

AFTER THE LAST SIP TRANSFORMS LONDON'S BUBBLE TEA AND COFFEE WASTE INTO LARGE-SCALE 3D-PRINTED DESIGN

Three Taiwanese designers explore how everyday food and drink residues can become furniture, lighting and sculptural objects through material research and robotic fabrication.



Group photograph of the exhibited works. Image courtesy of the designer.

LONDON, September 2026 — Presented at **Fab.Pub** in East London from **11–18 September 2026** during **London Design Festival**, *After the Last Sip* brings together new work by Taiwanese designers **Chao-Chun Kung**, **Ching-Yu Lin** and **Chen-Yang Chang**, with spatial curation by **Chih-Han Liu**. The project transforms discarded tea leaves and coffee grounds into composite materials for large-scale 3D printing. Supported by Taiwan's Ministry of Education through the Taiwan Global Pathfinders Initiative, the exhibition connects Taiwan's cultural relationship with tea and coffee to contemporary material research in London. It traces these familiar residues from everyday consumption through collection, processing and experimentation to full-scale furniture, lighting and sculptural objects.

The project begins with an ordinary question: what remains after making a drink? Led by **Chao-Chun Kung**, who also serves as the main fabricator across the works presented in the exhibition, the team collects used tea leaves from London bubble tea shops and spent coffee grounds from local cafés, drying, grinding and compounding them with PLA. Different material ratios, particle sizes and blends are tested for their effects on colour, texture, translucency and structural behaviour before being developed into human-scale objects using large-scale robotic 3D printing at **Fab.Pub**. By treating disposal as a beginning rather than an end, the project explores how familiar waste can acquire new forms, functions and possibilities.

Rather than hiding the marks of fabrication, the works preserve their printed layers, particles, irregular textures and subtle shifts in colour. These accumulated traces form a kind of artificial sediment, recording what the material once was, how it was made and how it might be reused or remade in the future.

Across the exhibition, visitors encounter the research at different stages. A material library presents tea leaves, coffee grounds, powders and experimental composite blends before printing. Smaller studies explore how changes in material composition affect colour, texture and geometry. These are followed by full-scale lighting, furniture and sculptural pieces, alongside failed prints, cut sections and reprocessed materials that reveal the limitations and discoveries behind the fabrication process.

Among the exhibited works, **Ching-Yu Lin's** *Undetermined Shore* invites visitors to contemplate the changing relationship between the island and the sea, evoking a sense of uncertainty and impermanence. Combining recycled coffee grounds and PLA, its layered, sediment-like surfaces retain alternating light and dark gradients that reflect Taiwan's continually shifting coastline.

Taking a different approach rooted in culture, **Chao-Chun Kung's** *CHA / 茶* begins with Taiwan's tea-drinking traditions and explores how tea can move beyond symbolism to become part of the design process. Serving as a material, a cultural reference and the starting point for generative geometry, tea is translated through a custom parametric system based on its Chinese character 茶 into forms ranging from a stool and table to a sculptural object approaching two metres in height.

By contrast, **Chen-Yang Chang's** *Nexus Bloom* explores the formal possibilities of parametric tools, examining how continuous lines can grow, connect and transform through digital design and 3D printing. Moving between furniture and lighting, the works translate gradual geometric changes into blooming forms that bring together structure, light, nature and social interaction.

Together, the works move beyond the idea of recycled material as a substitute for something new. Instead, *After the Last Sip* asks how design can retain the history of a material while giving it another form, function and period of use.

What remains after the last sip is not necessarily an ending.

EXHIBITION DETAILS

Exhibition: *After the Last Sip*

Dates: 12–18 September 2026, 11:00–18:00

Opening night: Friday 11 September, 19:00–21:00

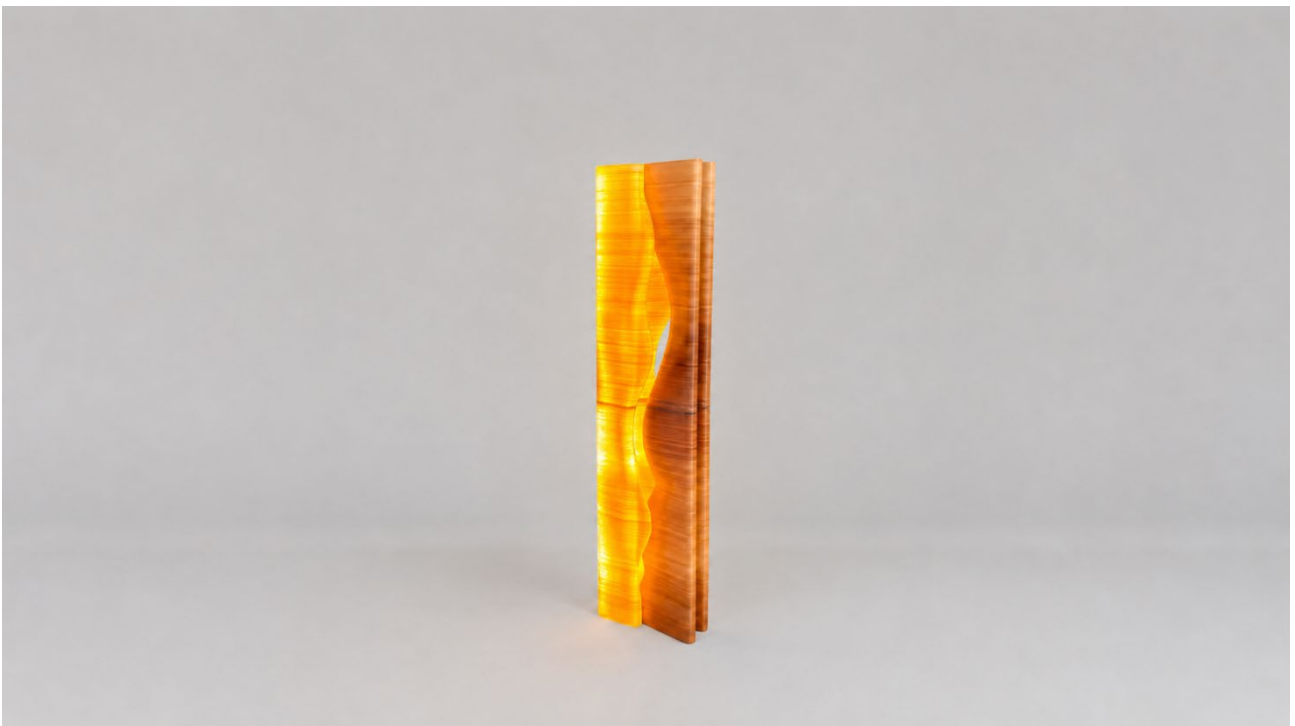
Venue: Fab.Pub, 22 Gossamer Gardens, London E2 9FN

Designers: Chao-Chun Kung, Ching-Yu Lin and Chen-Yang Chang

Support: Taiwan's Ministry of Education through the Taiwan Global Pathfinders Initiative



CHA / 茶 by Chao-Chun Kung. Tea-waste PLA composite, developed through a custom parametric system. Image courtesy of the designer.



Undetermined Shore by Ching-Yu Lin. Recycled coffee grounds PLA composite. Image courtesy of the designer.



Nexus Bloom by Chen-Yang Chang. Tea-waste PLA composite. Image courtesy of the designer.