

memento
Fei Gao

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memento



Artist Statement

In my collection MEMENTO, I explore the unique culture, atmosphere, and lifestyle in China that existed at the end of the last century. The deeply ingrained memories of neon light in a dark night, a trolley passing through the city, sprawling innumerable bamboo scaffolds, the elderly walking with birdcages, as well as the typical fire escape staircases in old buildings, have all faded away, but not in my personal vision.

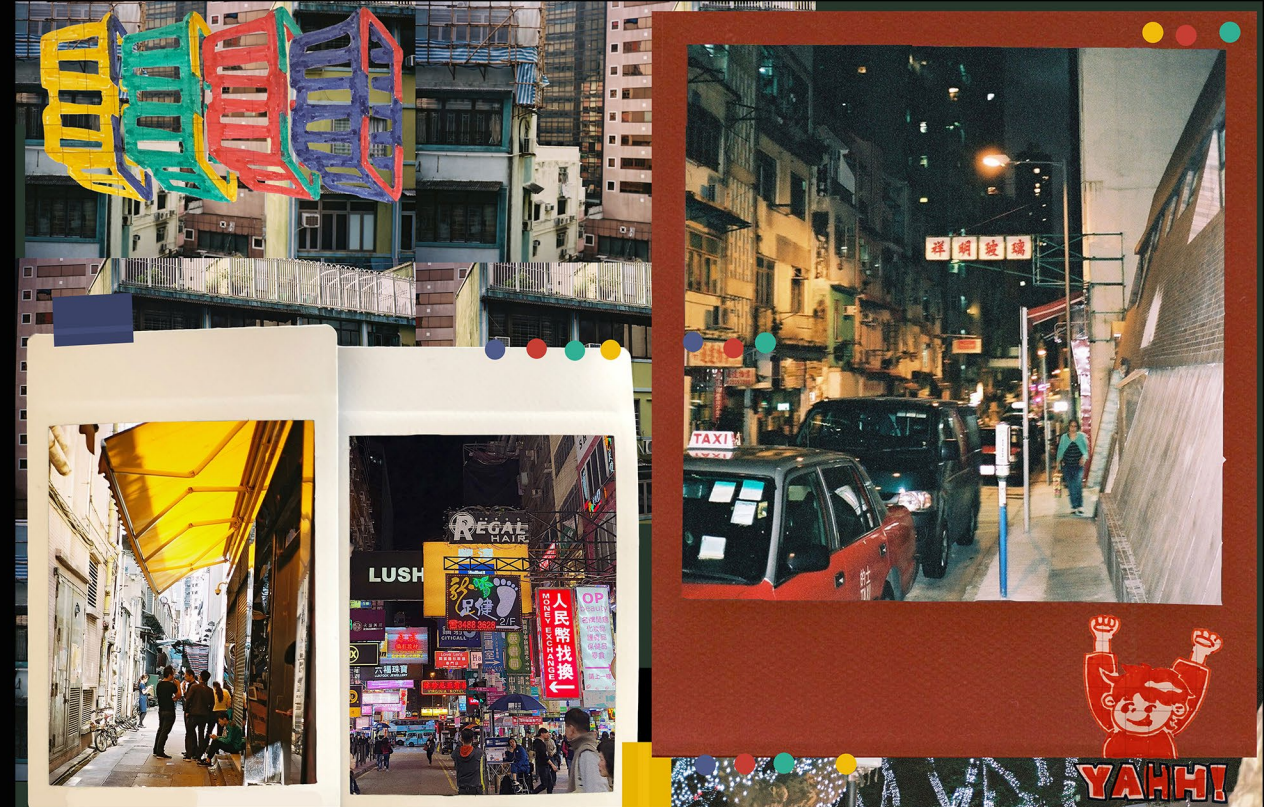
The central work of MEMENTO is a shoulder piece of scaffolding that all the other pieces in the collection interconnect with. This combination of scaffolding, accent lighting, installation, and smaller jewelry pieces transport the wearer into an idealized version of the city from my youth. Every piece is not only a wearable adornment in its own right, but also a part of the “city”. Each conveys a fragment of unforgettable memories.

Working mainly in metal, I like the malleability of silver and copper. These metals can represent the softness of bamboo or a hard rigid rebar. I love the colors and the glossy texture of enamel, and have combined it with metal for this collection. I apply plique-a-jour technique on the neon light pieces, so that light can shine through the translucent enamel to bring these streetscapes of my youth to life.

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memento 2

Moodboards



Sketches

Scaffolding

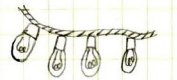
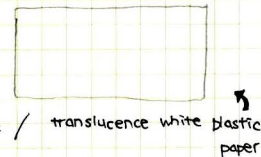
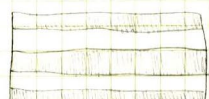
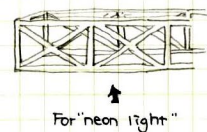
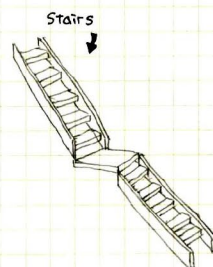
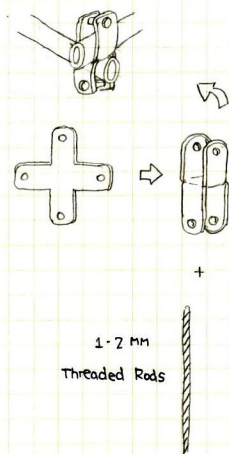
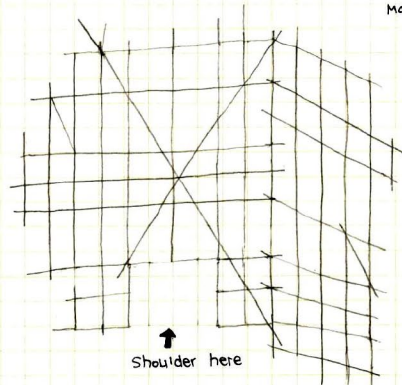
"Scaffolding" is the most important piece of my collection, because every other piece can physically connect to it, and it's also a huge-scale piece.

In my illusion, this "scaffolding" could be ~~worn~~ wore on shoulder (like 50 x 50 x 40 cm). Wearer can see from inside out (the scaffolding, everything hang on the scaffolding, and outside ...), so the wearer is like an inhabitants in the "city".

Material: copper or brass tube.

← shape of the scaffolding is not decided until I finish other small pieces

Other accessories

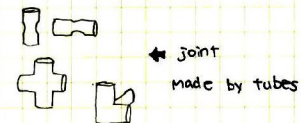
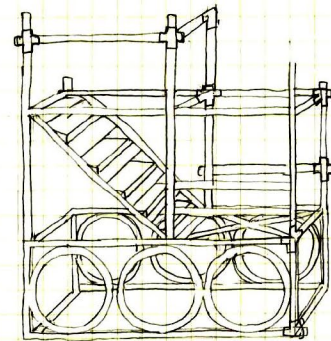
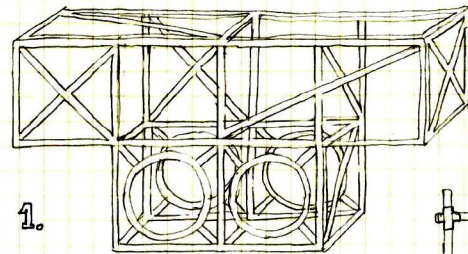


mini Scaffolding

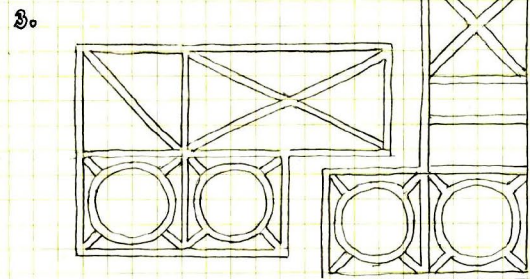
This is a mini-size of the "Scaffolding", which is more wearable in daily life.

ring

Sketch



2 rings fit together

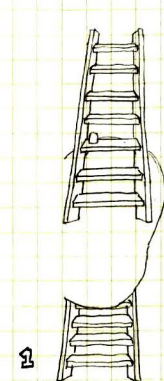
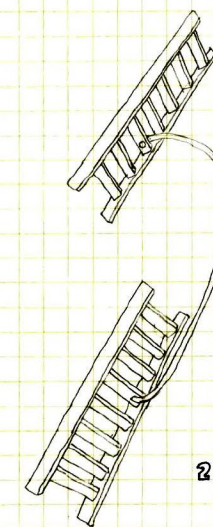
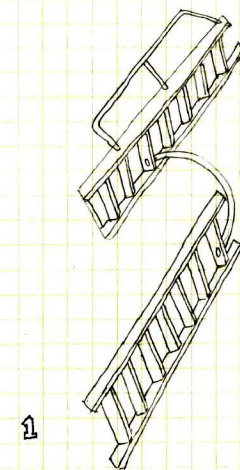


Fire Escape Stairs

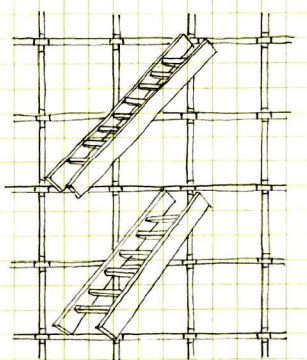
"A fire escape is a special kind of emergency exit, usually mounted to the outside of a building." Many buildings built in earlier time ~~use~~ has outside fire escape stairs. Like New York has a lot. Those stairs may no longer have their function, but use as ~~more~~ decorations.

Ear cuff

Sketch



Front view



bird cage

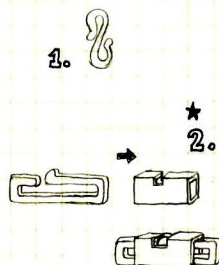
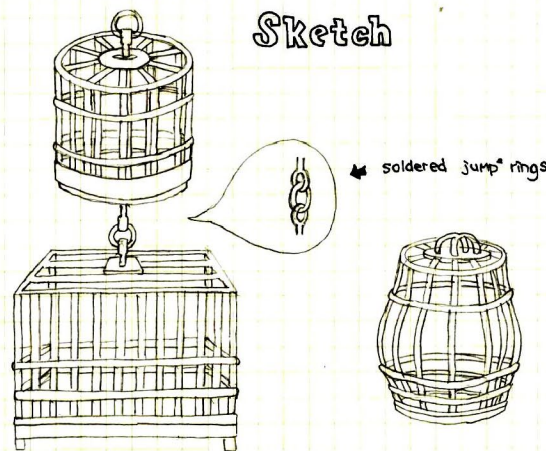
chocker / necklace / pendant ...

Liú niǎo
"遛鸟" - to walk one's bird

Bird owners (most old people) go to park, garden... with their birds. Usually, they put birds in birdcages, and swing the birdcage to practice birds' leg strength.
At home, ^{most} owners hang the birdcage on balconies.
It's a very traditional hobby in China.

Sketch

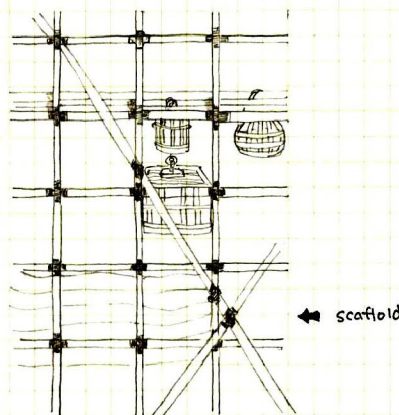
clasp



The clasp should be able to work as a clasp & connect the piece to the scaffolding.

