

**Goro Murayama solo exhibition “Painting Folding”
@ Takuro Someya Contemporary Art (TSCA, Tokyo)
Review for *BT* by Yukiko Shikata [4 Feb, 2021]**



Installation view: Left, *Painting folding – Regard This as a Key to Hypothesize a Door That It Would Open* (2020),
Center, *Painting folding – Conceive a Body that is in Accordance With This* (2020)

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A ceaseless process of differentiation that erupted in the pandemic

Entering the exhibition space, one is confronted with *Conceive a Body that is in Accordance With This*, the work that holds the key to the entire exhibition. The “woven paintings” based on the concept of autopoiesis that Murayama has been creating since 2008 have grown into unprecedentedly multilayered three-dimensional helix structures, with a protruding end seemingly piercing into another dimension. Part of this tip droops and hangs over a printed 3D simulation image.

Murayama has drawn inspiration from simulation in science where lifelike behavior is generated based on the rules of cellular automata, coining the expression “simulational poiesis” to refer to his works in contraposition to scientific simulation. In this work, the two come together for the first time, forming a kind of hybrid body encapsulating strong contrasts.

The title of this exhibition derives from protein folding, a biological model where one-dimensional amino acid sequences are developed into three-dimensional helix structures. The woven painting and the scientific image share their regard for the three-dimensional as well as the helix structure that occurs in nature.



Painting folding – Conceive a Body that is in Accordance With This (2020)
Acrylic on woven hemp string, 200x160x30cm, reference image.

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The helix could be described as a dynamic flow in which various patterns and structures are created a posteriori.

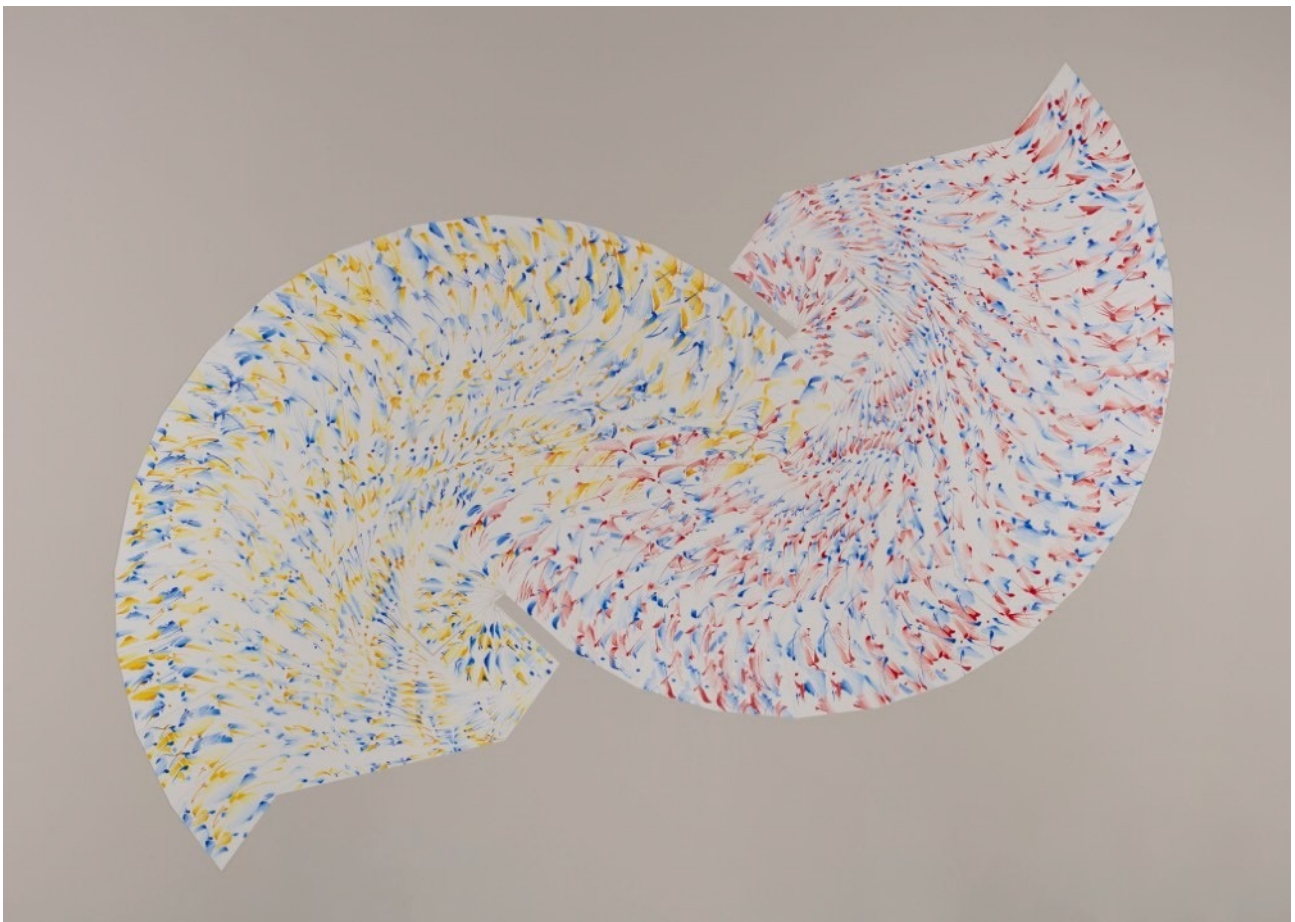
By introducing self-organizing rules, the woven paintings assume a series of processes where two-dimensional supports are generated by hand from strings to then be painted over. The support is thus a series of traces that lead from one dimension to two and three dimensions. The image is a simulation of the three-dimensional structure of the Covid-19 spike proteins (the main target of the antibody), showing the way in which the helix is entangled. The woven painting in this work is achieved by Murayama incorporating this generation process as a rule. *Regard This as a Key to Hypothesize a Door That It Would Open* positioned to the left of it takes as its motif ACE2 proteins*, the receptor that binds to the Covid-19 spike proteins, which form the "matching body" corresponding to the work.

