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Beyond Japan Transcript

Series 2, Episode 23: Global Crafts: Woodblock Prints with Wuon-Gean Ho

Edited by Oliver Moxham, Host and Producer

GLOBAL CRAFTS: WOODBLOCK PRINTS
WITH WUON-GEAN HO



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S2.E23

OM: Oliver Moxham

WGH: Wuon-Gean Ho

OM: Hello and welcome to *Beyond Japan*, an interdisciplinary podcast that looks at the broad reach of Japanese Studies from within and beyond Japan. This podcast is brought to you by the Centre for Japanese Studies at the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures in collaboration with the University of East Anglia. I'm your host, Oliver Moxham, Research Project Coordinator at the Sainsbury Institute and researcher of language and Japanese war heritage.

This week we are joined by Wuon-Gean Ho, printmaker and research associate at the University of West England's Centre for Print Research, to discuss the place of *mokuhanga*, or woodblock printmaking, in the global spread of traditional crafts. Wuon-Gean Ho walks us through her path to *mokuhanga*, her experience learning from a master printmaker in Japan and how learning these traditional methods have shaped her growth as an artist.

We hope you enjoy the show.

OM: Okay, good morning Wuon-Gean, thank you for joining me on the podcast today.

WGH: Nice to meet you, Oliver. It's fantastic to be here.

OM: So, first off, we'd like to know a bit more about you. Can you tell us about your area of expertise and how your interests brought you there?

WGH: Okay. My name is Wuon-Gean and I'm a printmaker, and that means I'm an artist that uses print in my artistic output. But I'm also, a research associate at the Centre for Fine Print Research in the University of West of England in Bristol. So, I edit an academic journal and I'm doing a PhD on printmaking and the mechanisms of touch when you make prints. So, a three-pronged print related lifestyle, as it were, work style.

OM: So, on your website, you have a blog entitled 'Diary of a Printmaker', with an impressive array of your linocut works. However, you present yourself as a multimedia artist who has worked with animation, drawing and photography. How did you become a print maker rather than an animator or photographer? Was that something apparent from the beginning of your artistic career?

WGH: Okay, I actually probably did come to art through print because I grew up in Oxford, which is quite close to an art fair called 'Art in Action'. And it was a four-day event in tents in a field, and you could learn artistic techniques in really short bite size lessons for children. And I think I was about eleven when I did a linocut class. My very first print was a picture of a cat on a roof. And I remember being really thrilled that when I pulled the paper back, I could see this image that I could make more of. So, printmaking for me became a real passion and something I would do on my spare time. And for me, it's a way of making an image which asks the question, "what happens next?" Do you make a print and then you can easily modify the matrix and make another print that's slightly different? Or you can make a print and then you can think to yourself, well, what happens around the corner? What's on the other side of this image?

And when you work in series like that, it naturally falls into book, arts and animation and, by extension, into film. So, at heart I'm a storyteller. And I really love narrative, and I think printmaking sort of does that naturally.

OM: So, your printing style is derived from *mokuhanga*, Japanese water-based woodblock printing. Could you explain for our listeners how this is distinct from other woodblock printing techniques and how you came to adopt this style?

WGH: Okay. I have to give you a bit of life history here because I grew up in a family where my dad was a vet and my mum was a nurse and I'm the oldest daughter. So, they were very keen for me to take over the family business. I mentioned to you I love print when I was a child, but they were keen for me to at least study something that had a kind of profession at university. So, I went to university and trained as a vet and made prints in my spare time. And halfway through the course, I thought, "I can't do this profession. It's too difficult. It's too different from my natural passion." And So, I took a year out, and I ended up in Japan teaching English on the JET [Japan Exchange & Teaching] program. And this was my first introduction to living in Japan and the tools and materials that they had in the stationery shop that you could use to make *nengajo*, or New Year cards. So, I remember taking home some pieces of Japanese vinyl and little blocks of wood and buying a little set of carving tools and making prints in my living room in the house where I was staying in Kagoshima. So, this was my first introduction to printmaking from a Japanese perspective. In my final year of college and vet school, I thought, well, there is this incredible opportunity to apply for a Japanese government

scholarship, the 'Monbu Kagakusho' [MEXT] Scholarship. So, I applied with my portfolio, and I was incredibly lucky to be awarded this scholarship to go and study in a university in Japan and to study *mokuhanga*, which is Japanese woodblock printmaking over there. So, it's a bit of a funny story because it's not really very straightforward.