Make much details as possible, like doors...
More different shapes of bird cages.

I will use clasp between each 2-3 birdcages, so wearer could adjust the size. And when I hang the piece to the scaffolding, I can take it apart (or the whole piece will be too long).

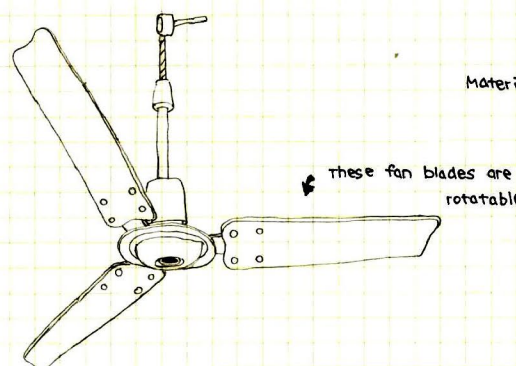


fan

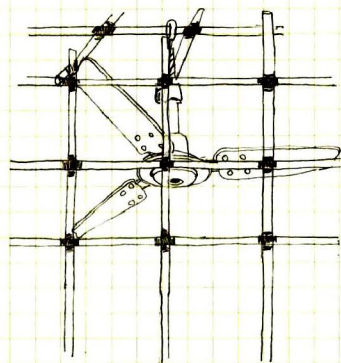
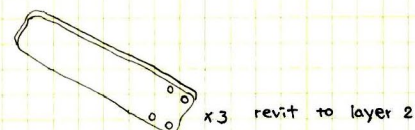
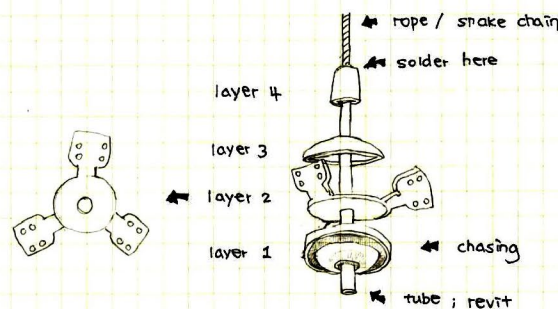
earring / pendant

I remember when I was first - third grade, there was no ac in my classroom. 40 kids were all bunched in the classroom. But we had several ceiling fans in green. My memory of childhood summer is those green fans.

Material: copper, patina

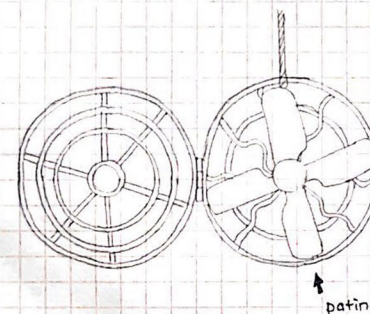
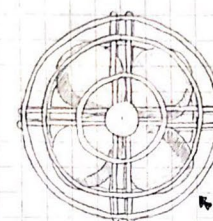
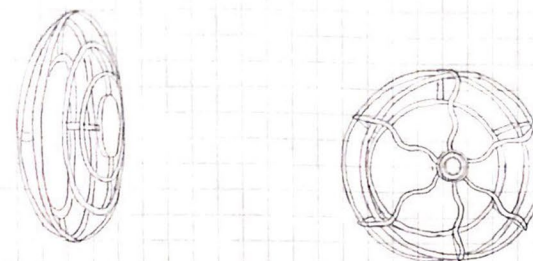


detail



Fan II

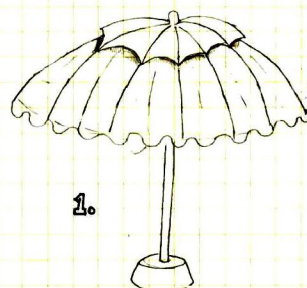
The outside frame of this kind of fan is more geometrical, which matches the scaffolding and birdcage better.



sunshade

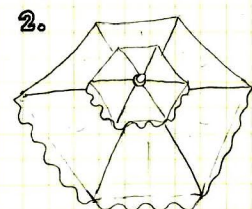
Except supermarkets, there were many different kinds of stalls in my childhood. They used to open at the first floor of residential buildings, corners, around schools... They sell ice-cream, candy, newspaper, and cigarettes... used to In front of Most of these stalls, owners hold umbrellas. Nowadays, those stalls are replaced by supermarkets, (mobile) 7-11...

sketch

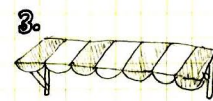


1.

Material: Metal, fabric



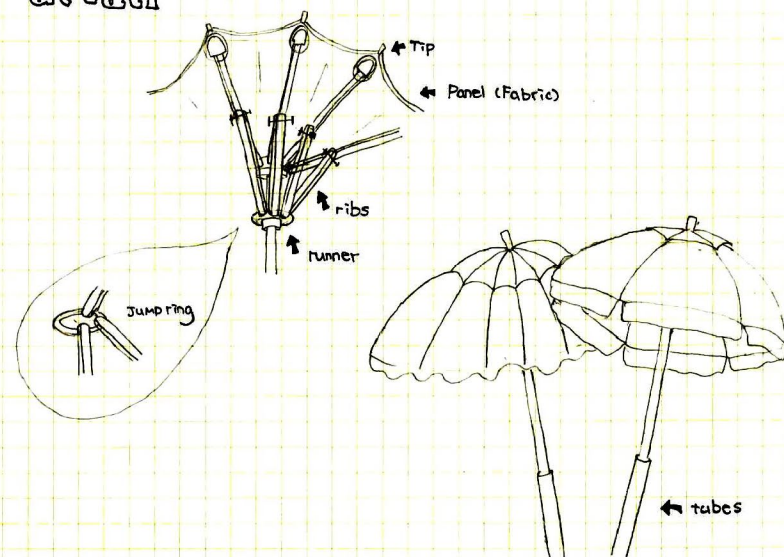
2.



3.

fabric or marriage of metal.

detail



Paper Cutting art

剪纸 (jiǎn zhǐ)

In 2006, Paper cutting art was listed in the first national nonmaterial cultural heritage lists, and three yrs later, it was selected into world non-material cultural heritage list.

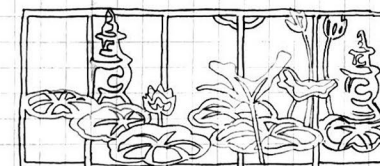
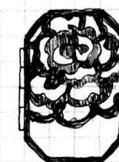
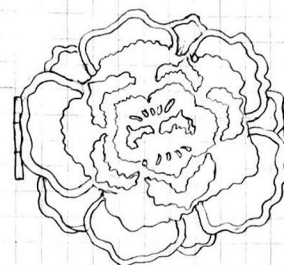
When I was young, every family put up window papercuts during Chinese New Year. But now, this tradition has been forgotten in the digital time.

red is associated with festivities and happiness in Chinese culture.



