Mycelium

Minjoo Lee
Fort Hays State University, anorsulli@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.fhsu.edu/theses

Part of the Graphic Design Commons, Illustration Commons, and the Printmaking Commons

Recommended Citation
DOI: 10.58809/XFUC6202
Available at: https://scholars.fhsu.edu/theses/3235

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at FHSU Scholars Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of FHSU Scholars Repository. For more information, please contact ScholarsRepository@fhsu.edu.
SYNTHESIS
A Trifected Graphic Design MFA Show

Mycelium
January 20 - February 3, 2023
Minjoo Lee

Graduate catalog
Master of Fine Arts Degree - Graphic Design
Fort Hays State University
Hays, KS
Graduate catalog
Master of Fine Arts Degree
Fort Hays State University
Hays, Kansas
January 20 - February 3, 2023

This catalog submitted to the graduate school in particular fulfillment of the requirement of the degree of Master of Fine Arts.
Mycelium (noun)
/məˈʃiːliəm/
plural: mycelia

the vegetative, root-like part of a fungus, consisting of a network of fine white thread-like filaments (hyphae).

From as long as I can remember, I've drawn inspiration from nature. I've always looked to create art and designs that contain the same visual elements and story-telling that is so present in nature. In mycelia, I found inspiration in the fact that they are vital in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems for their role in the decomposition of material. They give life to what has died, turning negative into positive.

TATUME ISLAND Tattoo Studio was born out of turning the biggest insecurity in my life into something positive through the power of my art and design skills, represented by the "flying elephant" logo. TATUME also draws inspiration from my roots in South Korea, such as the use of the Hangul alphabet and my choice of colors. While my origins don't define me, they are an aspect of my life I am proud of and not hesitant to show.

Mycelium is also an important food source for many soil invertebrates and a primary factor in the health of plants. Trees can communicate and share nutrients with each other via mycelium, which has its own network design. Mycelium is everywhere, storing memories and information in their cell since they first appeared on this planet. In short, mycelium is vital to nature.

With my book "THE NOTES OF ARTEMIS", I hope to inform more people about nature and the amazing creatures that it hosts. It was born out of my love for animals and my sympathy for their suffering. I hope you fall in love with them, just like I did. The project "PEACE FOR UKRAINE" was also created because I wanted to find a way to use my artistic skills to help ease the suffering in Ukraine. All proceeds from that sale went to help Ukrainian families.

If my bachelor's degree was about honing my ink-pen art style, found in my illustrations and tattoos, and learning to apply it to graphic design, my MFA study was about challenging myself to learn new skills and how to work with different materials.

Like mycelium grows one cell at a time, eventually branching out to cover the whole planet, I too hope to branch out my art. I hope you enjoy the show.
‘Peace for Ukraine’ Fundraising Project

Linocut prints

9” x 15”
‘The Notes of Artemis’ Illustrated Pop-up Book

Mixed Media

approx. 10” x 13”
Shidisshe
Ink Pen
12” x 20”
Shidisshe
Ink Pen
approx. 7” x 10”
17 years
Lithography print
14” x 20”
Whisperer
Procreate
8” x 11”
Portrait 1

Procreate

8” x 11”
Ganjang-gaeran bap

Procreate

8” x 11”
When creating the tattoo studio, the artist made sure to add a little bit of her root in the process. The adorable square-ish letters you'd see as soon as you step into the TATUME ISLAND, are the word 'TATUME' written in Korean, and printed by the artist herself, '타투미'.
Her first original TATUME piece was about her very personal complex. Growing up, Minjoo was obese most of her life. It was only during high-school that the artist gained close friends, and even then, the bullying never stopped. The artist was constantly name called and one of the most common names that was an elephant.

Throughout her whole life, the artist yearned to be simply lighter and that’s how she got her inspiration for the first-ever TATUME tattoo design. In 2013, after a long convincing from her family, Minjoo decided to get gastric sleeve surgery. The procedure was simple, however, after removing 70-80% of her stomach, the artist had a long way to recover and gain back her health.