So, I ended up going to Osaka Kyoikudaigaku, which is Osaka Educational University. And it wasn't my first choice University, but due to the kind of sudden economic recession, I ended up there. And actually nobody really knew how to do *mokuhanga* Japanese woodblock printmaking in the college where I was. So, I ended up joining the swim team and taking photos and making rings. And I tell you about the swim team because I think that taught me more potentially about how to make than any other experience that has happened in my life. So, basically, I'm not brilliant swimmer, but I love swimming. And the only way to swim in the University pool was to join the team, and I found myself in a group of very talented young people who were, at the time, the best team in the University Championships. And we were trained 2 hours a day, and in the summer, we had camps. We trained for 4 hours a day, like 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours at night. And I realized that I was never going to be very good. I was always the slowest get to the end of the lane, and everybody would go "hai!", and then we'd go off and swim again, and they would finish their drills, and then they'd wait for me to catch up. And the minute I got to the end, they'd set off again. So, I was permanently the worst person, which was really embarrassing situation, but made me think, why do we do anything in life at all? I mean, do we do things because we're brilliant at them, or do we do them because they are an interesting thing to do? Or do we think that even if

you have no positive feedback, just the act of doing something is enough in and of itself? I think that's a kind of contrast between being goal-oriented and being practice-based, somebody who's quite interested in doing something for its own sake. And I learned that I was never going to be the best, but that it was enough for me to be on the journey. So, that's what happened. I was part of the swim team. I told them I wouldn't compete because I would bring their scores down. But they did win the all Japan contest that year, and I think I put my ego to one side, and I experienced (I think it's probably) a very Japanese sense of encouraging each other, no matter how good you are in the group that I learned and just the sheer physical pleasure of being in the water had to be enough. Being the best was not really the aim of the practice. And I kind of dive into art in a similar way. I kind of think, okay, I'm going on a journey. I'm going to enjoy this journey. I'm not sure where the goal is, and I think turning up and having a go is as valid as turning up and being brilliant. Maybe it's never going to be within grasp to try and be brilliant immediately, but to turn up is a very valid thing to do.

OM: I think it sounds surprisingly similar to academia. I think that many academics suffer from imposter syndrome and there's this pressure to be the most prolific writer of articles or be at the cutting edge of research. But you have to check yourself and say that "I'm contributing. I'm doing something I love, and that's needs to be enough", you know?

WGH: Then you become more authentic because in a way, if you're always trying to focus on the end result, it can hamper your freedom in the moment for something to

change. So, I normally try not to promise anything. When I make something, I don't tell someone I'm going to make a picture about this because I think in a way that would destroy the mystery and the authenticity of what is going to develop. And I have to be in the moment and kind of respond to what the picture is telling me. In a way, I'm kind of a guardian or an enabler, but not necessarily a driving force with an end goal in mind. And I think we're the same in research. We have to be open to maybe something unexpected coming up in our research and thinking, "Okay, well, that wasn't what I expected, but I might have to go along that path and see whether it takes me somewhere new." Yeah, I like it.

OM: Definitely. So, you went to university, they didn't teach *mokuhanga*, you joined the swim team; how did you arrive at *mokuhanga*?