hinge

..... means happiness/good luck in marriage

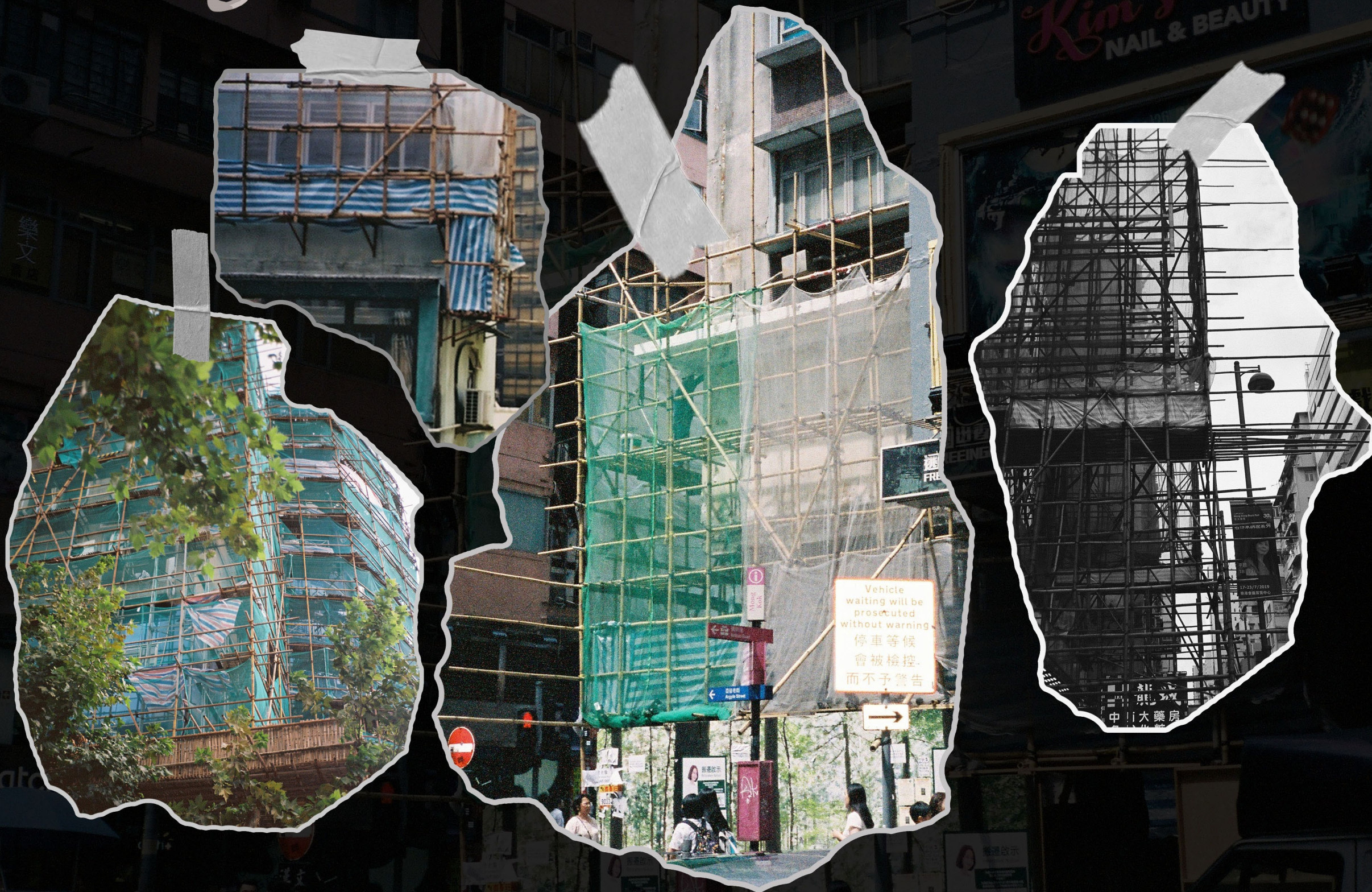


lotus

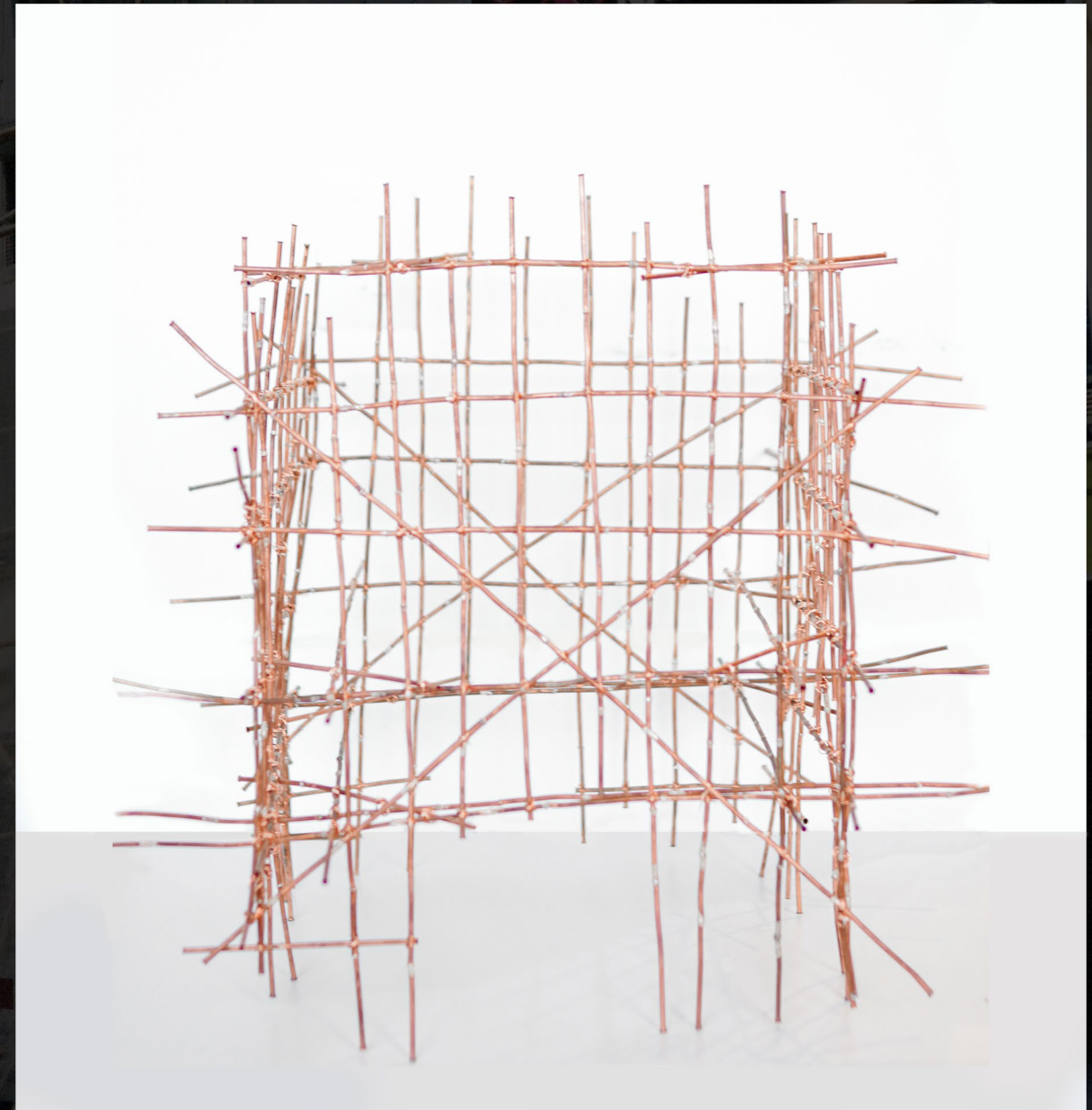
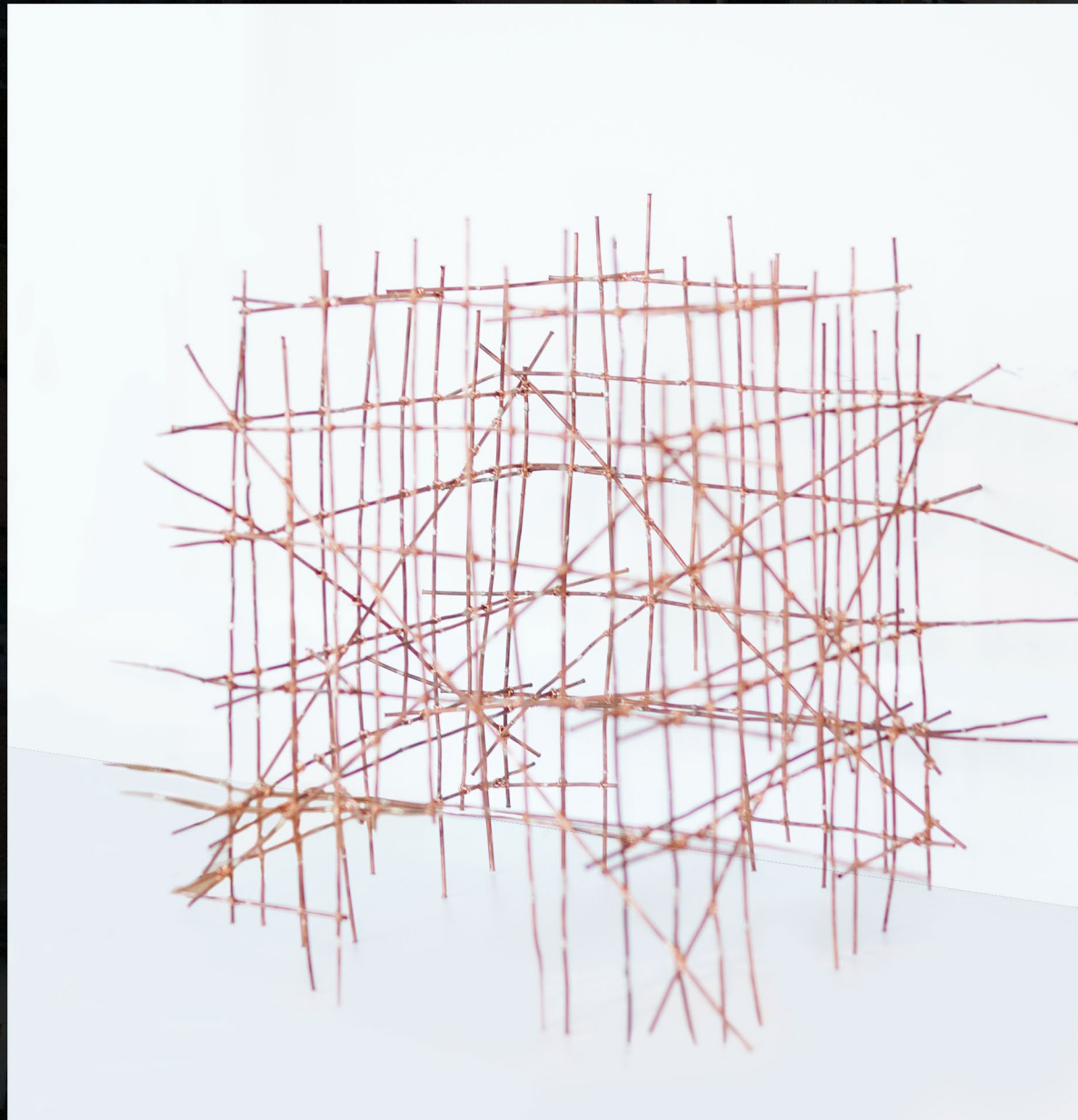
"Three Ponds Mirroring the Moon" was printed on the backs of RMB



