

# LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

**Ran Hwang**  
***Transition***  
**April 5 – 27, 2012**



Ran Hwang, *Two Love Tree*, 2012, Buttons and pins on wood panel, 47 x 71 in, 119 x 180 cm

New York – Ran Hwang's first solo show in New York City will be on view at Leila Heller Gallery in Chelsea at 568 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street from April 5 – 27, 2012. *Transition* will feature eight works made of buttons, beads, crystals, thread, and pins, and will also include a video installation. A catalogue with an essay by Barbara Pollack will accompany the exhibition.

Using common, mass-produced fashion materials, Hwang creates striking works of art that transform and re-contextualize these everyday objects. Sparkling buttons, shimmering beads, and long spools of thread are affixed to wood panels with thousands of pins to form Buddhas, temples, urns, and plum blossoms—all iconic symbols of Zen Buddhism.

*Rest II*, 2009, depicts a Buddha resplendently coated with layers of lustrous silver buttons and beads intricately patterned to form the ornate figure. Hwang contrasts the figure's solid form with a spattering of buttons and beads that fall from the edge of the work into the negative space that surrounds it. This notion of the artwork's deterioration is common practice in Hwang's repertoire as she reminds the viewer of the dichotomy of permanence and impermanence, and ultimately the transience of life.

Zen Buddhism is apparent not only in Hwang's motifs, but also in the process of constructing the works. Weaving thread, creating hand-made paper buttons, hammering each pin approximately 25 times until it is secure are all time-consuming tasks. The monotony and receptiveness of these actions require the upmost concentration and discipline, recalling the meditative state practiced by Zen masters.

In the catalogue essay, Barbara Pollack writes: "On one hand, it is an overtly labor-intensive mode of art-making, to the point that thinking about the sheer effort can distract from appreciation of the work. But, for the artist, the task of mounting buttons upon buttons, one pin at a time, parallels a Buddhist monk's practice of staring at a blank wall for months on end as a path to enlightenment. Her art-making is entirely meditative for Hwang, and she hopes that viewers can share the meditative state evoked by her strongest work."

Born in the Republic of Korea in 1960, Ran Hwang lives and works in both Seoul and New York City. She studied at the School of Visual Arts in New York City and attended the Graduate School of Fine Arts at Chung-Ang University in Seoul. She has exhibited at several international institutions including the Queens Museum of Art, New York; the Chelsea Art Museum, New York; The Seoul Arts Center Museum; and The Jeju Museum of Art, Jeju Island. Hwang's work is also a part of numerous private and public collections including The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul; and The Hammond Museum, North Salem, NY.

For more information, please contact Lauren Pollock at [Lauren@leilahellergallery.com](mailto:Lauren@leilahellergallery.com) or call 212-249-7695.

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**Leila Heller Gallery**

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