

# SINGAPORE DESIGN: THE ALCHEMISTS



A new generation of designers  
7 - 12 March 2017  
Singaplural  
F1 Pit Building (Level 3)

Admission: \$10

Opening hours:  
Monday - Sunday: 11am - 10pm

[www.alchemists.sg](http://www.alchemists.sg)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**15 talents from Singapore explore the magic in design through the looking glass of a new alchemy: a selection of tools and objects inspired by the alchemical process of transforming substances such as lead into gold.**

7 March 2017 sees the opening of 'The Alchemists' exhibition at Singaplural, held at the F1 Pit Building, during Singapore Design Week 2017.

'The Alchemists' is a nod to the Italian movement of the 1970s, Studio Alchimia, whose members' experimental design pieces resulted in a design language and creativity that challenged the status quo. It was a radical design movement that pushed the boundaries of design, and changed the global design landscape for the future.

The title also aims to convey a seemingly magical element, or role, that exists in the act of designing or making. The alchemist of yesteryear dedicated their life to the transformation of materials, from the ordinary to the precious, most commonly from metal into gold. The starting point for 'The Alchemists' project was 'the designer as alchemist: what can be designed by applying the process of transmutation?'

'The Alchemists' is curated by Italian editor, writer and designer Stefano Casciani, and co-curated by designer Patrick Chia, who is also the founding director of Singapore's Design Incubation Centre.

A new generation of designers from Singapore embarked on a creative investigation through design - of language, mythologies, and philosophies. Various materials were explored, from nylon laser sintering to resin pouring, from liquid colouring of ceramics to acrylic textiles moulding. However, 'the intent of the show is not to simply exhibit new production technologies, but to develop along with them, a more contemporary attitude for designing in the global context', mentions Casciani, Italian curator for the show.

'By selecting designers that vary in age and experience, the showcase hopes to reflect on the current state of design from a Singapore perspective. More importantly, this project hopes to serve both as a converging and a departure point for more dialogue and collaboration among this group of designers, as well as future generations of designers to come', says Chia.

'The Alchemists' showcase is the result of a lecture and workshop series. These design prototypes were shown in an exhibition at the Triennale di Milano in April 2015, as part of Milan Design Week - the largest and most important design event internationally.

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END



### Les Raconteurs (The Storytellers)

Afzel B. Imram

Base - W285 x D285 x H10 mm

Cubes - W20 x D20 x H20 mm, 42 pieces

Slate, maple wood

This is an interactive artefact that depicts archaeological drawings found in Burkina Faso that have never been deciphered. Inspired by how players create meaning with tiles of alphabets in some board games, this tool encourages one to interpret those mysterious symbols through the composition of stories, thus participating in the effort to understand them.



### Ming 647 Chair

Colin Seah (Ministry of Design)

W700 x D580 x H1075 mm

Steel, copper finish

This steel wire seat is inspired by the silhouette and gravitas that the traditional timber Ming bow back chair commanded, and challenged by the desire to invert it into something opposite – light, airy, and colour infused. It is an answer to the designer's question "how can a ubiquitous piece of traditional furniture be challenged and updated?"



### Colour Bowls

Eason Chow & Tricia Chean

W190 x D190 x H48 mm and W60 x D160 x H280 mm

Acrylic

The juxtaposition of two objects magnifies the transmutation of colours we perceive as illusions. The red cascade that seemingly seeps from the apple represents its weight, but also the significance of perception in dictating how we understand our surroundings. The short bowl remains clear as there is no object resting its visual weight onto it.



Pour  
Hans Tan  
W500 x D500 x H600 mm  
Resin, Fibreglass, ABS, Powder-coated Steel

This table is cast with its top surface faced down without a mould, using gravity and the surface tension of resin made viscous to form the multi coloured table surface, where each colour puddle is individually poured.

The curing time of the resin is controlled and layered with precision so that each colour to not mix with the adjacent one to generate the multi-coloured puddles.





### Spotted Nyonya

Hans Tan

180 x H165, 170 x 170 x 210 and 310 x 135 x 135

Porcelain, bamboo handle

This contemporary take on Nyonya porcelain vessels – traditional wares of Chinese-Peranakans in South East Asia – transforms their surface into a new dotted pattern. The pieces masked with the new motif are sandblasted, so that the areas protected are preserved, while the glaze sections from exposed areas are erased, revealing the white porcelain which lies beneath.







## MATr

Jolene Ng & Lee Si Min

W201 x D201 x H220 mm

Laser sintered nylon

The MATr series was borne out of the constraints and the optimisation principles of 3D printing. MATr envisions support structures as design objects, produced in a co-dependent fashion, with four products in the same print cycle of one.

While laser sintering allows for fantastical forms to be created, the freedom to push the limits of the design objects produced with such methods leads us to make objects that are too fragile to survive the printing process and the subsequent extraction from the printer. MATr reimagines the support structures that make these objects possible, as separate designed objects in their own right, giving rise to the manufacturing of objects within other objects.