Scaffolding

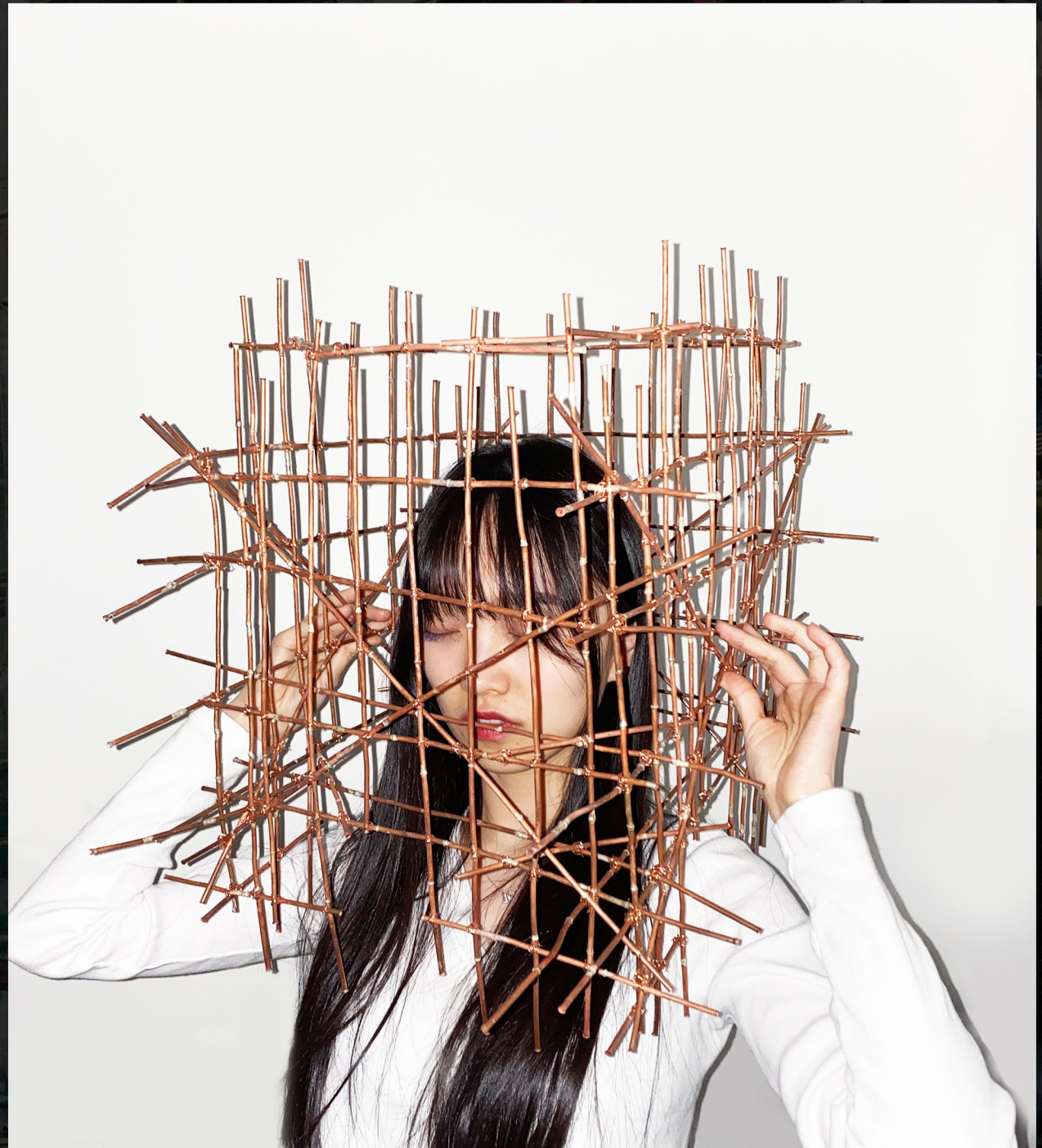


M01 Scaffolding

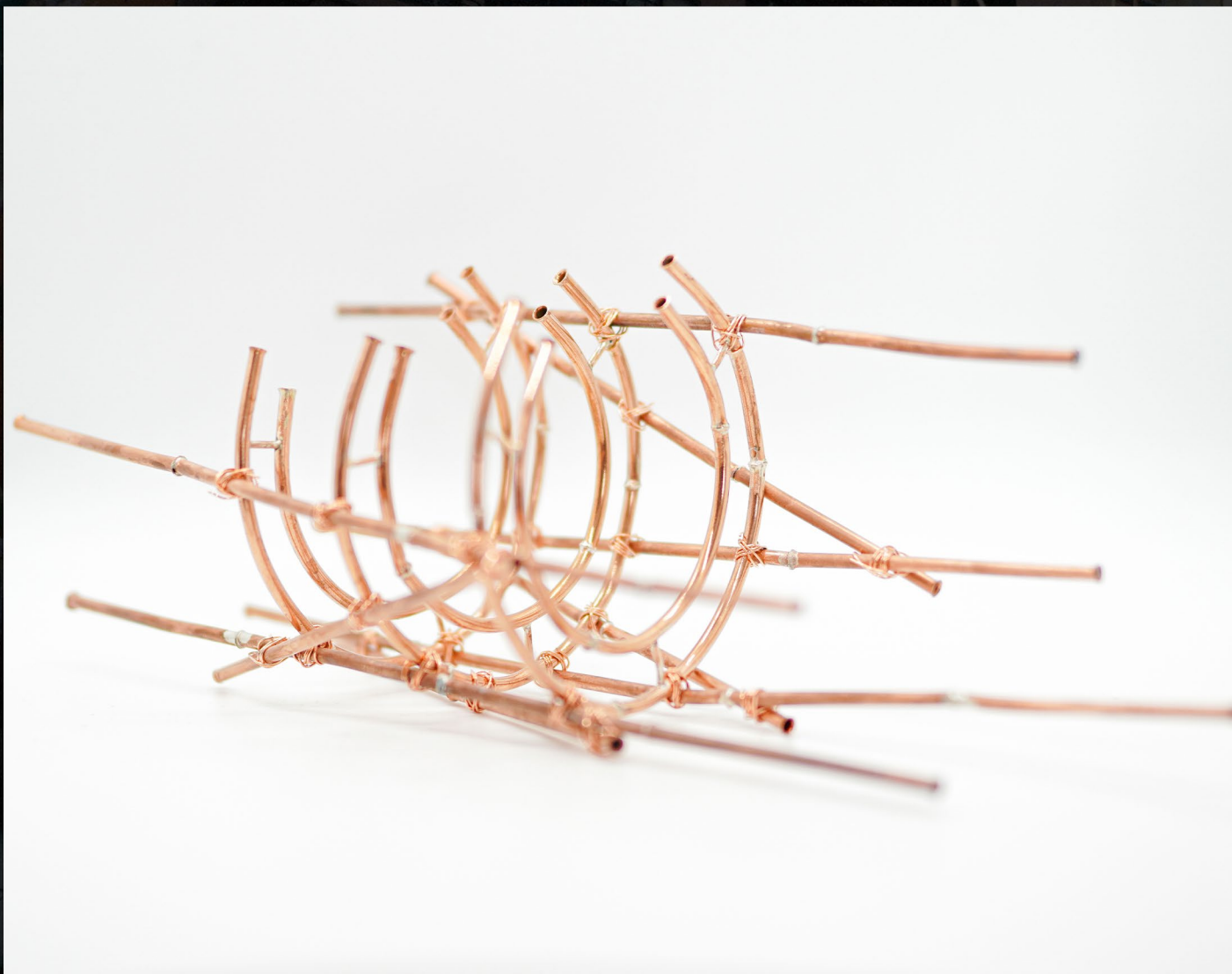


Material: Copper tube, copper wire
Dimension: 35*45*55 cm

M01



M02 Scaffolding Cuff

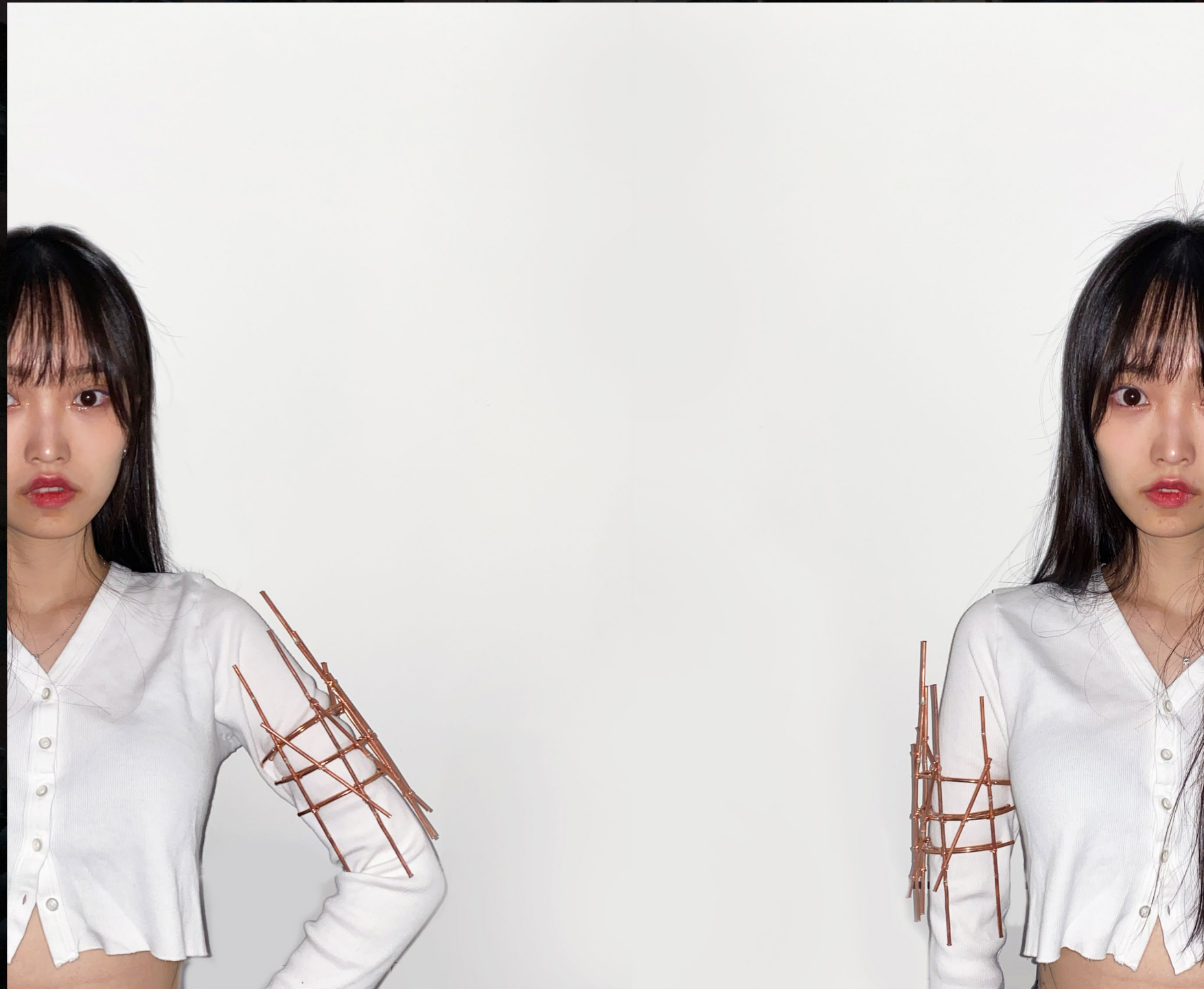


Material: Copper tube, copper wire

Technique: Hand-fabricated cuff

Dimensions: 9*9*27 cm

M02



neon light

LUSH



M03 foot Massage neon light

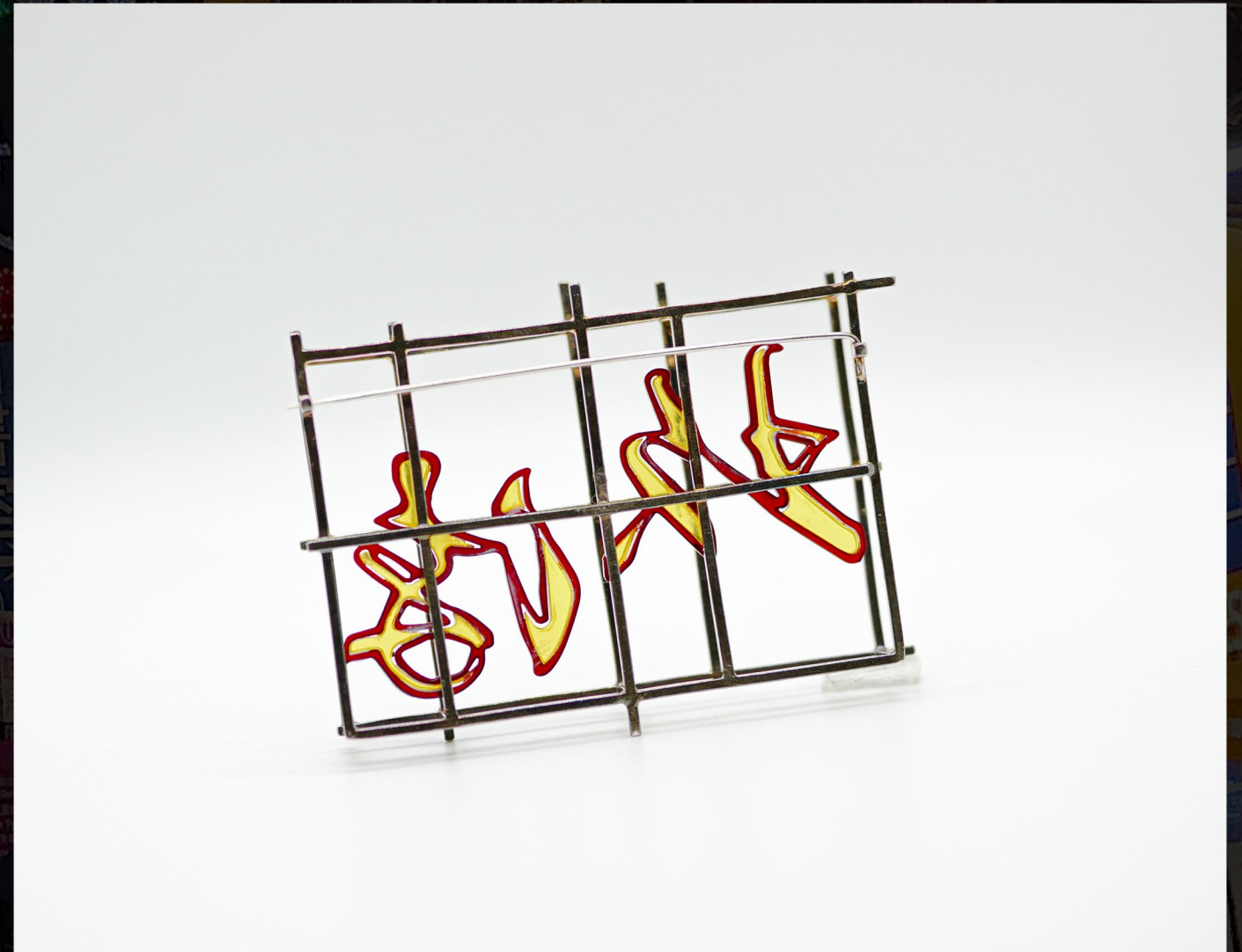
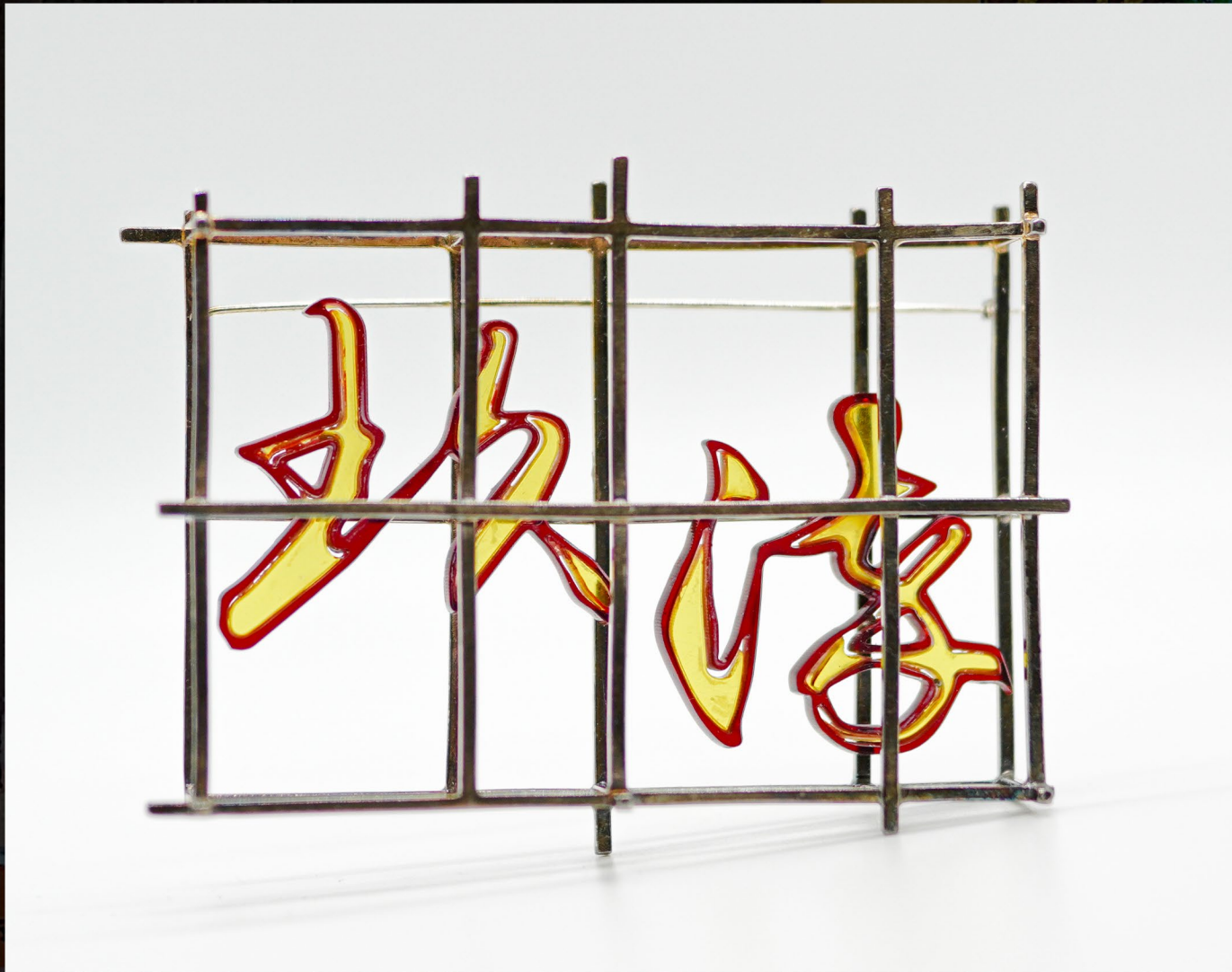


Material: Sterling silver, fine silver, resin
