It soars to a height of 6.65m and weighs an impressive 3 tonnes.

Titled The Wind And Wings, this stainless steel sculpture on the grounds of Nanyang Technological University (NTU) was handcrafted by sculptor Yeo Chee Kiong and his team of 10.

The 40-year-old was commissioned by the university to make it and had only about two months to do so.

It is to commemorate the university as the world’s first Youth Olympic Village and was officially unveiled by President S R Nathan last night.

In between teaching classes at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Yeo flew three times a week for 88 days to Xiamen in China, where the forging foundry was located, to literally hammer the work into shape.

He says: “It’s quite a challenging piece because you have to use your hands and hammer to forge it out of stainless steel and work out every single detail.”

The sculpture is made of top-grade stainless steel imported from Finland and features Yeo’s signature bulbous forms.

The work glows with multiple colours at night, thanks to seven light-emitting diode lights at the base of the work.

A rather magical effect is created, which you would have to see for yourself in person, says Yeo.

He adds: “Every hemisphere is able to capture your image like a telescope and you will see hundreds or thousands of reflections of yourself in the sculpture.”

The work thus changes character from day to night. Its shape resembles a butterfly, which Yeo says is a “symbolic figure for young people”.

He explains: “It is a metaphor for the concept behind the Youth Olympic Games, that this is just a starting point and the young athletes are just starting out. Who knows? Maybe five years later, they will become famous in what they do. Everyone will have an opportunity to create his own future.

“To me, the most important thing is that the piece of sculpture should go beyond words because it really is a transformation experience and can be interpreted differently.”

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