WGH: So, I took the money and I ran away. I did that. I enrolled as a private student to the university which I had originally been promised a place in, Kyoto Seika University, because Kurosaki Akira, the amazing print artist of the 20th century, was the head of the department there. And he is an incredible *mokuhanga* artist. He passed away a couple of years ago, but I regard him as the 'Print God'. So, I went there to study. And once again, it was not what I expected from having been to university in the west. I found myself carrying his books. I found myself really having to attend to learning by watching and absorbing, because things weren't explained in a verbal linear sense in the way that I expected. So, I learnt to copy his movements. And I think there's probably a whole range of people who have copied his movements and have disseminated that copied

movement to their students, which is really interesting. The lineage of how we learn is probably traceable back to certain masters who have taught key teachers.

So, I learnt how to make *mokuhanga* Japanese woodblock technique. It's very simple. It's a printing technique that involves water. So, you wet the block. It's a wood block, and you add a little bit of glue, and then you put some paint on it and you brush it in with a bamboo brush that has deer and horse hair, pig hair, very low tech. And then you use damp paper, which you press on the back with hand pressure to transfer the pigment from the wood to the fibres of the paper. And it's So, simple, and yet it's So, difficult. It's kind of one of those things like learning to play the guitar. If you describe it in words, it sounds like a fairly straightforward premise, but you realize very quickly that it's all down to humidity and tempo and pressure and evenness and maybe kind of very sensitive way of handling your tools. And suddenly you realize there's a real kind of unspoken art form to being able to produce a flat area of colour or to produce a certain effect.

OM: It sounds like a very practical knowledge rather than something you read and learn from a book.

WGH: Definitely, and that's actually what my PhD is about. It's about capturing what I call 'tacit knowledge', the knowledge that we know in our bodies, and we find very hard to put into words. And my recent obsession is with *gomazuri*, the 'sesame seed' effect. Have you heard of this?

OM: That's new to me.

WGH: So, sesame seed effect is this really beautiful effect that happens with Japanese woodblock. And it happens when you don't have that much glue and you have quite a lot of water in your mix. And it often happens at the beginning of the printing session when you first made your block and you just started printing. And it happens a lot with beginners as well. And what happens is the colour just splits into little islands of intense colour and then less colour, So, they look like a field of sesame seed grains that have been flung over the surface of the paper. And almost every textbook that I read says, "Well, you just need to practise, and you'll soon be able to master this elusive technique" or "Don't worry about this flaw. You'll get better soon." So, it's a very kind expression of encouraging people to try a little harder. And "don't worry, it'll go away. When you know how to print, when you figure out how your body works and how all the materials work, you'll know how to get rid of this unwanted effect." But at the beginning of the 20th century, the *mokuhanga*, the Japanese woodblock print technique, became used by a lot of creative printmakers, and a lot of them deliberately used this sesame seed effect to indicate to the audience that it was hand-printed, that it was a handmade, genuinely hand-printed item.

And it has this really wonderful 1920s kind of vibe about it. It's got this very lovely vibrating field of colour. And if you put another colour on top, you'll get this incredible optical pixelated effect that gives images real depth. And it has been used by many artists since as a creative technique. And Kurosaki used it a lot in his work as well. So, I've been interested in defining exactly what goes into making a *gomazuri* sesame seed effect print. Exactly how much water do you need? How much glue do you need? How

much pressure do you need? And can we reproduce it and how can we quantify it? So, that's been my current kind of obsession with this very beautiful effect.

OM: So, you started off printing with linocuts and then learned *mokuhanga*. How was it going from that skill to another? Are they quite transferable or is it a whole different kind of knowledge?

WGH: Yeah, I think when you think in print making terms, there are a lot of similarities. So, both linocut and Japanese woodblock are relief prints. So, the ink goes on the surface of the block, and you carve away everything you want to keep white. So, you're working in reverse. So, all your actions are in removing something and everything that you make will come out as a mirror image when you print it. So, it's going to be reversed left to right. So, you have this kind of back to front way of thinking and approaching your image which becomes yeah, it's very transferable. You can use your Lino skills for your Japanese block skills and vice versa.