Technique: Hand fabricated box and frame
Dimension: 3*2*11 cm

M03



M04 neon Sign 97
LUSH



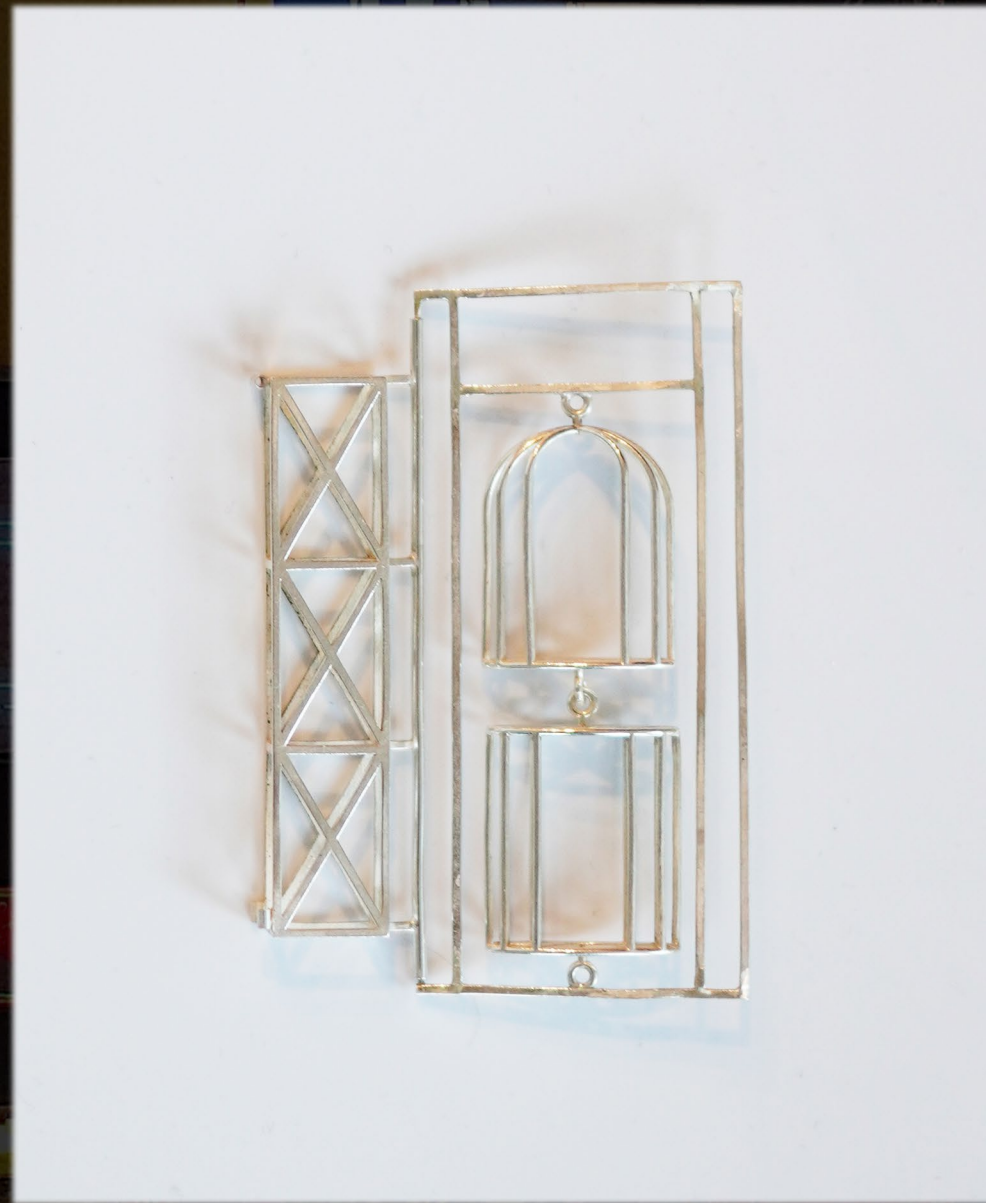
Material: Sterling silver, acrylic
Dimension: 9.5*6.5*1.5 cm

M04

LUSH



Mos Mahjong neon sign

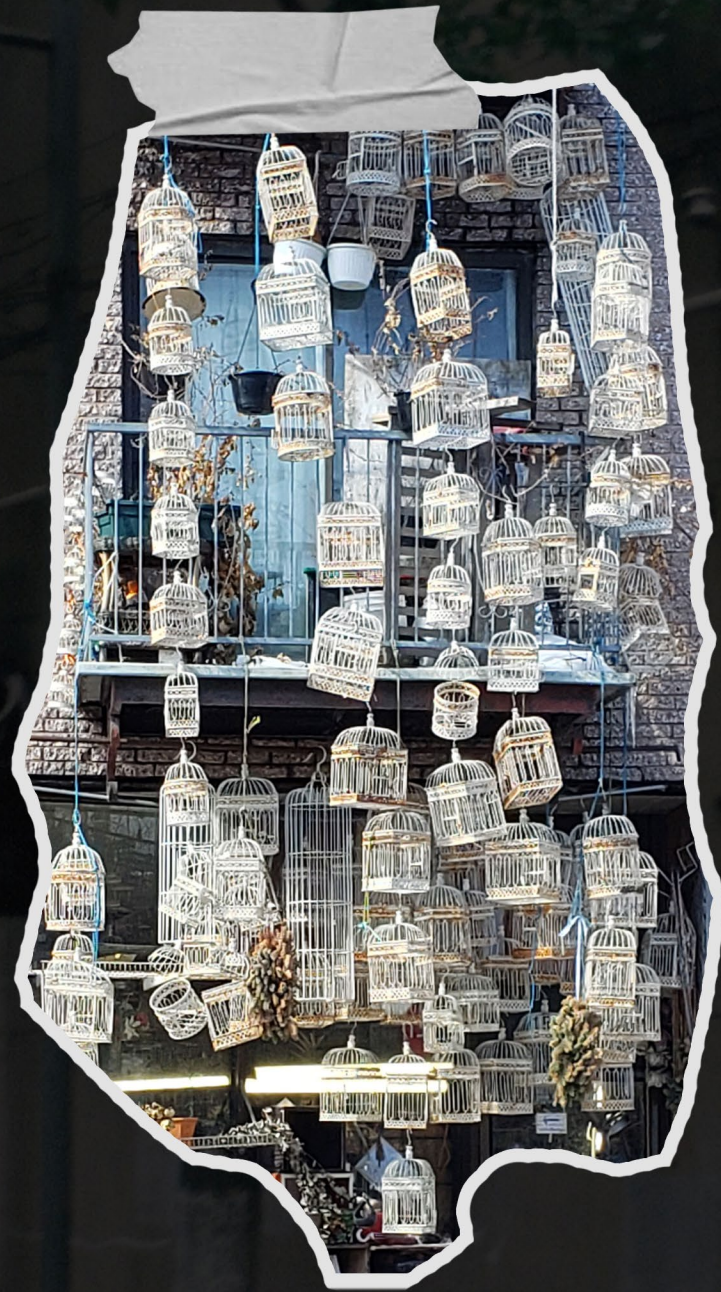


Material: Sterling silver, acrylic

Technique: Hand fabricated frame, lost-wax casting, CAD model

Dimension: 7*9.5*0.7 cm

birdcage



M06 birdcage ear cuff



Material: Sterling silver
Technique: CAD modeling, lost-wax casting
Dimension: 3*3*22 cm(left), 4*3*15 cm(right)

