

# DOODLE designs

**Mukul Goyal is moulding contemporary table accessories with ancient craft**

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**F**OR THE past several years, Gurgaon-based designer Mukul Goyal has been traveling to the tribal belt of Mayurbhanj district in Orissa to study the Dokra craft of lost wax technique. "I mainly wanted to adapt it to contemporary aesthetics and application," he says. But there was a nagging problem to the set of serving spoons he developed using this indigenous method a year ago; the brass-based spoons with teflon-coated scoops were too heavy and impractical. So this year, he replaced the golden metal with a lighter aluminium-based alloy

with good results.

Now if you walk into the Next store in New Delhi or any of the FusionZ store in California, it is likely that the new version of the spoons are sitting at the shop windows. So are the napkin holders, flower vases and candle sticks, all made at his studio Designwise India.

Goyal, who is trained as a metallurgical engineer at IIT Kanpur, said the design bug bit him when he, "visited the National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad on some project work and fell in love with designing".

So he decided to become a student again and enrolled for an industrial product design course at NID. Later, he went on to secure a post-graduate degree in industrial design at Milan's

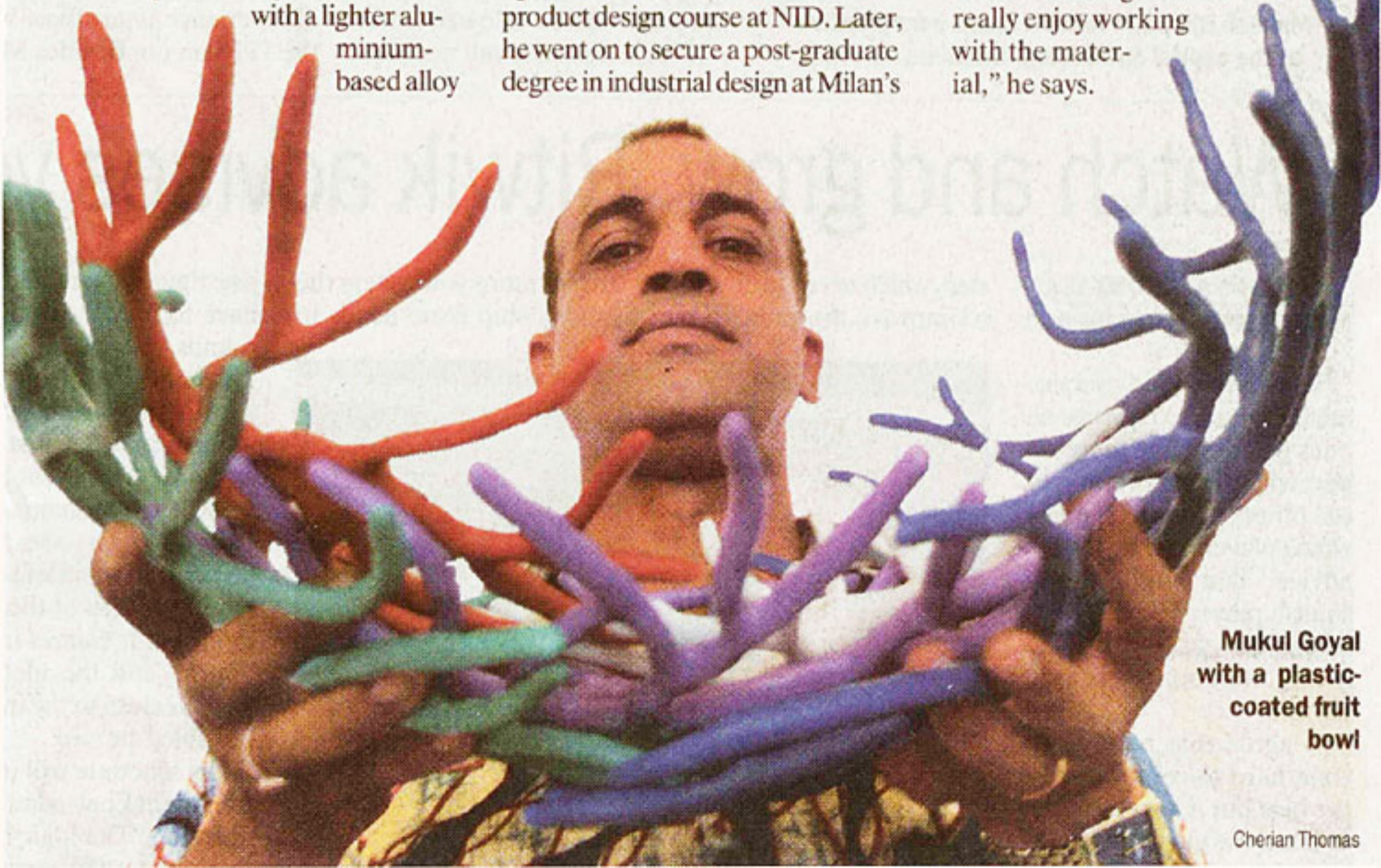
Domus Academy.

While the problems of designing a good product never ends, a question continues to bother him. There are so many products out there, does he really have to make more? "But I realised that I needed to present my perspective too," he says.

Today most of his products are retailed at top-end boutiques across the country and at select shops in the US. The products are manufactured at his Gurgaon factory where his staff of 120 are trained to handle sandcasting techniques like tinting, doodle and lost wax.

Mukul, however, admits that most designers fail when a friction between creative pursuits and business goals arises. "From the way I saw it, the business had to come to me and on my own terms. Moreover, since we were working on such a tight budget, we had to get profitable from day one," he says. Last year, the company made a turnover of Rs 2.5 crore.

Besides, says Goyal, "Our export-based manufacturing orders leave the studio enough room and money to experiment with our own designs." Next the metal designer is eyeing to design a line of leather goods. "I really enjoy working with the material," he says.



**Mukul Goyal with a plastic-coated fruit bowl**