

SIDE GALLERY

KOICHI IO



Three Legs Vase

Manufactured by Koichi Io
Japan, 2017

Patinated kuromido (copper alloy with antimony and arsenic)
Hammer-raised and chased

Measurements

17 cm × 16,5 cm × 19h cm
6,7 in × 6,5 in × 7,5h in

Details

Unique Piece

About

Koichi Io is a Japanese designer whose practice combines the technical precision of traditional metalworking with a distinctly contemporary sculptural language. Trained in metalwork at Musashino Art University in Tokyo and later at Seoul National University, he works with specialized alloys and labor-intensive processes such as hammer-raising, chasing, and patination to create vessels distinguished by their subtle irregularities, tactile surfaces, and carefully balanced forms. Rather than treating the vessel solely as a functional object, Io explores its sculptural possibilities through variations in volume, proportion, texture, and surface. Works such as Three Legs Vase reveal the traces of their making, allowing the repeated action of the hammer and the changing qualities of the patinated metal to become integral to the final form. This dialogue between material, process, and object places his work within the continuum of Japanese metalworking traditions while expanding them through a contemporary approach to form.

Biography

Koichi Io (b. 1987, Japan) is a Japanese metal artist whose practice bridges traditional metalworking techniques and contemporary sculptural expression. He studied metalwork at Musashino Art University in Tokyo before continuing his education at Seoul National University in South Korea, developing a practice shaped by both Japanese craft traditions and a broader East Asian approach to material and making.

Working primarily with metals including silver, copper, and specialized alloys, Io employs demanding techniques such as hammer-raising and chasing, building each work gradually through repeated manual intervention. His vessels are characterized by carefully articulated volumes, subtle asymmetries, and surfaces that retain the physical traces of their production, emphasizing the relationship between material, gesture, and form.

Io has received recognition in Japan and internationally for his contribution to contemporary metalwork. In 2019, his work was selected as a finalist for the Loewe Foundation Craft Prize, bringing his practice to an international audience. Through his ongoing exploration of vessel forms and metalworking processes, he contributes to a new generation of Japanese makers who approach inherited craft knowledge not as a fixed tradition, but as a field for experimentation and contemporary expression.