Minjoo had to adjust to a new lifestyle and simple things were more difficult than ever, but the progress she was finally able to see on her body after her whole life, was definitely worth every second. Now, the artist has lost about 180lbs, and she exclaims, ‘Simply being able to do things has brought her so much happiness in her life.’
Now Minjoo is on a mission to help anyone who are struggling to love themselves for any reasons. The artist believes that everyone deserves to love themselves no matter what they look like or how they feel about themselves. By having a personal tattoo consultation, Minjoo creates a TATUME design for each individual with their unique complex and their life stories.
"I don’t like my face, I think my forehead is too big and my
toothache hurts. I wonder if it’s called toothache or tooth
ache like parts of a skull but mine stick out more. I think it is the
book ask. My legs is too big say my bottom, it’s too small to the
book look somehow. I’m sure got compared to	

myself growing up. I have a weak chin like if it’s not real, look
table growing up. I have a weak chin like if it’s not real, look
table growing up. I have a weak chin like if it’s not real, look
table growing up. I have a weak chin like if it’s not real, look
table growing up. I have a weak chin like if it’s not real, look

Age: 24  
Origin: Andover  
Pronouns: He/him

“Ever since being a kid, I’ve always been hyperfixated on perfectionism. It seemed as though when I performed well, I would receive love, so I chased that love. I felt like people would only give love transactionally based on my performance—and if I couldn’t perform in the way they wanted, I was not worthy of it.”

“The 2 animals I chose to create your TATUME animal is a weaver bird and a koala. Weaver birds are known for their amazing engineering when it comes to their nests. Home-building is done exclusively by males hoping to attract a female. Depending on the species and available building materials, nests may be constructed with plant fibers or twigs. This bird reminded me a lot about your story, because they crave to build the perfect house to be loved.

On the contrary, Koalas are far from perfectionist. They are known for their easy-going nature and their slow life style. They can sleep for up to 20 hours a day, due to their low energy diet, and the intense amount of energy required to break down toxic leaves.

As you can see, your TATUME animal’s nest is far from being perfect or even having a shape of a nest. I wanted to tell you that you are and will be loved no matter what kind of ‘nest’ you build.”
Age: 25  
Origin: Downs, Kansas  
Pronouns: She/they

“Here are my insecurities: shape of my nose, pooch of my stomach, love handles, wanting to be shorter/hating being tall, fear of abandonment, self doubt, imposter syndrome, and mainly just feeling like a stranger in my skin. I don’t feel anything when I see myself except wonder who she is.”

“From your story, the line “imposter syndrome” really stood out to me. You’re one of the most authentic/genuine people I’ve ever met, and that surprised me. It made me curious to know what is making you feel like you have to pretend to be someone or something, and I thought, maybe that’s your form of self-defense in a way.

As much as how strong you are and how other people might think you’re a strong and independent individual 24/7, from what I know, you’ve been hurt by people many times and that’s why it made me think maybe this is how she protects herself.

Owl butterfly does the same with its beautiful wings. The black round spots on its wings are something called eyespots, which makes them look like a face of an animal when their wings are spread fully. I thought this was very fitting for you because it is trying to protect itself but at the same time, because of this pattern, they have such beautiful wings. Obviously butterflies are born from cocoons but I added egg in your design so that maybe one day, you would feel safe enough to just be yourself and come out of the shell. It also made sense to me cause you said you feel like a “stranger in your own skin”, which seemed similar to egg shells.”
Age: 21  
Origin: Hays  
Pronouns: She/her

“I would say i’ve always been insecure about appearance, but what bother me most is how i let how i view myself affect my personality. I catch myself a lot wishing i would speak up or just loosen up more with friends to be my most authentic self. Sometimes I don’t stand up for myself or I will tell half truths to avoid any sort of confrontation, because I don’t want them to have a negative reaction. I am pretty shy and subdued at first, but I wish I was a stronger and more confident person in that way. 
So low key i have a lot of anger and anxiety pent up inside myself, and i do let that effect how i treat my family and friends for things that is in the past or they can’t control. but Toni told me their new nickname for me is “little vicious” so do that with what you please!”

“I chose Chameleon and Slow Loris as your 2 animals to create TATUME. I chose chameleon because what stood out to me from your answer was that you’re trying to “blend in” to the society or the group of people you’re with. It seemed like it’s a form of protection for you, as well as you’re afraid to just be your authentic self. 
Because of that reason, I chose chameleon to be your first animal cause they’re quite shy animals and they camouflage to protect themselves, even when they have one of the most vibrant and beautiful colors on their body.
I chose slow Loris, because of the second message you’ve sent me. That word “little vicious” stood out to me and I thought this animal was perfect for you. They are quite shy and adorable, but actually venomous animal.
Also, I always thought that you had one of the most cutest doe eyes I’ve ever seen and I thought it was perfect fit. I purposefully didn’t draw any leaves or plants around it, because this TATUME animal is not afraid to be itself and flash its beautiful colors to the world and I hope you get to feel the same one day, that you can just be yourself and don’t have to make yourself fit in.”
Age: 19  
Origin:  
Pronouns:

“Always need reassurance to know that I am liked/loved. Feels like I’m not enough but also too much to handle. Scared I’ll never find love. Feels like I can’t share my feelings around my friends, because they don’t seem to care. always being compared to my brothers. I’m insecure about my faith around my friends because I’m afraid of judgement.”

