

A New Layer II: Design stories from Taiwan to the world

Designers from across Asia and Europe partner with Taiwanese craftspeople to produce highly experimental new design works

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Led by NTCRI (National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute), the ongoing A New Layer project and platform aims to foster new partnerships between Taiwanese and international designers and craftspeople. In 2017, the project moved into its second phase, with research and development wrapping up this month on "A New Layer II: Crafting Identities / Design Stories from Taiwan".

In order to transform traditional Taiwanese craftsmanship products into contemporary design objects and furniture, the NTCRI invited Belgium-based curator Lise Coirier as Art Director and 7 internationally based designers from France, Germany, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Sweden, and Switzerland to Taiwan to work with some of the most talented local craftspeople on the island.

The Taiwanese craftspeople, who specialize in Koji pottery, bamboo bending, lacquerware, ceramics, and indigo dyeing, were partnered with a designer or design team, to develop their cutting-edge design concepts. As part of the research phase of A New Layer, the designers traveled throughout Taiwan for numerous weeks, visiting not just the crafts people's workshops, but also sites of cultural or historical significance in Taiwan.

"The overseas designers and Taiwanese craftspeople worked together to conceive, materialize, and finalize their design, with the craftspeople revealing in the numerous challenges and new visions presented to them in their craft by the designers," says Coirier.

To date, four design projects have been completed:

- **The New Koji (Pottery) Collection** by **Anton Alvarez** (Sweden), **Zhong-Zheng Chen and Chi-Li Hsiao** (Taiwan), which revisits the classical forms presented in the traditional Koji pottery.
- **The Indigo-Dyed Bamboo Chair** by **Jin Kuramoto** (Japan) and **Jian Cheng Lin and Wen-Chun Tang** (Taiwan), which combines both the handmade bamboo bending process with the natural indigo-dyeing technique normally applied to textiles.
- **The Cong Collection** by **Julie Richoz** (Switzerland/France) and **Chin-Mei Huang** (Taiwan), lacquerware inspired by a Cong vase at held in the collection of the National Palace Museum.
- **The Bridge Bamboo Bench** by **Sebastian Herkner** (Germany) and **Ming-An Wu** (Taiwan), a technique-testing project inspired by the colorful steel bridges dotted across Taiwan.

Two more works will be completed in the coming dates:

- **The Clay Table** by **Wonmin Park** (Korea) and **Wen-Yi Kung** (Taiwan).
- **The Fruit Tower** by **BCXSJ– Boaz Cohen & Sayaka Yamamoto** (Israel/Netherlands - Japan) and **Jian-Fu Zhong** (Taiwan).

"The cross-cultural dialogue that has taken place between Taiwanese craftsmen and international designers during the course of A New Layer has enlightened and challenged both. We are really pleased to see that all the participants in the project enjoyed the process, with the designers bringing a contemporary mindset to high-quality Taiwanese craftsmanship. A New Layer has not only pushed the boundaries of both craft and design in Taiwan, but also created tangible objects and furniture that the general public can engage with," says by the director Keng-Hsiu, Hsu of NTCRI.

All A New Layer design works will be available for online viewing in a website going live on November 30, 2017, and will be exhibited and promoted internationally from 2018.

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Image Bank / Photography

Link to online press release and images:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/cvy9kefr4v8rdw8/AADUeEiBQPdFMzLUm7Xj5v0Ma?dl=0>

Image bank includes photographs of situational context and design process photographs.
Images of all 6 prototype designs will be available soon.

Image courtesy: Photo by Maciej Korbas (Poland) / Courtesy NTCRI & Taiwan Designers Web

Website and Social Media

Online from November 30, 2017:

Website: www.anewlayertaiwan.com

Instagram: @anewlayertaiwan / #anewlayerII

Facebook: @anewlayertaiwan