The pandemic that has engulfed the world since 2020 has had a profound impact on politics and economics, on society, and even on people's physical and mental health. Cutting-edge life sciences and information and communication technologies promote information gathering and analysis, simulation, and medical treatment, but we are faced, at the same time, with the limitations of modern systems (including modern science). Viruses that repeatedly mutate (including COVID-19) are a threat to human beings, but now that there is an understanding that genes originate from organisms (including humans) and that eight percent of the human genome has been introduced from the outside via retroviruses, the relationship between humans and viruses must also be reinterpreted from the perspective of communication.



Painting folding - Regard This as a Key to Hypothesize a Door That It Would Open (2020)
Acrylic on woven hemp string, 140x160x25cm, reference image.
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Behind the timeliness of his reaction to the pandemic, there lies Murayama's long-standing contemplation and practice regarding the loosening ends of the progress of modern science, namely the notion of objective observation reaching its limits, as well as the possibility of emergence through autopoiesis. Murayama creates his works following a set of rules. The process, however, induces reciprocal metamorphoses and leapfrogging in both the work and the artist due to the encounter with unexpected situations caused not only by misalignments and errors, but also by the peculiar materialities of the materials and the artist's own physical and emotional fluctuations. Murayama says that when producing his works, he alternately experiences the internal behavior of the system and the gaze of an outside observer. To explore the possibilities of a science of emergence that overcomes modern science through art—what Murayama aims to achieve is a creative turn that goes beyond the existing boundaries of science and art to find a new way that the two can work together.



Voderberg Tiling Drawing (2020)
Acrylic on paper, cutting plotter, 160x205cm

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The above-mentioned three-dimensionalization with helix structures can also be seen in “Tiling Drawing” that applies Voderberg's mathematical spiral tiling. The work brings the binding of multiple units of a protein into a four-dimensional structure (a new protein) and mathematical filling into a relationship, resulting in the amplification of the paper's distortions that create a new modality (dimension).

Murayama's works are the irreversible tracks of the interaction between the support, which is dynamically created on the basis of autopoiesis, and the perceptual and physical actions of drawing on it**. They are log records that have undergone several stages of metamorphosis, a process of constant differentiation between the various intermediate realms. This exhibition marks a momentous turn in Murayama's quest, which underwent a new development after a quiet eruption in the age of pandemics.

*Functional receptors for the human coronaviruses SARS-CoV and SARS-CoV-2.

**The cellular automaton drawings developed on grains of old wood constitute a new development for the artist, where the support is treated as a record log (a word which curiously also refers to the cut trunk of a tree) formed by nature.

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Takuro Someya Contemporary Art [Tokyo, <https://tsca.jp>]

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Translated by Naoki Matsuyama