“Heron has a symbol of balance, stability, and self-reliance. They are perceptive and grounded, and also have a deep sense of contentment in everything they do. They are an animal that lives in a large group, and mate for life.

I chose sunflower for your second part of your TATUME animal, based on your insecurity about your faith and how you don’t feel comfortable showing it around your friends. Sun has been a big symbol of god for somany centuries in many different religions/cultures. The flower was named ‘Sunflower’ for it’s devotion to its own god which is the sun, and I wanted you to be unafraid to show your devotion.”
Age: 18  
Origin: Cunningham, Kansas  
Pronouns: He/him

“Reflecting over life experiences I feel like some of my biggest insecurities come from both physical appearances + personality traits. When it comes to physical appearence the most insecure part about me is my height, although it doesn’t bother me too much now. I say my height, because I feel like I am shorter than most men, and that used to make me feel a bit insecure. I think that when it comes to personality traits, my biggest insecurity is how shy I can be which makes me very nervous around people. Even though I am still really shy, I’m slowly but surely gaining more confidence and becoming less shy.”

“The two animals I chose to create your TATUME animal is an otter and a hummingbird. From your physical insecurities, I thought marine animals or avians animals would be perfect.

One of the biggest reasons I chose these 2 types of animals is because they’re the type of animals that are never restricted by height, since they can swim as low as they want and fly as high as they want.

I chose a hummingbird, because they’re known for being one of the most shy animals, and I chose an otter for its friendly and social nature. They are extroverts with an abundance of energy. Active and engaging socialization is essential as they life life hands-on and are always ready to socialize.”
Age: 20  
Origin: Holcomb, Kansas  
Pronouns: He/him  

“My biggest insecurities is that I am anxious when talking to new people. I get in my own head about saying something wrong or thinking I’m talking too much or too little. I rarely start conversations because I feel like I’m bothering someone if I do. I just want to be more relaxed when talking to new people.”

“The two animals I chose to create your TATUME animal is a frog and a parakeet. One of the biggest thing I’ve noticed from your story was that you want to be less anxious when talking to new people. I chose frog for this reason, since they are rather shy creatures and the way it jumps reminds me of the state of being nervous/anxious. Parakeets are known for its talkative nature, as well as their beautiful singing voice, and some might say they talk ‘too’ much. I wanted you to feel comfortable enough to be able to talk/sing just like the parakeets, whenever you meet new people.”
Age: 18  
Origin: Hays, Kansas  
Pronouns: She/her

“When I was younger I was on the bigger side, my ribs stick out a lot now. So I like to wear sweatshirts and jackets to cover my torso. When I try to wear tight clothing I feel very uncomfortable/very awkward. I hate how big my forehead is, my hair is thin so it’s hard to cover how big my forehead is. With my insecurities I feel like I can’t go out without feeling uncomfortable or awkward. I can’t just be me, because I’m always uncomfortable. When I go out, I feel like that’s what people look at. I love to be active but I hate that the title of being masculent comes along with it, especially when you’re more broad and boxy looking.”

“I don’t know if there are any other animals that are more ‘boxy’ than leopard tortoise on this earth. They have rather masculine exterior than a lot of other animals, even the intricate pattern on its shell. They way you described yourself reminded me of humming bird, because they also have large forehead and pretty thin feathers, however, they’re known as one of the most prettiest birds. They are also known for being very active in their life, having one of the highest wings beat among other birds. I wanted you to be as active and free as you want, no matter what kind of body shape you may have.”
Age: 23
Origin: Wichita, Kansas
Pronouns: She/her

“I have a fear of death and I obsess over it. I know it’s not rational and there’s no way to solve it, but I can’t control it. I’d like to be less afraid of death.”

“I imagine this to be an arm(bicep) piece so it can wrap around the arm nicely and give it a great flow. I chose oyster and Jellyfish create your TATUME animal.