Each MATr yields a Basket, a Bowl, a Vase and a Lampshade.







## Transformation Bags

Karyn Lim

Folded: 170 x 170 x 80 mm, 240 x 200 x 80 mm, 300 x 200 x 200 mm

Plywood, felt, vinyl, magnets

Experience a little magic as these bags magically transform from a flat object to a volume in one swift motion. Made from a semi-flexible membrane of plywood pieces and fabric, the shape of each bag is controlled by the various patterns of geometry. Designed to surprise the user by discovering 2D objects becoming 3D.





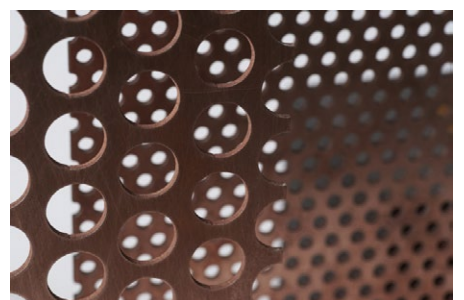
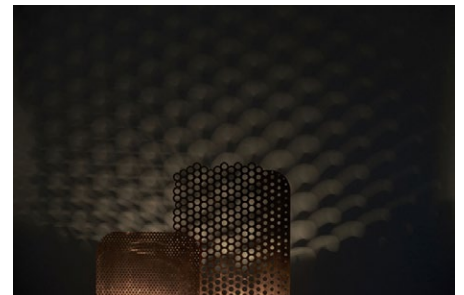
## Plexus Lamps

Kiera Lin

W300 x D142 x H580 mm, W257 x D117 x H405 mm

Copper, resin

Ancestral and contemporary materials such as copper and resin have been chosen for this sensual set of lamps, which explores the overlapping and transition of patterns formed by light passing through perforated surfaces – an homage to the oriental tradition of delicate screens to modulate natural and artificial lighting at home.





## Fools' Gold

Lanzavecchia + Wai

W435 x D435 x H1800 mm, W1200 x D360 x H650 mm

Chrome car wrap vinyl, galvanized corrugated steel, powder-coated mild steel structure

Inspired by the laminates used by creators of the Alchimia group in the late 1970's, Lanzavecchia + Wai employs this approach to gold-chrome car wrap and volumes of rudimentary function constructed out of corrugated steel sheets. This is done to purposefully increase their value perception, while concurrently revealing its actual humble materiality. The corrugated property not only gives the metal sheet its structural strength, but also maximizes surface area for car wrap application, thereby having more "value" than a regular steel sheet. It is within this conceptual and aesthetic tension that this object dwells.

The range and possibilities of this aesthetic palette is further expanded by vinyl's ability to be printed and laser-cut with texture.

This concept riffs off the prevailing trend in car-modification culture, covering up panels in stock paint with swathes of textured colour vinyl as the owner fancies; more often than not resulting in a veritable mobile Pop-Art sculpture.



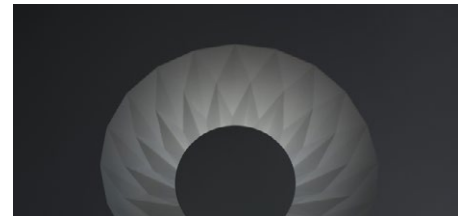
## Ruchette

Desinere (Melvin Ong)

W300 x D200 x H360mm

Maple wood base, painted metal reflector, 3D printed shade

The alchemy in this object – inspired in form by the ruffs adorning Elizabethian costumes — sees a marriage of craft, technology and materials where the intricate pattern and nuances of hand pleated paper are captured onto a 3D printed surface coupled with an eclectic mix of spun wood, metal and 3D printed nylon.





Float

Olivia Lee

Dia. 450cm x H550mm

Cast resin, lotus leaves, powder coated steel legs

An illusion for the home – a levitating lotus pond supported by a trio of intertwining stems. Each table is unique, containing an arrangement of lotus leaves sourced from South East Asia. Behaving like a giant plano-convex lens, Float creates many surprising optical and visual effects. Everyday becomes a magical affair, as reality appears to distort around this table.





