



# Tai Hwa Goh: Virtual Exhibition Tour Transcript

## Narrated by: Tai Hwa Goh

Hi, I'm Tai Hwa Goh. I am a printmaker and installation artist. I am doing printstallation which making installation art with hand pulled prints, blurring the distinction between printmaking and sculpture. At first glance it seems like the readymade honeycomb paper goods but upon closer inspection you can see that I had printed, cut, and formed each component.

I extended my prints to outside of the frame and pushed the boundaries of traditional printmaking from two-dimensional images on paper to three-dimensional sculptural installation. This transforms the space to make a more dynamic relationship with the viewer.

When I look at my work process, it is divided into the timing of printing, the period of making three-dimensional pieces, and the period of planning and assembling the composition. Starting with hand-drawn illustrations of organic shapes and patterns, I scanned and digitally altered the images and then screen printed them on thick and strong paper such as Korean Mulberry paper. After the paper has been printed with my image, I place it on top of a sheet of bees wax and melt it into the paper. It stiffens it and will also make paper translucent.

When you make three dimensional things it is important to show the image backside and frontside like textile. After the paper is waxed, patterns on the paper are not images on the surface anymore but more integrated as an independent art form. It's been very interesting for me. When many images are created, the images are then collected and pasted or sewn to create a three-dimensional object. My practice is like building up the vocabularies to make sentences and phrases. After I made the individual pieces, I combine them together at the gallery. After the show is scheduled, I research the site and try to simulate the installation doing many sketches and trials on my studio wall and space.

I sketch a lot. At the very beginning of the whole process, I am inspired by the medical, biological, scientific illustration books. Sketching is also always the best tool to plan the site-specific installation

Let's go to look at each piece closer:



The first piece we are looking is *Assymetric Arrangement*.

In Target Gallery, I explore my recent print installation and sculptural series which is a symbolic contemporary investigation about shaped floristry. My reimagined arrangement of flowers shows how Human desires have distorted the naturalness of organically grown plants, and resulted in the monstrous, unnatural, and asymmetrical entities.

Inspired from the art of flower arranging, one of my mom's favorite contemplations I observed many times at childhood, I made my installation move beyond the aesthetic appeal of flowers by using industrial materials such as pvc, plexiglass, pipes and driveway sticks.

In my recent work, I'm also focusing on is the contrast between two opposite things- that tension. For example, I'm using a very organic shape, but you can also see industrial pipes, plastics, pvc and cement. Walking around these organic, biomorphic paper installations, I would like you to feel not only the tensions of delicate balance between nature and civilization but also the tensions of the contrast such as microscopic vs macroscopic, cellular vs large scale, inside vs outside, and untamed vs domestic.

My color is very bright and very tropical. But- it's very artificial. I use colors like candy, artificial, very tempting, but very dangerous. Toxic, even. That's why I use a lot of fluorescent color. Specially here I use the very bright orange color as a metaphor of caution and warning. My work looks very joyous, but I also want people to think about the dark side of my work, you know, why it has to be bright, and then why it has to be very fluorescent. Sometimes when we see something right before it begins to wither, it is at its best, brightest, and then starts decaying.

### *Leaks*

This installation is part of a "Leaks" project that was installed in a hallway two years ago. A hallway has the most lively and diverse contents than any other aspect of the universe. People with brimming minds filled with emotions, secrets, and ideas walk through hallways all day every day. There are vibrant relationship and deep-rooted connections between the people who walk those halls. Some of those emotions might be pushed down, piling up in the shadows of the mind. Some of those relationships might be kept secret, hiding unscathed deep underneath the surface. But sometimes there is a leak, a burst of unexpected opening that the well-kept feelings, secrets, ideas, and relationships flood through.



My artwork was the open expression, the leaks, of the emotions, the secrets, and the paradigms that the constrained hallway struggles to contain. Since Torpedo factory which the target gallery is located is the huge art center that has many artist studio through hallway and also has interesting history that the building was used as a a naval munitions factory and government storage for things such as congressional documents, artifacts from the [Smithsonian](#), and [Nazi trial](#) records, I thought this piece will be exciting in this exhibition.

### *Transplant Series*

Humans think that they are able to make a perfect, natural setting for plants. However, they are not aware that they hold the power to manipulate the temperature, the sunlight, and whatever organic freedom that plants need to be able to thrive. Unknowingly, when the setting such as incubator, cloche, or greenhouse was invented, humans over the course of time, started to use this power to control and dictate the recipes for the natural plants. But one cannot grow a natural plant in an unnatural environment. This is what the humans failed to understand.

The power to grow natural, organic plants slowly dissolved to the power to grow the adored plants; the plants that the humans and their honorable guests would like to look down upon and glorify themselves with its beauty. The “natural” setting slowly dissipated into the corrupt manipulation chamber that humans liked to use to tamper with the Nature kingdom. This tampering resulted in the monstrous, unnatural entities that were undistinguishable from its natural cousins in wildlife.

### *Minnewaska Pine Tree*

Sam's Point at Minnewaska State Park New York is one of our family's favorite trails. In late April 2016, a fire of unknown origin burned 2,028 acres (8.21 km<sup>2</sup>) of the park and nearby woodlands. Containing the fire required nearly a week of effort from over 300 responders from local and state agencies; no structural damage and only minor injuries were reported.

As a historically fire-adapted ecosystem, much of the vegetation at Sam's Point responded positively in the wake of the fire. I got the inspiration from the scenery of the regeneration of pine pitches at the park, I thought about how the nature was vulnerable and fragile but at the same time strong and recoverable.



Another inspiration for this work was the famous American artist Dr. Seuss's 1971 book "Lorax", Lorax who speaks for trees without tongues. I love Seuss' illustrations, and I read this book many times to my daughters when they were young. Lorax is keen on how capitalism, human desire, and how human components dominate and conquer natural components. There, I was inspired to use wood, artificial colors and plastic pipes.

I hope you enjoyed my exhibition in Target Gallery.

Thank you so much.