the material. the handmade characteristics are still the most important element in craft; the artisanal touch evokes emotion from the object to the user and owner. anodized aluminum is one such technique where she has

found a balance between digital and handmade. the artworks of ‘the commotion in the back garden’ do so, too. they were commissioned for the NTCRI’s ‘early research on the application of the forming of metal sheets -raising and sinking the metal blank’ from MIRDC. this reduced the workload so that yung-ling tseng could focus on just the creative process. **the pieces encompass the integration of crafts and modern technology as well as fine art and applied art to traditional yet crafted.**

see ‘the commotion in the back garden’ by yung-ling tseng in NTRCI’s neo-taiwanese craftsmanship exhibition on MOM – here.



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designer: yung-ling tseng