OM: Definitely. So, can you tell us a bit more about your fellow *mokuhanga* students and what their motivations were for attending?

WGH: Ah right, in the class? Well, at Kyoto Seika University, which is a great liberal arts college in the north of Kyoto, they had a really strong set of studies for ancient crafts like paper making and *mokuhanga*, as well as a more contemporary print making techniques like lithography and etching and so on. So, a lot of the students would come in as a print major and they would do all the different techniques and then they'd slowly specialize to *mokuhanga*, or Japanese woodblock. I don't know about their motivations,

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but for sure, there's this incredible range of effects that you can get with woodblock that is impossible in other techniques, such as screen print. For example, the colour sits inside the fibres of the paper. So, there's this really beautiful glow to the image because the colour is deep in a way. There's a real tactility to the print. A lot of people printed flat colour and then speckled colour on top. So, you had this little depth as well, these varying levels of register as to where the image is at and there are a few people who were experimental printmakers. For example, this incredible artist from China who everybody called by his Japanese version of his Chinese name, Chang Ke. And he used to print on unsized paper.

So, if you print on paper that doesn't have size on it, the pigment will bleed. It's like printing on toilet paper. Like you get this incredible, like, wicking of your pigment away from where you printed. So, you print this very loose image and then he would take some size, which is called Dosa, which is like rabbit skin glue or Ox tendon glue and paint it on the surface of the paper and then print again. So, he had this really beautiful range of marks, some of which were very misty and loose and soft because he was printing as if the paper couldn't hold the image where it was placed. And then he would contrast that with a very crisp image on top. So, his work was really inspiring. I think everyone was playing with material and pigment and trying to learn this technique that's very physical.

OM: Fascinating. I'm sort of curious about how these traditional techniques are taught because Japan is a nation that is very interested in preserving its cultural heritage and

that includes living national treasures, making sure that traditional crafts continue as they have done for generations. And so, to hear that there's all this experimentation going on with *mokuhanga* is a bit surprising, I guess, for me.

WGH: Yeah, you're right. But I really wonder because I think Kurosaki bridged old and new techniques with incredible skill. He was fascinated with finding a way of making a photographic woodblock prints. And when I was there, I remember they used to screen print glue onto the surface of the block and then put the block inside a sandblasting machine and sandblast the block down. It took hours. You'd have your gloves on and your mask on, [it was] really noisy, and then take the block out, remove the PVA glue, and then print it as a water-based print. And a couple of my fellow students, I think Kawabata Chie, she made some beautiful work. I remember using that technique. It's kind of like how can we use an old technique in a way that also, resounds with the contemporary artist, the person who has a cell phone and the person who loves photography. How can we use that?

I think we talked earlier about heritage and using culture after the [Asia-Pacific] war to think about your core belief systems. And I think there is a big movement of what they call *shinhang*, 'new print' *mokuhanga* artists who make images in the traditional Ukiyo-e style of printing and their work also, has a nostalgic quality to the depiction of light and the depiction of countryside and nature and the elements, which is conveyed by the fact that the technique which is used is a technique that was commonly used in the 18th and 19th century. And it speaks to us. It kind of reverberates with our notions of old-

fashioned beauty and peace and landscape and appreciating the seasons because of its kind of quality, surface quality. So, we need to make a new language for our contemporary age.

OM: I think it sounds like a real mix in the tools being used in the materials as well. You have on the one hand these horse hair, boar hair brushes and ox tendon glue, but you also, have someone using sandblasters. So, it seems like, again, quite a mix of the traditional and the modern going on.