M06



M07 birdcage ear cuff



Material: Copper
Technique: CAD modeling, lost-wax casting
Dimension: 4*3*63 cm

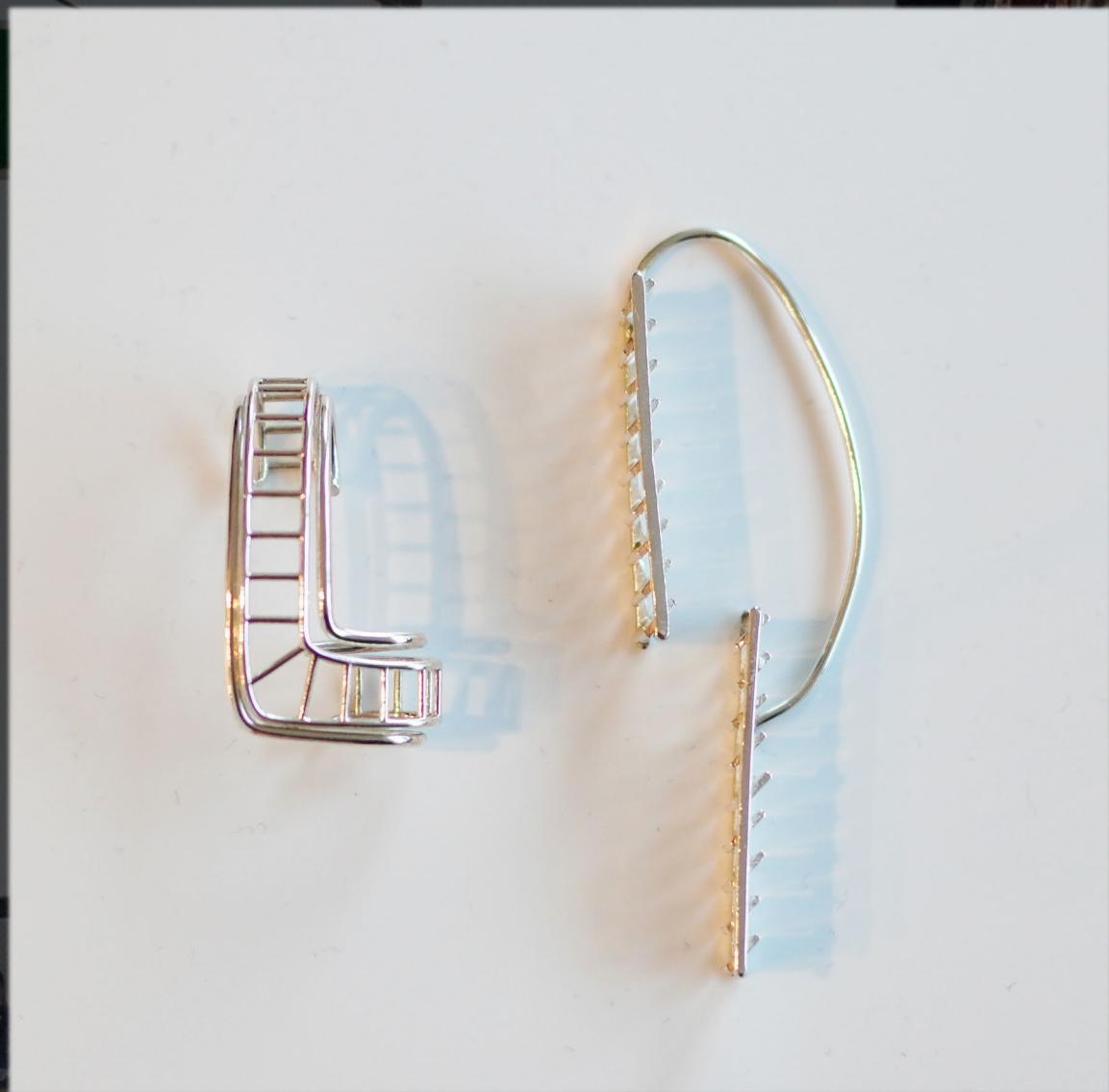
M07



Fire escape



M08 Fire escape ear cuff



Material: Sterling silver

Dimension: 2.5*2*4 cm(left), 1.2*3*7.5 cm(right)

M08



M09 Fire escape ring

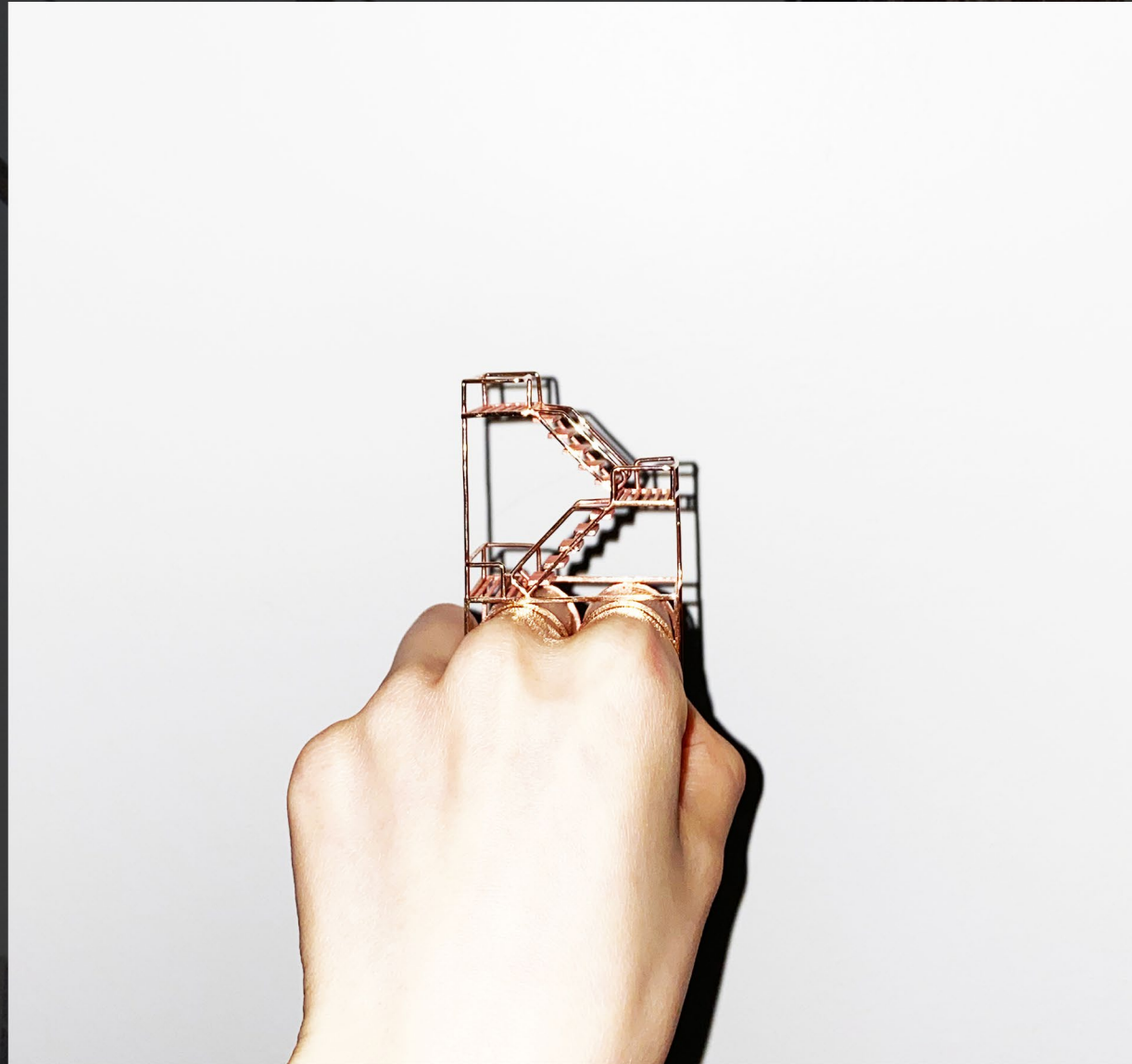


Material: Copper

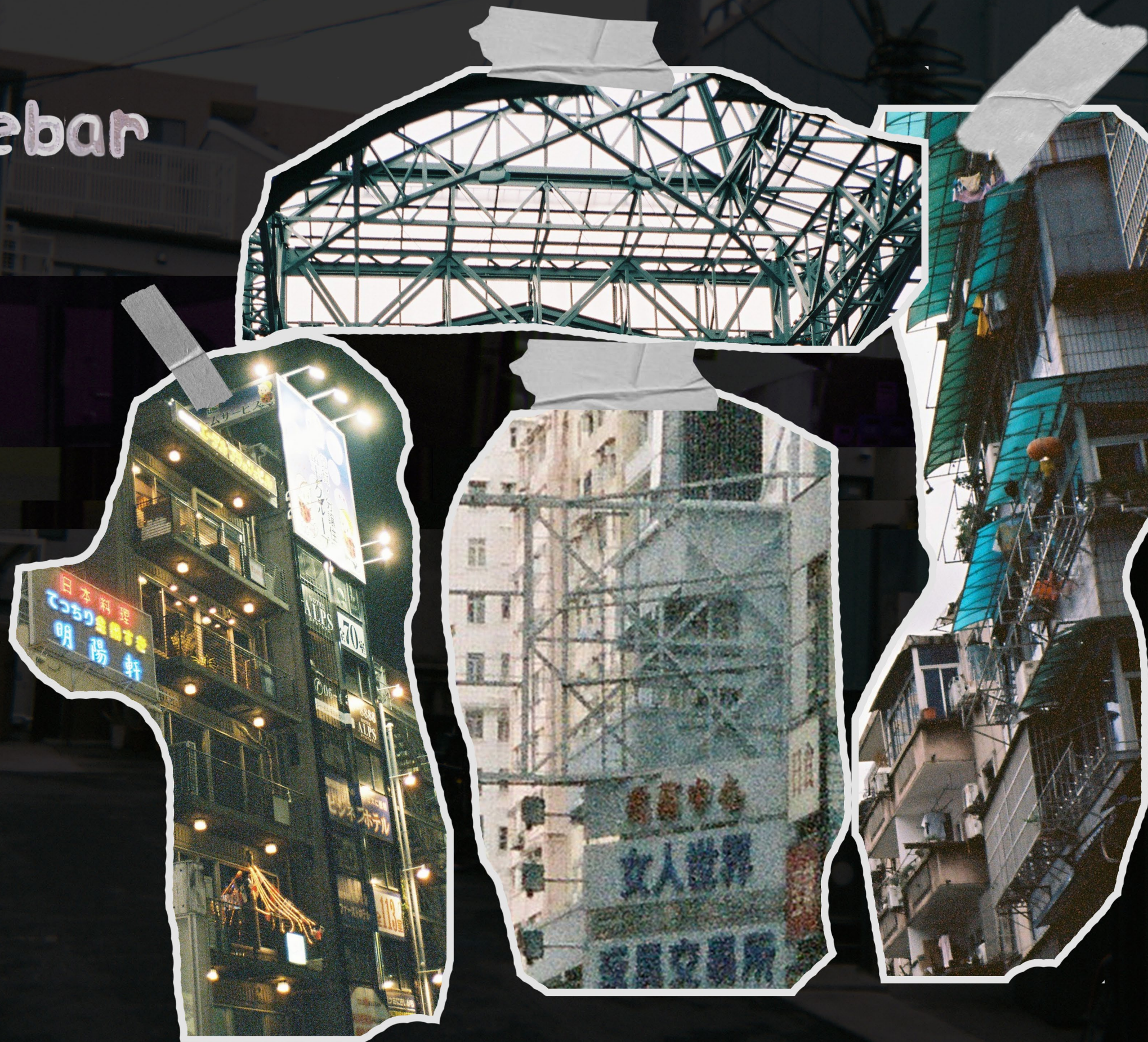
Technique: CAD modeling, lost-wax casting

