

Design Resource

Metal Spoon Bird - Ahmednagar, Maharashtra

Metallic Sculpture

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Srikanth B.
NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/metal-spoon-bird-ahmednagar-maharashtra>



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2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
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Introduction

Throughout the evolution of mankind, along with the sequential changes in life, their surroundings and culture also equally witnessed transformations, specifically shaped to suit human life. Each progress instigated something new into the lifestyles of human beings, like the introduction of utensils into the way we approached food and servings. In this list, spoons make a primary part of the food consumption, widely found in the areas of the west. Likewise, humans slowly started developing arts and crafts out of these utensils to exhibit their imagination, culture, and architect. Hence we still see an unending development in the area of art, which is still manifesting itself into new and improved forms. Here we are emphasizing metal spoon birds as a handicraft form which is still extensively in practice.

The word spoon is believed to be derived from the Greek word 'Cochlea' which means snail, signifying the use of snail shells as spoons in ancient Greece. Many old scriptures from Egypt, India, and China also hold mentions on the use of these curvy utensils. According to history, traces of spoons were first found in Europe in the year 1259. While forks are believed to be a contribution of the Qijia community (2400- 1900 BC) from present-day China. During the ancient days, materials like ivory, flint, slate, and wood were majorly used to make the spoons. Sporadically, illustrations from 11th century Rome under the Byzantine Empire carried images of people using forks to consume hard food items like meat, shells, and plant roots. And the current style of stainless steel spoons was introduced lately in 1970. While in the case of India, spoons and forks were very sparsely used, as eating with hands was very much a part of their culture. But in modern India, with the amalgamation of varied traditions, heightened inter-association, and global level cultural exchanges, the presence of spoons and fork in the eating table is a normal view in the country now.

Mr. Balaji Vallal from the district of Ahmednagar in Maharashtra is an Indian artist who specialized in sculpture making, especially one made of clay, metal spoons, metal scraps, and fiber casting. From his range of works, metal spoon birds and scrap metal are the most noted, which is a regular participant in all prominent art exhibitions across the country, where they are displayed as well as sold.

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A photo of the senior artist's home and working place.



Mr. Balaji Vallal, a senior artisan at the spoon bird making center.



A spoon bird with a binding wire nest.

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Tools and Raw Materials

Following are the tools and raw material required for making of metal spoon bird:

- **Metal Spoon and Fork:** These are the primary raw materials for the metal spoon craft.
- **Electric Glue Gun:** It is used as an adhesive to stick the spoons.
- **Glue Stick:** This solid glue stick is loaded into the glue gun, which melts due to the heat in the gun.
- **Cutting Plier:** It is used to bend parts or remove unwanted elements.
- **Lantern Burner:** It is used to make the head part of the spoon bird.
- **Copper Vase:** It is used to make the body part of the spoon bird.
- **Nut and Hair Clip:** Nuts are used for the eyes of the bird and the hair clip to make the beak.



The collection of materials used for the making of spoon birds.

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Set of metal spoons.



Glue gun sticks.



The glue gun used to assemble the spoons.



Nuts, bolt, and washers, used to make the eyes of the bird.

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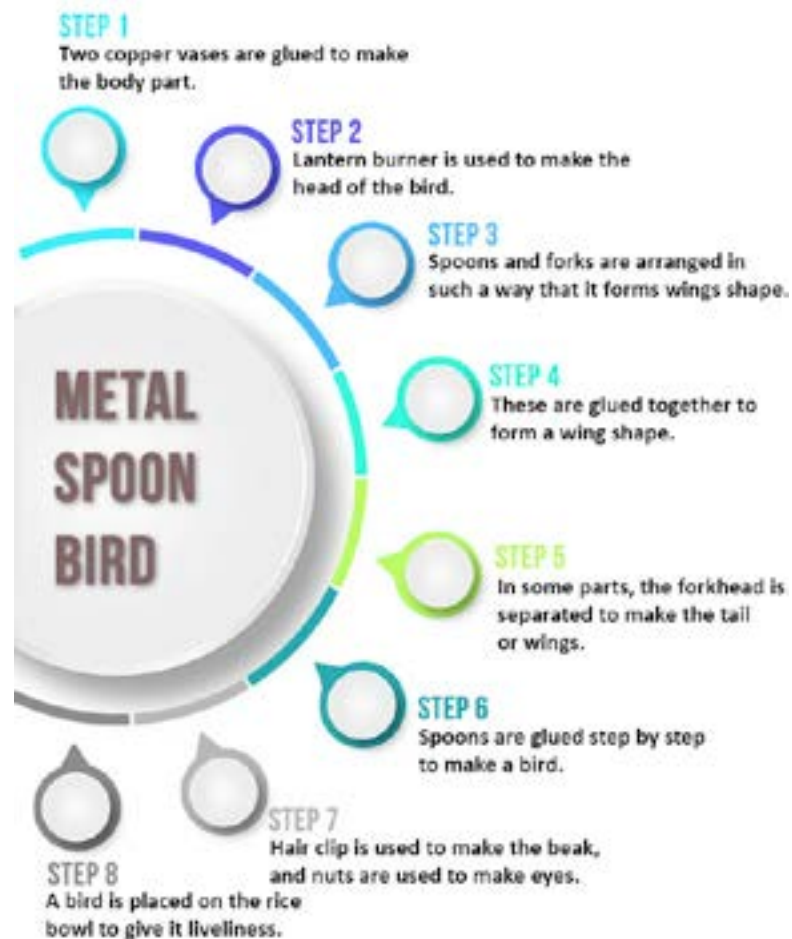
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Making Process

Firstly the artisan selects two copper vases of different sizes to make the body and they are attached to each other with glue. Then spoons and forks are arranged to check the body proportion and spoon positions before they are glued to the vase. Once these materials are placed correctly and glued well, the fork heads are separated to make the tail and wings of the bird. Here the lantern burner makes the head part, hair clips the beak and nuts the eyes of the metal sculpture. After the completion of all the above steps, the finished bird is placed on a rice bowl to establish a theme.

Flow Chart:



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The raw materials used in the metal spoon bird making.



Artisan setting the work area for the spoon bird making.

Artisan attaching the big and small copper Kalash or vase with the help of a glue gun.

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Using a lantern burner, the artisan making the head part of the bird.

Artisan selecting spoons for attaching it on to the copper Kalash.

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Artisan using fork heads to make the wings part of the bird.



Artisan attaching spoons on the copper Kalash surface using a glue gun.



Artisan displaying the wings attached to the spoon bird body.

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Attaching spoons with a glue gun gum.



Artisan applying glue gun gum on the metal piece parts to stick them together.



Artisan cutting hair clips into an intended shape for making bird's beak.

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Artisan fixing the bird's beak.



Artisan checking the correctness of the fixations.



Attaching a nut as the bird's eye.



The final look of the spoon bird.

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Products

This type of metal art is regarded for its uniqueness and innovation across the globe, as it is a rare form practiced at selected places. As it doesn't conform to mass production, each product made here is different from one another and is totally handmade. The size of the metal spoon made by Mr. Balaji Valla ranges from 1 foot to 2 feet, and their cost hovers between 7,000 INR and 8,000 INR. Though the production of new forms and experiments on modern styles are under consideration, currently, he concentrates only on spoon birds of various sizes and shapes.



A finished bird placed on a rice bowl to establish a theme.



The final look of the spoon bird.

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Video



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This documentation was done by Professor Bibhudutta Baral and Srikanth B. at [NID, Bengaluru](#).

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