WGH: Yeah, I did a workshop recently in the British Museum, which was called Inspired by Hokusai, and Hokusai was a complete genius. And I'm nowhere near anywhere, even a hundredth as able as he was. But I found myself in the funny position of running a workshop for beginners. And I thought, "well, how many people will come?" And they said, "well, it could be anywhere between 100-200 people." And I thought, "well, okay, I can't carve the same block ten times with amazing precision, but I can ask a machine to help me." So, I carved and designed a block, and then I got a laser engraving company to laser engrave eight more blocks. And while it wasn't perfect, the sensation of printing from a block that a machine had carved was probably as fun as printing from a block that had been hand carved. It made it really accessible to the audience. And I think they had a lot of fun because you could actually feel and smell and touch and hear and kind of really get inky and get involved in the printing process. So, yeah, for sure, technology is helping us as much as old style tools.

OM: Yeah, it sounds like a lot of fun. I wish I could have been there.

WGH: Well, I happily bring it up to Norwich and you can have a go. It's a portable workshop now because it's my suitcase.

OM: Please do come down sometime. So, just to go back to the students in your class and your learning *mokuhanga*, were there many Japanese? Because it sounds like there's quite a mix of Japanese students and overseas students.

Yeah, there were about ten Japanese students and about four overseas students. And I remember my best friends weren't necessarily woodblock printmaking friends. So, it's kind of funny, we don't think if you're doing this discipline that you're going to be best friends with somebody else who's doing the same discipline. I was actually very stressed when I was there because I wanted to consume and be really good at something that isn't very easy to be good at immediately. So, you end up really focusing on your journey and not looking outwards to other people.

OM: I had a similar experience when I was studying in Kyoto. It's my year abroad and I joined the Kendo [Japanese swordsmanship] Club to try out some sword fighting. And they spent the first six months just learning how to step backwards and forwards in the proper manner.

WGH: I did that too, the shuffle, and I was terrified. I didn't want to be hit! So, I got into the *kiai* [shouting], but I didn't want anyone to hit me So, I kind of, like, lean backwards a lot.

OM: I didn't have much of a problem being hit, but when it actually came to the fighting, I found I was quite reluctant to hit somebody else. It was a bit of a block to overcome. And they kept having to lean forward, saying, "go on, you can hit me."

So, having looked over your prints, including the fantastic "COVID Tales" series, you seem to have achieved a level of depth and perspective not typically seen in traditional ukiyo-e prints associated with woodblock printing. I'm particularly impressed with the use of reflections and mirrors to achieve this. Would you describe this as an adaptation or a continuation of the traditional techniques that you were taught in Japan?

WGH: I think it's interesting because I studied history of art at school and at university. So, I took a year off on the vet course to do history of art as well. And I think I have quite a big training in Western composition from observing people I love, like Rembrandt [Harmenszoon van Rijn] and [Honoré] Daumier, [William] Hogarth, [Edward] Munch. The way they make a narrative in a space is quite scenic. And kind of encourages the eye to rove around and see what's happening in that corner, what's in the shadows, for example. So, I think that's quite a big influence, and it influenced me before I went to Japan. So, I know the Japanese have a different perspective system, which was parallel perspective depiction of the world and with multiple vanishing points, because they have a scroll-based system like the Chinese perspectival approaches. So, it is a very different kind of grounding, like a classical grounding.

But I'm fascinated by mirrors and windows because I think the print is like a window into another world. And in regard to your question, because I told you about having to

reverse everything and everything you carve away is white, not dark, it kind of makes you think on a very metaphoric level, "where does the truth lie? Is it in the thing I keep or is it in the thing that I eliminate?" I draw myself lefthanded on the blocks that I've made. And when I print, I come out as a righthanded person again. So, it's this kind of duality. It's a natural duality because of a medium of print, you're asserting truth, but you had to lie in order to make the truth come out. You see what I mean? And in a way, a mirror and stuff like that, too. We look at ourselves on Zoom and we see a mirror version, because that's the face that we're familiar with in the mirror. And we're presented to the world as the flipped version, the right way round, as it were. But we are mediated by the screen, so, once again, you don't really know what I look like. You don't know how tall I am or what I'm wearing, what trousers I'm wearing. You have this partial view and you assume the rest. And I kind of like that sort of playful, ironic mystery behind making partial views, partial mirrors and playing with that truth-lie duality in my images.

