

Vertical Gallery Proposal

Emily Lovett



My Concept

I'm a three-dimensional designer/maker, with a focus on metal craft and the handmade. The concept of my work is mostly focussed on promoting pewter's craft abilities to a wider audience. Pewter is a white, malleable metal; malleability being the quality I exploit in my work. I use the material's softness to create pattern and texture on it's surface. For the small number of people who do recognise the material they may associate pewter with dark-greyish, traditionally styled tankards and domestic wares popular in the 1700s. In my work, I try to show pewter in a different light, and modernise the material to make it more appealing to the craft audience of today: I want to show off the metal's qualities in an attempt to re-popularise it as a craft material.

I have been developing geometric, graphic textures and patterns formed by fly-pressing pewter into laser engraved, acrylic formers. I love combining Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAM) techniques – particularly laser cutting - with pewter, because it allows me to achieve the clean, industrial lines I desire in my work – there is a beautiful narrative between my CAM acrylic formers and hand-crafted pewter objects.

Pictured on the previous page, is an example of my previous work: a wall-mounted pewter vase, with a textured and formed front panel. The texture is formed by fly-pressing pewter into an acrylic, laser-engraved former.

My Process

My process is as follows:

- First, I use Illustrator to create a drawing of where I want the laser cutter to cut and engrave.
- I then laser engrave the drawing into a piece of acrylic – I spend a lot of time tweaking the speed of the laser engraver to achieve the correct depth; the slower the engraver goes, the deeper it gets. I have developed an ombre-effect by speeding up the engraving on each row of pattern, so it eventually gets shallower.
- When the acrylic former is cut, I then attach a strip of pewter on top of the engraving, and use the fly press (see below for example) to manually push the metal into the recesses which have been engraved. The fly-press is a machine which pushes (and can also cut) metal into a desired shape, operated by manual strength. This translates the engraved pattern from the acrylic into the pewter as a visual and haptic texture – which is concave on one side, and convex on the other.
- I then form the pewter, using wooden formers which I cut using the laser cutter. The pewter sits on top of the former, and I push the pewter into its shape. This part of the process adds to showing how malleable the material is, and I can just push the pewter into the former with my hands to form it.

In previous works, I have used this process to create textured components, which I then solder to other pieces to make a product. For the Vertical Gallery I aim to focus primarily on the process and show pieces that highlight this; I intend to display strips of fly-pressed pewter, alongside their acrylic counterparts.

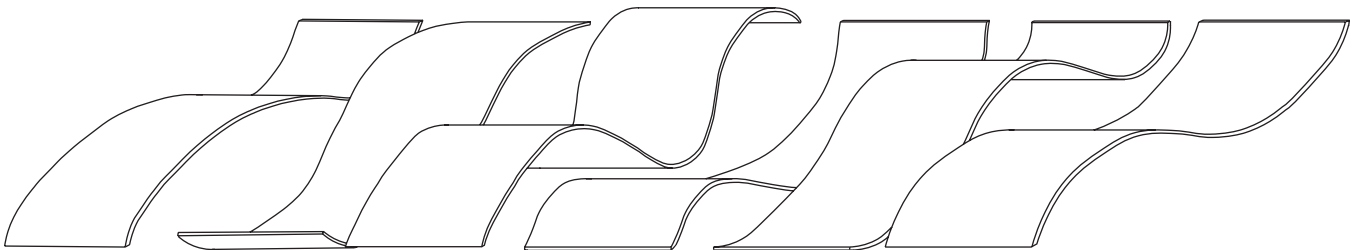


This image shows my previous work. The grid texture on the side of the piece is fly-pressed on a gradient, where the engraving on the acrylic gets deeper so the metal gets forced deeper into it, causing a deeper impression. In this piece, the deeper engraving was at the bottom, and slowly decreased in depth going up to the top of the piece. I would like to make the gradient more obvious in my piece for the Vertical Gallery, and have the form and the gradient work together hand in hand – almost as if they are responsive to each other.

My Proposal

I propose that my piece will entail multiple strips of formed and textured pewter suspended on thin steel wire in the air, alongside its acrylic counterpart. This allows members of the audience to see both the concave and convex texture, by looking above and underneath. On the deepest trough of where the pewter is formed, is where the texture will be the deepest, giving the appearance that the texture and form work hand in hand.

- Each strip of formed pewter will be 250mm wide, and 1200mm long when formed.
- Each strip of acrylic will also be 250mm wide and 1200mm long when formed.
- Before forming, the pewter and acrylic strips will all be 1600mm long, so I will require 6x 250x1600 pieces of 0.9mm thick pewter, and 6x 250x1600 pieces of 5mm acrylic.



This is an illustration of what the form of the pewter and acrylic strips will look like, with the peaks and troughs where the deeper and shallower texture will sit. These strips show how the formed and textured pewter will look, and there will be another identical set of 6 made from the acrylic formers.

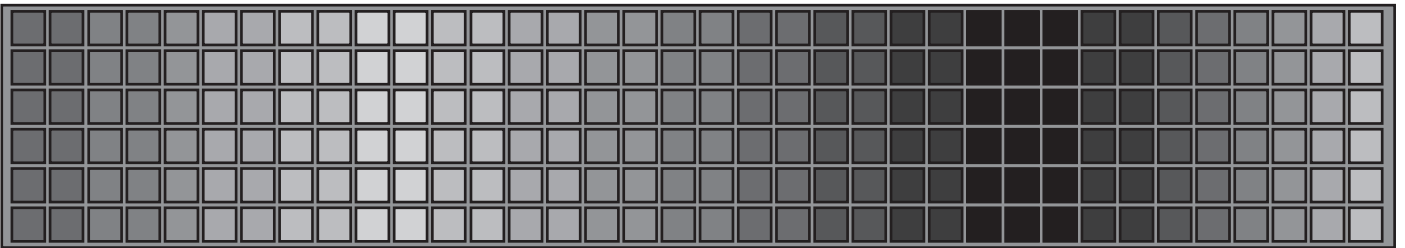
Laser Engraved and Formed Acrylic:



Highest point on the form,
shallowest engraving

Lowest point on the form,
deepest engraving

Textured and Formed Pewter:



Highest point on the form,
shallowest texture

Lowest point on the form,
deepest texture

Here I have tried to illustrate how the gradient of the texture will look on both the pewter and the acrylic. The lighter parts are where the texture is the shallowest on the pewter, so the engraving is the shallowest on the acrylic, and the peak is at its highest point in the form. The darker parts are where the texture is the deepest on the pewter, so the engraving is the deepest on the acrylic, and the trough is at the lowest point in the form.

My Other Work

For more information on my other projects or to see how this process can be incorporated into more practical objects, please visit my website or take a look at my Instagram. Thanks!

www.emilylovettwaller.co.uk

@emilylovettwaller