Dimension: 2.3*2.3*4 cm

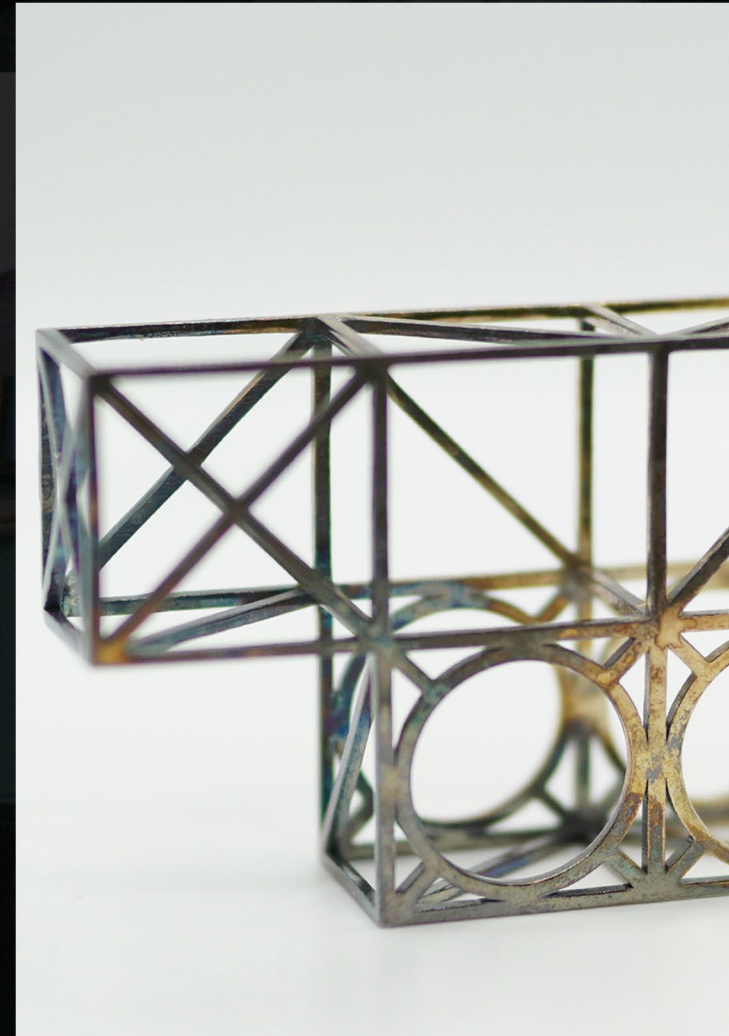
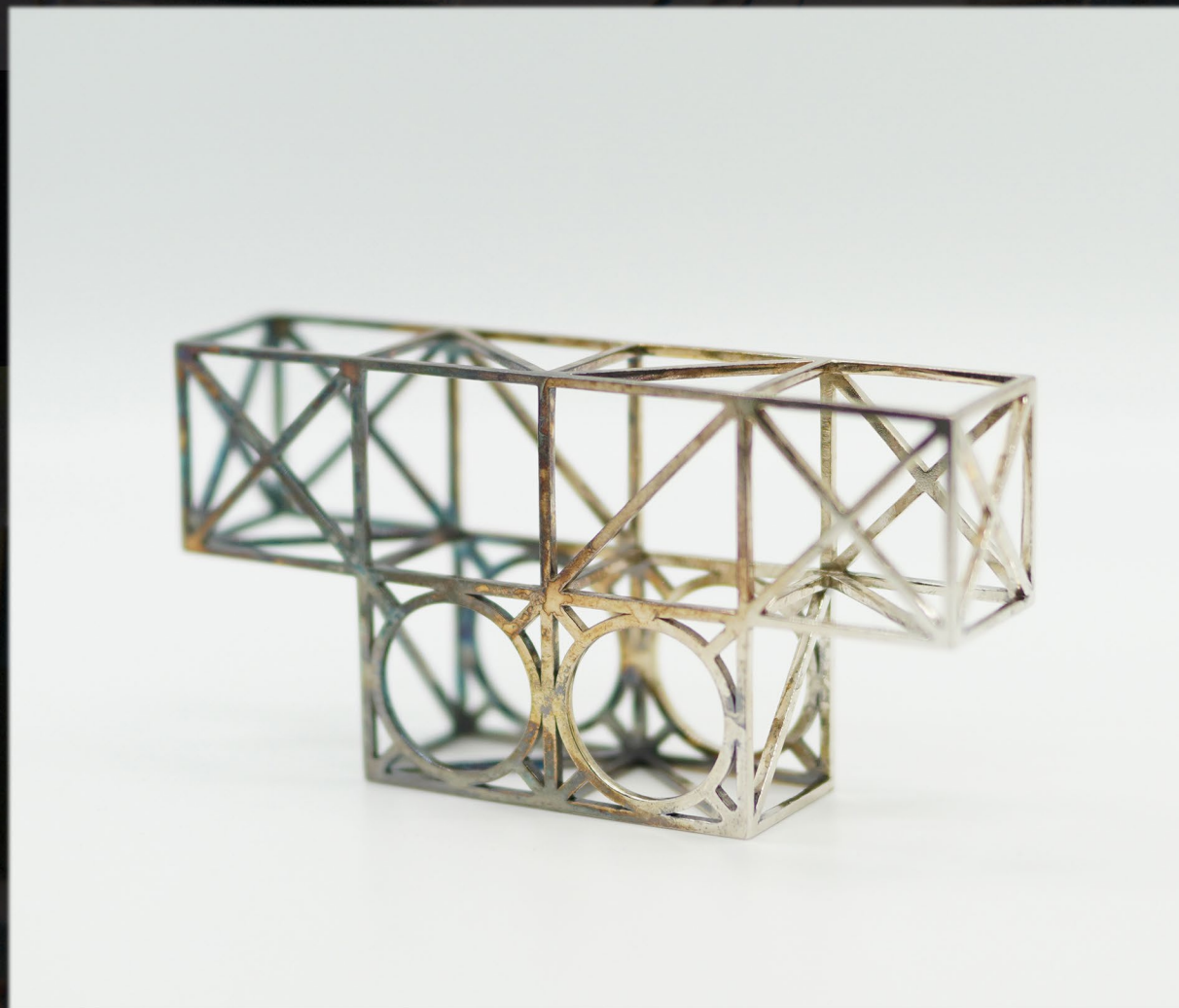
M09



rebar



M10 rebar frame ring

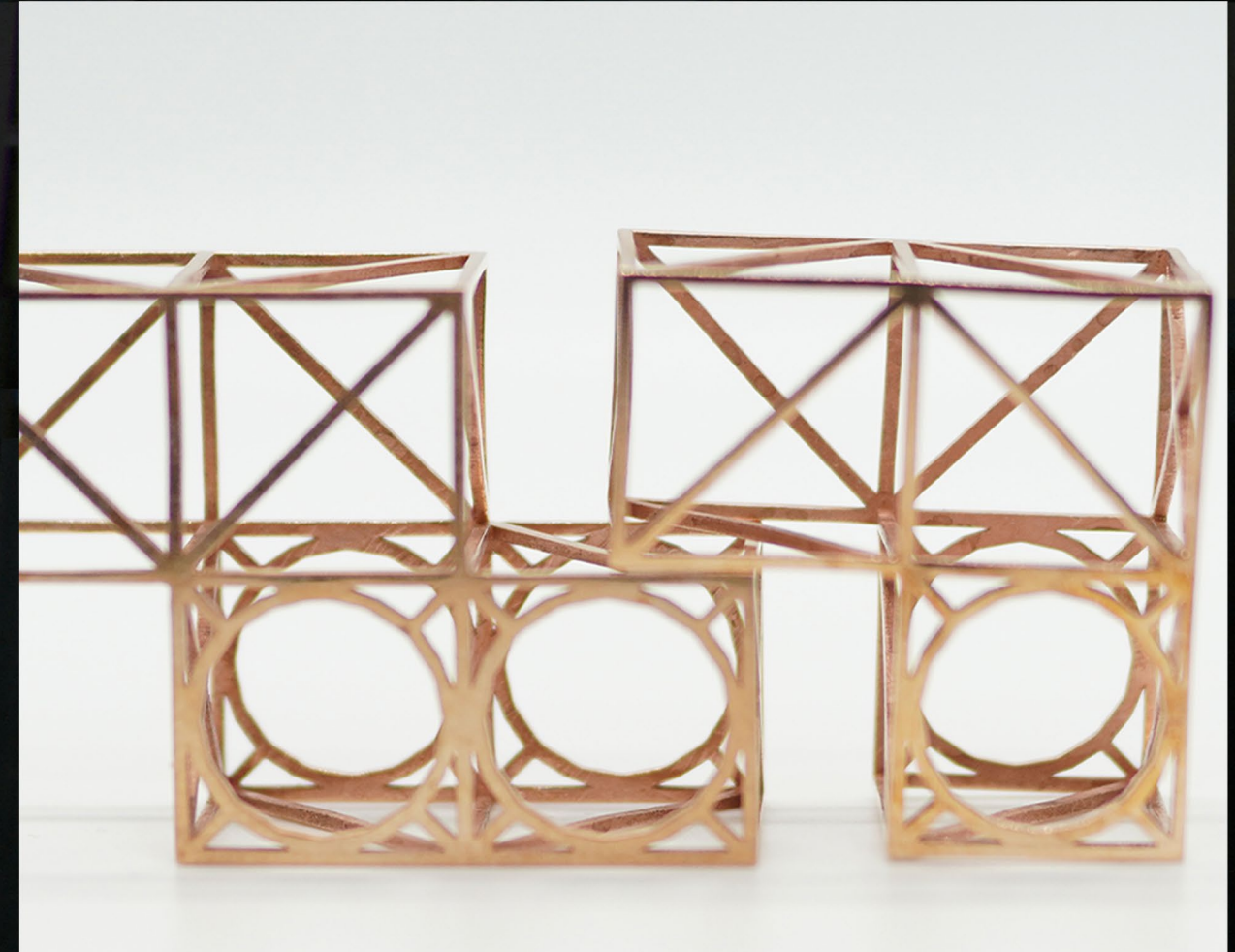
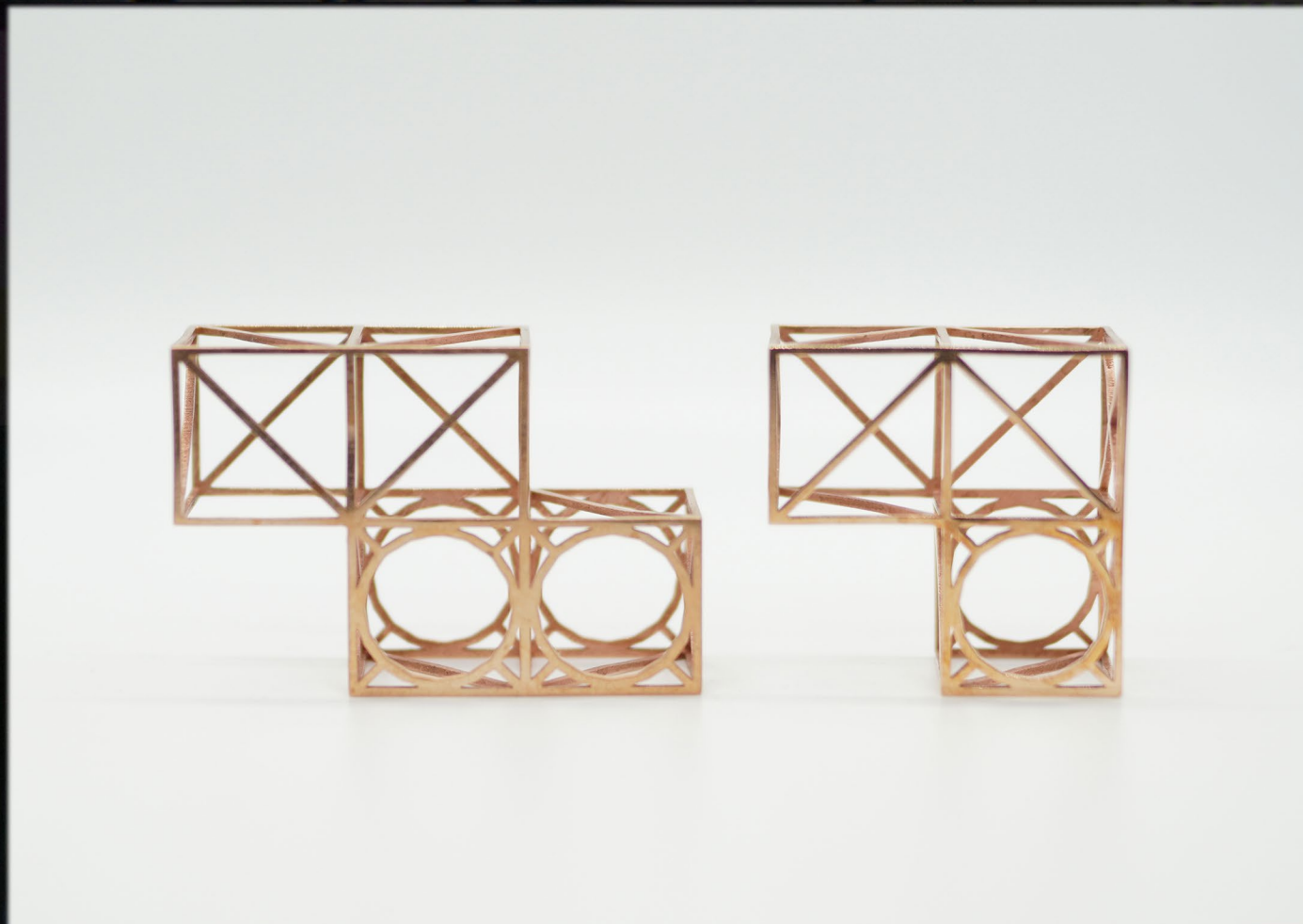