So, for example, are you talking about "Mirror, Mirror"? The print of a swimming pool changing room? They didn't have a mirror, they had a piece of metal that was beaten flat to act as a mirror because it was a very kind of Council-run swimming pool, so not particularly rich. And I think this mirror has been there for a long time. So, you'd go to the swimming pool, change in the changing room, you're getting ready for a swim. You'd walk past this piece of metal and you would see a grotesque figure with a very dumpy body and amazingly long arms, and it would really stop you in horror. Like, "is that really me? Is that what I look like? I know I'm going for a swim, So, I've got my swimming

costume on, but do I really look this disfigured?", for example. So, I kind of made this print because it's about that kind of humour. Maybe we do look like that. Maybe our eyes are wrong, maybe that's an accurate reflection of my inner soul. And the surface value, the way that light hits the surface of my skin, is actually falsehood. You don't know where the truth lies. Anyway, they upgraded and they bought a new mirror about a year after I started swimming there.

So, I made another print about women hanging out in front of the mirrors, slightly inspired by my time in Japan because I love the bath ritual. But the second print is called "She Doesn't Care If We Stare", and it's a picture of a woman who's changing in front of the mirror and she has no clothes on. And I know in Japan it's completely normal to go to the bathhouse and have no clothes on and hang out together without clothes on. But in the UK, for sure, there's a real sense of surprise and outrage and amusement and maybe embarrassment when you see somebody with no clothes on who's really happy having no clothes on in a changing room, in a female space. And so, I made this print about this lady who was just hanging out in front of the mirror with a lot of people looking at her in this very questioning way. So, it's about "why are we shy in the UK? Why are people not shy in Japan?" Maybe that has been the one kind of thing I've taken back from Japan that's made its way into a print. But yeah, why do we have these different approaches?

OM: Just to go back to the Zoom perspective, there's something I find quite amusing. I've been networking with people through Zoom over the last couple of years,

particularly through the podcast, meeting a lot of academics that way. And when I've met people in person, they're quite shocked to see that I'm a fairly tall person, which doesn't come across much from just head and shoulders, but also, I guess it means that I don't sound like a tall person. Is there a way to sound like a tall person?

WGH: I'm not quite sure, but yeah, it definitely makes you think a lot about how much your physical appearance is different from your online appearance. I suppose. It's not just that, isn't it? It's the quality of our voices and the fact that we still have a very acute sense of smell, even though it's not as good as dogs. And we probably respond to each other's pheromones and body heat and microbiome and chemicals. Those things, we probably exchange bacteria and we hang out within a meter of each other, and those things probably affect how we feel about each other. And they're very hard to replicate on the screen. Although we're getting used to it, I think we're getting better at it. Like our tolerance level has increased, and in a way, it's become like a window instead of an alien communication tool.

OM: So, I understand you're connected to a worldwide network of printmakers. How widespread is *mokuhanga* and how should this international spread of the practice challenge our understanding of it as a traditional Japanese art style?

WGH: Okay. I'm on the edges of the *mokuhanga* world because although I studied it in Japan 15 years ago, I mainly made linocuts, and I've just come back to it with my PhD. But I recently attended this international conference, and there are about 100 people there from all over the world. It actually ran through the time zone that ran for 48 hours

without a break. So, it started in Japan, and then it moved to Europe, and then it would end up in North America and go round again and again. So, you just have to sleep and miss one time zone in order to retain some sense of sanity. But it's definitely global. There was a really beautiful talk on *mokuhanga* in, I think, Argentina (I'd have to look that up) where somebody had said that it was a really great technique, but she was a pioneer in bringing it to schools. I think the appeal of the technique is that it's quite low-tech, So, you can adapt it. You can use Western print making papers. You can use toothbrushes at a pinch. It would be terribly difficult, but you can use a toothbrush or a hairbrush or a shoe brush to print from. You can use watercolour paints, and you can use wallpaper paste instead of traditional Japanese rice paste. So, the principle of the technique is portable and possible in the domestic sphere. And you'll see a lot of artists from all over the world trying to make new approaches to printing discs.

