

# STYLE

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13

**F**or the past 15 years, Suho Paper Museum (樹火紀念紙博物館) has challenged visitors to look at sheets of processed plant fiber with new eyes. The curators of the museum want people to see paper not just as something to paint, draw or print on — but as a medium that can be sculpted, molded, sewn and crafted into items ranging from jewelry to buildings.

The museum was opened in 1995 but its roots go back 50 years, when Chen Suho (陳樹火) founded Chang Chuen Cotton Paper (長春綿紙), which specializes in handmade and other specialty paper.

Chen wanted to create a museum that would advocate environmental conservation and cultural awareness by showcasing paper as more than a fragile and throwaway material. Before Chen could bring his plan to fruition, however, he was killed in an airplane crash in 1995. The Suho Memorial Paper Culture Foundation (樹火紀念紙文化基金會) was established to carry on his dream.

In keeping with Chen's mission, Suho Paper Museum has placed a strong emphasis on education since its opening, with regular papermaking and art classes. The ground floor houses a workshop where visitors can experience traditional papermaking for themselves, while the roof is home to an outdoor studio for children and a large, cocoon-shaped structure made entirely out of bamboo latticework by conceptual artists Yangenn Wang (王揚恩) and Yu-Chin Hsiao (蕭有志). The museum's permanent exhibition traces the history of paper around the world.

In the past few years, Suho Paper Museum has expanded its purview to design and the intersection of art with daily life.

Love Paper, Love Life (紙的幸福設計), an exhibition held earlier this year, focused on everyday objects made of paper, including dishware, lighting fixtures and furniture. Suho Paper Museum's next exhibit, which



**Ideas for Green Life** runs through July 17 at Suho Paper Museum and features art and designs that promote environmental awareness.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SUHO PAPER MUSEUM

opens late next month, will invite artists to present their own takes on the humble paper plane.

"In Taiwan, there's been a greater emphasis recently on the 'living arts,'" says Daniel Chou (周耀俊), Suho Paper Museum's spokesman. "This has given us the opportunity to expand our focus from fine arts and education to design."

In *Ideas for Green Life* (綠色生活·混搭美學), which runs through July 17, the museum is showcasing art and designs by Xu Yu-zun (徐御尊), Jundai Chen (陳君岱) and Chang Jin-lieng (張金蓮) that carries a message of environmental awareness.

"We wanted them to create work that would not only inspire people to think of how to use paper in a way that is mindful of the environment, but to make fine art relevant to daily life," says Chou.

Xu, an architect known for his sleek and modern interiors, created an installation out of 1,700 blocks made from recycled newspaper. His "brick" walls resemble the concrete fences that were once a common feature in Taiwanese residences, with diamond-shaped openings to allow sunlight through.

Each paper brick is made from newspaper cut into thin strips and left bare so text and splashes of color from photographs and advertisements are still visible. Xu's work not only stretches

preconceived ideas about what wastepaper can be recycled into, but is also a commentary on society's relationship with (and distrust of) the news media.

"Newspapers are a way of transmitting information," says Chou. "But people now rely more and more on the Internet and TV for their news. At the same time, they are also increasingly wary about the information they receive. Xu's work reflects that — the newspapers are ripped up, mixed with glue, molded and made solid again."

Multimedia artist Chang explores the similarities between the human body and other forms found in nature, including stones and leaves, in her bronze sculptures. Also included in the exhibit are her macro photographs of flowers, which look like abstract watercolors at first glance.

Chen Jundai's jewelry also draws on unexpected juxtapositions and contrasts. For *Ideas for Green Life*, she created necklaces out of egg cartons, old phonebook covers and sterling silver. Other jewelry features smooth medallions with fragile, lacelike cutouts evoking autumn leaves that have begun to disintegrate.

"A lot of artists only use paper as a medium for drawing or printing," says Chou. "But [the artists featured by Suho] transform paper into three-dimensional objects. The focus is on the paper itself."



## MUSEUM NOTES

**WHAT:** Suho Paper Museum

**WHERE:** 68, Changan E Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市長安東路二段68號). Tel: (02) 2507-5535

**OPEN:** Mondays to Saturdays from 9:30am to 4:30pm. The museum's gift shop is open until 5pm

**ADMISSION:** General admission is NT\$100. Admission including papermaking class is NT\$180

**ON THE NET:** [www.suho.org.tw](http://www.suho.org.tw)

Folding art  
into daily life

*Suho Paper Museum shines a spotlight on a material most of us take for granted*

BY CATHERINE SHU  
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