## Instruments of Beauty (Divine Tools)

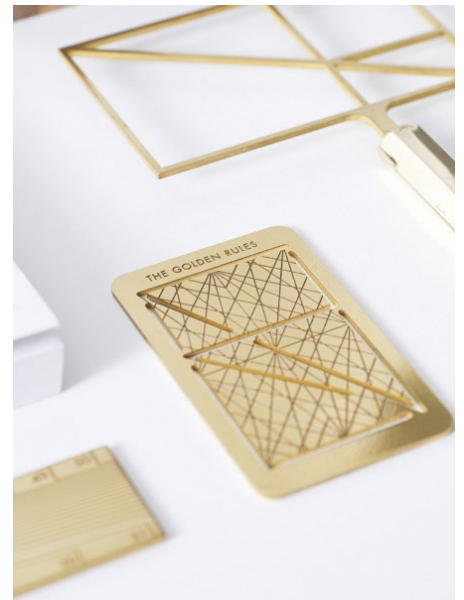
Olivia Lee

Set of 9 tools, various dimensions

Gold-plated stainless steel, brass, acrylic, clear mirror glass, ash wood, paper

This is a collection of tools personifying mankind's yearning for beauty and meaning in the world. Just as the Alchemists sought after enlightenment through the pursuit of immortality, the Ancient Greeks looked for divinity in the correlation of mathematics, sciences and arts. They believed divinity could be found in the Golden Ratio ("Divina Proportione", according to Italian mathematician Pacioli) a geometric relationship as old as the spiral of the nautilus shell and propagated in iconic artifacts across history.

This set for vision and drawing with the Golden Ratio represents the convergence of disciplines (math, engineering, art) and ideals (spirituality, technology) – and the promise of eternity through everlasting and universal beauty. These tools invoke the mysterious force that encodes the Universe with the innate sense of proportions. These 9 tools apply the principles of the golden ratio across different formats and functions - each tool is designed to aid in the use and discovery of the divine proportion in existing or new work.







Aura Tropicale

Outofstock

Dia. 150 x H100, Dia. 90 x H100, Dia. 50 x H50

Ceramic

The honeycomb structure softly receives a drop of lemongrass extract, allowing the essence to flow down its stem-like vessels and be absorbed. This repurposed ceramic filter is possibly one of the most sophisticated industrial materials to be used in the diffusion of aroma. Its porosity holds the oil and the scent is released slowly over time.







Duck & Crane Lamp  
Studio Juju  
Dia. 150 x H340, 300mm x H1.45m  
Delrin, aluminum, LED

Through the articulation of its neck, the Duck lamp is animated in a nodding motion, which is both whimsical and functional. Crane Lamp is the taller cousin of the Duck Lamp. Its neck can be articulated to be used as an ambient light against the wall or as a directional reading lamp.





## Textile Transmutations

Tiffany Loy

Dress: W720 x H940 mm

Shawl: W1130 x H730 mm

Acrylic

“Textile Transmutations” is the creation of three-dimensional forms on textiles. The project explores a heat setting technique, and modifies it to suit a small scale production. Acrylic molds were designed to augment the form of polyester fabric, achieving a rich texture that flows throughout the material.

The three-dimensional motif on the textiles were generated from a basic module, the 20mm circle. The module was distributed in a radial manner, and overlapped to create a repeated pattern on the 3D textiles were then trimmed into different outlines.

The shapes resulting from the process are wearable on the human body as sculptural dresses to accentuate the presence of the human figure, a subject often lacking of interest in the living and product design practice.





Time & Space

Yong Jieyu

W230 x D230 x H230 mm

Marble, brass

Clocks become physical manifestations of our desire to accurately quantify and make sense of time's perpetuity. This project celebrates immeasurable time instead. By reconstructing and introducing parallax error into a clock, a once accurate instrument has been turned into an experience of perpetual movement, of time passing - inaccurate and hardly measurable.



### Quasi-Equilibrium

Yuta Nakayama

W183 x D183 x H222 mm

CCFL (cold cathode fluorescent light ), concrete mortar, aromatic humidifier, micro Controller, motion sensor

This is a responsive aromatic-diffuser that reacts by a sensor to the movement around it. The tectonic concrete base supplies heat onto drops of aromatic oil placed on its curved top, releasing aromatic vapors into the air to levitate through the stereotomic red, green and blue neon colors and to softly touch your senses.

## Designers

Afzal B. Imram  
Colin Seah (Ministry of Design)  
Eason Chow & Tricia Chean  
Hans Tan  
Jolene Ng, Lee Si Min & Donn Koh  
Karyn Lim  
Kiera Lin  
Lanzavecchia & Wai  
Melvin Ong (Désinere)  
Olivia Lee  
Outofstock  
Studio Juju  
Tiffany Loy  
Yong Jieyu  
Yuta Nakayama

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Patrick Chia

Producer: Yoichi Nakamuta

Organised by: Industry+

Space Design: Tim Power Architects

Graphic & Web Design: Fifth Column

Web Design & Development: Garage Interactive

Photography: The Primary Studio

Original Sound: Invisible Designs Lab

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The Design Society

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# About

## ABOUT INDUSTRY+

Singapore-based production company Industry+ was launched in March 2014, dedicated to producing high quality contemporary design products that are made in Asia.

Industry+ engages with various forward thinking designers from all around Asia, in a collaborative process that oversees the areas of development and production.

The development and curation that has gone into their design collection reaches beyond products - always seeking new designers and creating platforms that showcase innovative ideas in art and design. Industry+ wishes to promote and see design from Asia succeed in international platforms.

### **Industry+**

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