It was hard to choose your first animal since animals don’t fear death as same as us humans do. I chose Jellyfish because Jelly fish are technically immortal, they have physical stages that they develop. At any stage, if they feel threatened or stressed, they can basically go back to their previous stage, like becoming younger again, to re-develop.

I chose oyster to be your other animal to combine because when you think about clam species, they don’t seem like they do significant activities or a lot of thinking, but in their life time, they create these beautiful pearls that takes years and that’s why I added those pearls in your TATUME animal.

I wanted to show that no matter how scary the death seems like to you, you’re still an individual that creates beautiful things and make other people’s life just as beautiful.”
The 2 animals I chose to create your TATUME animal is a weaver bird and a koala. Weaver birds are known for their amazing engineering when it comes to their nests. Home-building is done exclusively by males hoping to attract a female. Depending on the species and available building materials, nests may be constructed with plant fibers or twigs. This bird reminded me a lot about your story, because they crave to build the perfect house to be loved.

On the contrary, Koalas are far from perfectionist. They are known for their easy-going nature and their slow life style. They can sleep for up to 20 hours a day, due to their low energy diet, and the intense amount of energy required to break down toxic leaves. As you can see, your TATUME animal’s nest is far from being perfect or even having a shape of a nest. I wanted to tell you that you are and will be loved no matter what kind of ‘nest’ you build.

Our TATUME nipples are made of rubber that is lightweight and easy to use, and will keep your needle in place, no matter how long the tattoo session lasts. Our TATUME nipple bags are resealable to minimize waste, and is made out recycled material.
From your story, the line “imposter syndrome” really stood out to me. You’re one of the most authentic/genuine people I’ve ever met, and that surprised me. It made me curious to know what is making you feel like you have to pretend to be someone or something, and I thought, maybe that’s your form of self-defense in a way.

As much as how strong you are and how other people might think you’re a strong and independent individual 24/7, from what I know, you’ve been hurt by people many times and that’s why it made me think maybe this is how she protects herself.

Owl butterfly does the same with its beautiful wings. The black round spots on its wings are something called eyespots, which makes them look like a face of an animal when their wings are spread fully. I thought this was very fitting for you because it is trying to protect itself but at the same time, because of this pattern, they have such beautiful wings.

Obviously butterflies are born from cucoons but I added egg in your design so that maybe one day, you would feel safe enough to just be yourself and come out of the shell. It also made sense to me cause you said you feel like a “stranger in your own skin”, which seemed similar to egg shells.

---

**Tattoo Needle (20 PCS)**

Made with medical grade stainless steel, each tattoo needle comes individually packaged in a sterile blister pack individually stamped with expiration dates.

All of our tattoo needles and tips set are pre-sterilized with EO gas. Peel back the paper cover from plastic blister to use.

Our Tatume tattoo needle packaging features one of our founding members, Tahemus’s Tatume animal, who now owns his own production studio, ‘Small-Sea’, Seattle, Washington.
Cartridge Needle (20 PCS)

Made of medical grade stainless steel. Each needle is inspected and examined three times under a microscope, ensuring superior quality for professional artists.

The casing of TATUME cartridges are made with transparent, medical-grade polycarbonate with a low profile housing, better ink flow, and an elastic silicon membrane to prevent ink leakage.

Our TATUME cartridge needle packaging features one of our founding members, C.Fraze’s Tatume animal, who now owns her own candy shop, ‘Marion’s’ in Prescott, Arizona.
Our TATUME ink cups are made with the base at the bottom to prevent the cup from tipping over to create a cleaner tattoo station.

The triple-layered paper packaging prevents the ink cups from breaking and contaminating the product, and long-lasting to stock up in any tattoo studio.

Our ink cup packaging features one of our most mysterious founding members.
TATUME rubber bands will help keep your tattoo needle in place while tattooing, by securing your needle from moving or jumping. Our rubber bands are made from synthetic polyisoprene and are latex free. Each bag roughly contains 300 pieces of small, medium, and large size rubber bands.
We’re aware of the large volume of wasted tattoo inks when pouring the tattoo ink in an itty bitty ink cups. Fret not! our marked spoid will help you measure exactly how much ink you need per cup.

TATUME ink bottles were specifically designed to not only show off our brilliant color selection in crystal clear quality, but to minimize our environmental impact.

Tattoo Ink
1 FL OZ.

We’re aware of the large volume of wasted tattoo inks when pouring the tattoo ink in an itty bitty ink cups. Fret not! our marked spoid will help you measure exactly how much ink you need per cup.