Material: Sterling silver

Technique: Hand fabricated ring, egg patina

Dimensions: 9.2*2*2 cm

M11 rebar frame ring set

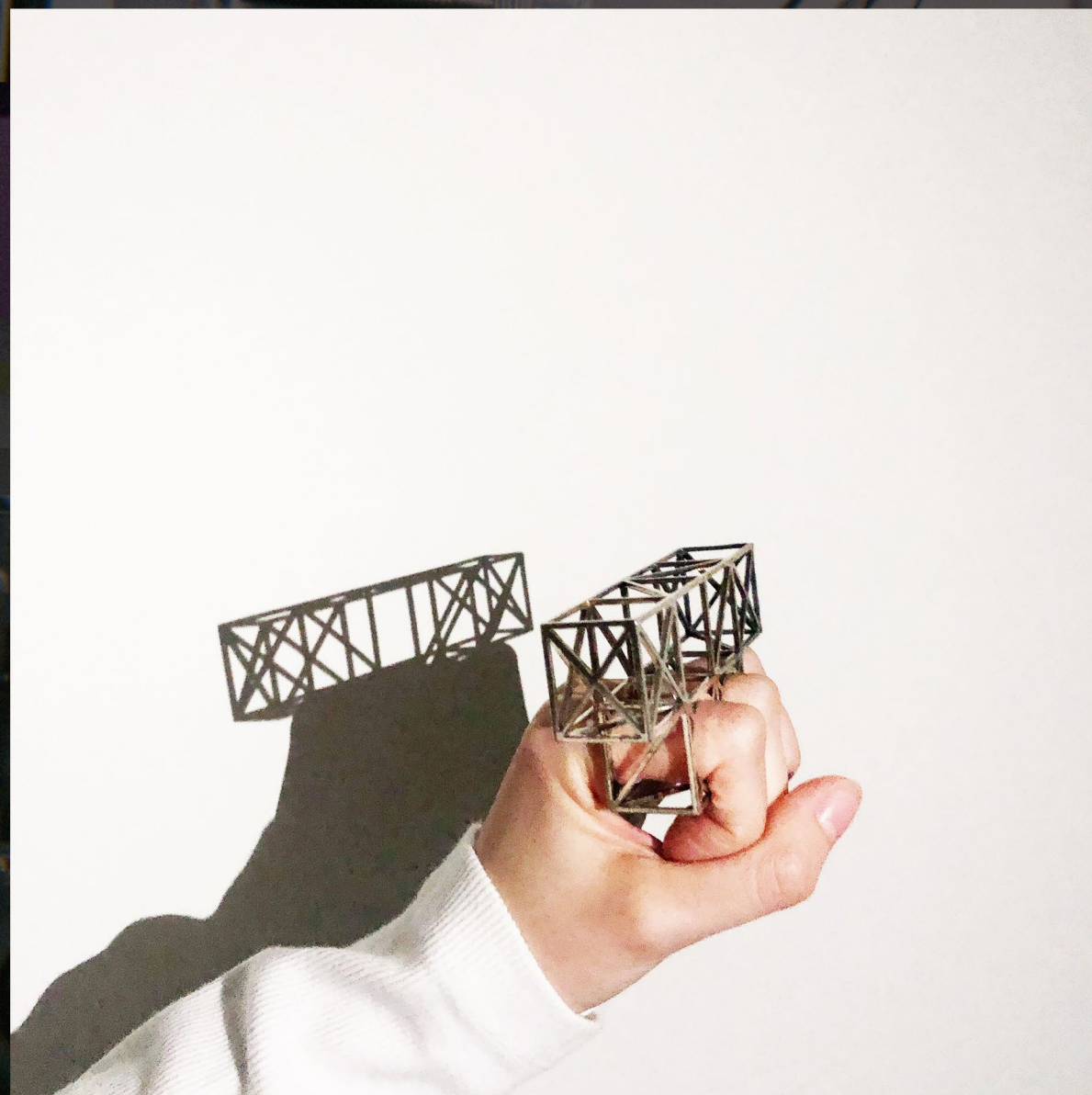


Material: Copper

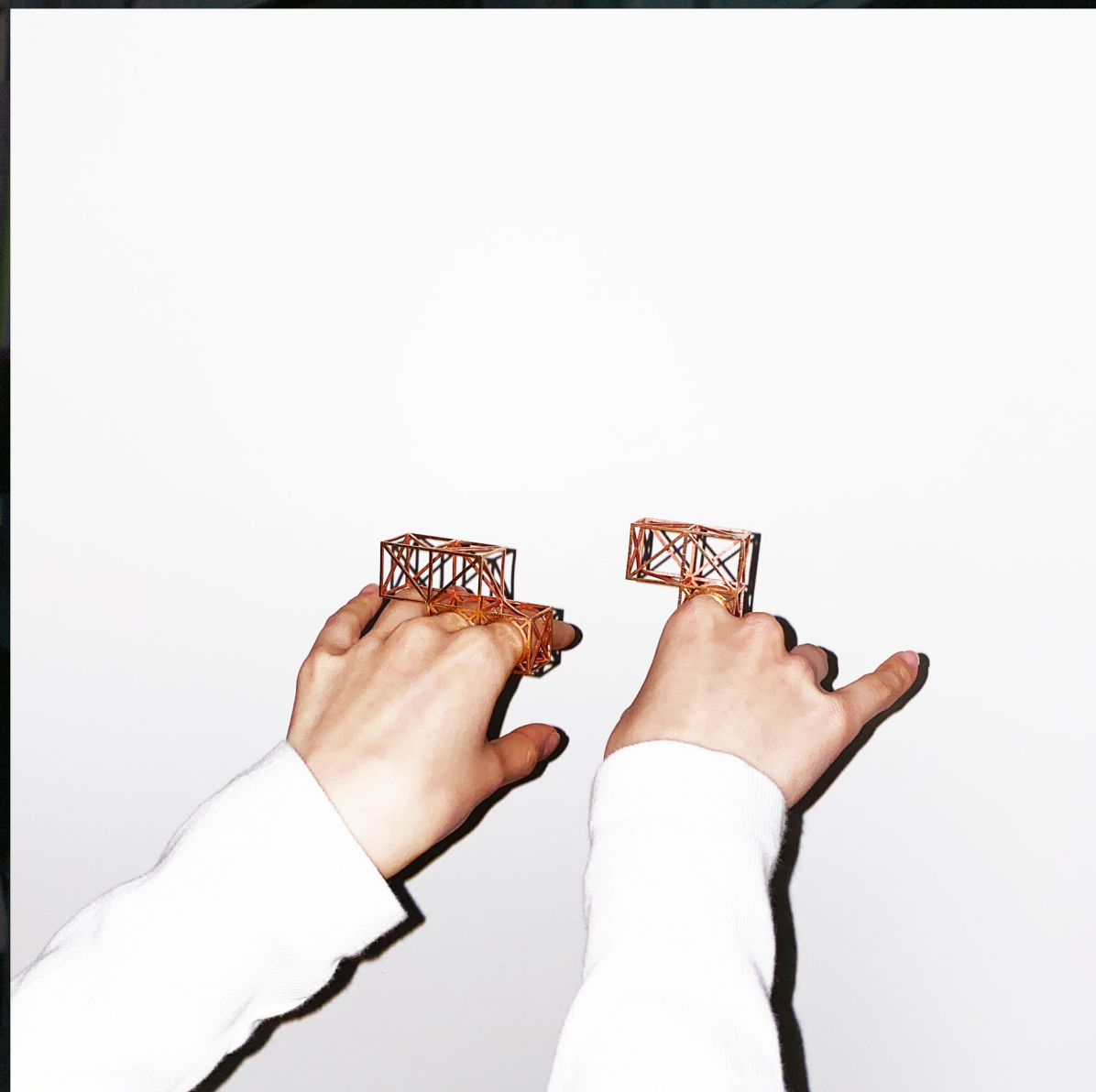
Technique: CAD modeling, lost-wax casting

Dimensions: 6*1*1 cm (left), 3*1*1 cm (right)

M10



M11



billboard



M12 billboard ring set



Material: Copper, fine silver
Dimensions: 8*1.5*8 cm (left&right)

M12



final look