There's a wonderful lady in Australia called Rosslyn Keane who's made these ball bearing ends, so ball bearing handheld printing discs that she sells across the world. But they're like a handmade thing, like a solution to something because the traditional object is hard to get. So, yeah, in a way, it's a principle as much as museum-style preserved craft heritage, it's a living expression, a living artistic expression. I don't know how to say it properly, but something like that. It's kind of adapting to...

OM: It's organic?

WGH: Yes, organically evolving. And I had a lot of fun because I've been using fruit to scale to weigh my hand movements, to figure out how much pressure I put on the back

of the block or using syringes to measure the amount of glue that I put on the block to see "how much do we really put when we put an amount that feels right?" So, yes, the kind of ever adapting technique would be a little bit like a recipe for a stew, and you're using new ingredients.

OM: It seems to me like the shared root of heritage and the art form is the traditional technique, but then they branch off where heritage tends to focus on preserving the original technique, whereas the active artists like yourself are inspired by it and then go on to adapt it to suit your own expressions.

WGH: Definitely. Yeah, I think that's good [summary.] And that's the test of a vibrant, living language, isn't it? When new words crop up, new expressions, it shows you it's being used and it's being practically adapted for convenience as well. So, I like it.

OM: Excellent. Well, thank you for answering all of my questions, Wuon-Gean. Before we finish the episode, could you share with us any other projects that you're currently working on?

WGH: Well, the "Diary of a Printmaker" prints that I made are going to be in a show in Hong Kong next year as an entirety, and I've made about 170 of them, so it would be nice to see them all in one place. And the V&A [Victoria & Albert Museum] just released a film of me printing, so if you want to see me in my space making linocuts and printing at home and in East London Printmakers, you can watch that video on YouTube. And I'm part of this conference called the Impact Printmaking Conference, which we run at the Centre for Print Research in Bristol. It's happening in September, and I have a panel

paper called "Meet Me at the Edge of Infinity", and it's all about how printmaking allows you to lay down colour blends and gradients. One of the traditional words is bokashi, which is the word for a gradient, and I love the way that it's an expression of atmosphere and colour and shadow and mystery. So, I'm going to do a paper there in September this year to which you are very welcome. So, a few things.

OM: Great. And if our listeners want to try one of your workshops, where can they find out more information about that?

WGH: So, I sometimes teach at East London Printmakers in London, and I'm giving a workshop in Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft, I think, near Brighton sometime in June. Do you know Frank Brangwyn and [Yoshijiro] Urushibara?

OM: I haven't heard them before.

WGH: So, Brangwyn was a Walthamstow artist and Urushibara was Japanese artist who came over and lived in England for about a dozen years. And he collaborated with Brangwyn, and they made beautiful prints, really beautiful prints. And so they're having a big show from April, I think, and they've asked me to teach a workshop there. But maybe we should make a date for a workshop in Norwich, and I'll come up with my suitcase of blocks. We can do a crash course in printing and then try carving and making your own image. It would be fun.

OM: That'd be fantastic. I will get the ball rolling there. Thank you for joining me today, Wuon-Gean, it's been a real pleasure.

WGH: Thank you for having me. It's been a pleasure, too.

OM: You can find a link to Wuon-Gean's website in the description below. Don't forget to subscribe on JapanInNorwich.org or on your preferred podcast provider for updates on new episodes. Join us for our next episode with Dr Viviana Andreescu, where we discuss public opinion on capital punishment in Japan.

We hope you will join us then. Thank you for listening.