TATUME ink bottles were specifically designed to not only show off our brilliant color selection in crystal clear quality, but to minimize our environmental impact.
One of our company’s biggest aspirations is to reduce plastic waste that are always produced by many tattoo supplies. By using our refillable TATUME Tattoo ink bottle, we can minimize immense amount of plastic waste that could, and is harming many animals, our planet, and even ourselves.

Every 3 plastic bottles that are returned to our studio, you will get 1 free 1 fl oz tattoo ink!
Everything we do is Synthesia.

portant as the present as both work harmoniously in defining what we do.

direction: taking what we have and doing something more with it. The past is just as im-
unique and personal to each of us, but we all related to the idea of forward movement and
one of us found our thesis work's genesis in a turning point moment. That moment was
thinking positive, synthesizing our experiences into something fuller and more holistic. Each

Synthesia is a neologism all about the idea of taking a negative and turning it into some-
Catalog List

‘Peace for Ukraine’ Fundraising Project
Linocut prints, 9” x 15”

‘The Notes of Artemis’ Illustrated Pop-up Book
Mixed Media, approx. 10” x 13”

Shidisshe
Ink pen, 12” x 20”, approx. 7” x 10”

Momentum
Linocut Print, 13” x 20”

Taeback
Lithography print, 8” x 16”

Whisperer
Procreate, 8” x 11”

Portrait 1
Procreate, 8” x 11”

Portrait 2
Procreate, 8” x 11”

Portrait 3
Procreate, 8” x 11”

Ganjang-gaeran bap
Procreate, 8” x 11”
Biography

Minjoo Lee was born in Busan, South Korea in December 27th, 1994. Lee studied Interactive Media design in Dongseo University in Busan from 2013-2018. During her sophomore year, Minjoo Lee joined to be part of the honor society program, which provided an opportunity to study at Fort Hays State University as an exchange student. After she completed her one semester of exchange program, she was able to participate in a workshop at School of Visual Arts in New York in summer of 2015. During the summer workshop, Lee realized she wanted to go back to Fort Hays state University to study graphic design, and she was able to get another opportunity to come back for another two semesters.

After Lee completed her bachelors degree in South Korea, Lee was determined to go back to FHSU to study graphic design, so she decided to pursue her masters degree at FHSU. After three and a half years, Lee is expected to graduate on May 12th with her Masters degree. Lee is excited to explore new possibilities in the U.S., as a graphic designer, or a professor, or as a tattoo artist.

Resume

2nd Place
Leo B Pencil Project, 2020

2nd Place - Graduate Design Category
John Heinrichs Scholarly and Creative Activities Day, 2021

2nd Place - Watercolor Painting Category
ROAR - Russell Original Art Review, 2021

Honorable Mention
ROAR - Russell Original Art Review, 2021

Variations: Multi-Media Printmaking Exhibition
The Annex, Hays, KS, 2022
I hereby grant Fort Hays State University an irrevocable, non-exclusive, perpetual license to include my thesis ("the Thesis") in FHSU Scholars Repository, FHSU’s institutional repository ("the Repository").

I hold the copyright to this document and agree to permit this document to be posted in the Repository, and made available to the public in any format in perpetuity.

I warrant that the posting of the Thesis does not infringe any copyright, nor violate any proprietary rights, nor contains any libelous matter, nor invade the privacy of any person or third party, nor otherwise violate FHSU Scholars Repository policies.

I agree that Fort Hays State University may translate the Thesis to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation and access. In addition, I agree that Fort Hays State University may keep more than one copy of the Thesis for purposes of security, back-up, and preservation.

I agree that authorized readers of the Thesis have the right to use the Thesis for non-commercial, academic purposes, as defined by the "fair use" doctrine of U.S. copyright law, so long as all attributions and copyright statements are retained.

To the fullest extent permitted by law, both during and after the term of this Agreement, I agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless Fort Hays State University and its directors, officers, faculty, employees, affiliates, and agents, past or present, against all losses, claims, demands, actions, causes of action, suits, liabilities, damages, expenses, fees and costs (including but not limited to reasonable attorney’s fees) arising out of or relating to any actual or alleged misrepresentation or breach of any warranty contained in this Agreement, or any infringement of the Thesis on any third party’s patent, trademark, copyright or trade secret.

I understand that once deposited in the Repository, the Thesis may not be removed.

Thesis: **Mycelium (1/3 of SYNTHESIA)**

Author: **Minjoo Lee**

Signature: **Minjoo Lee**

Date: **05.09.2023**