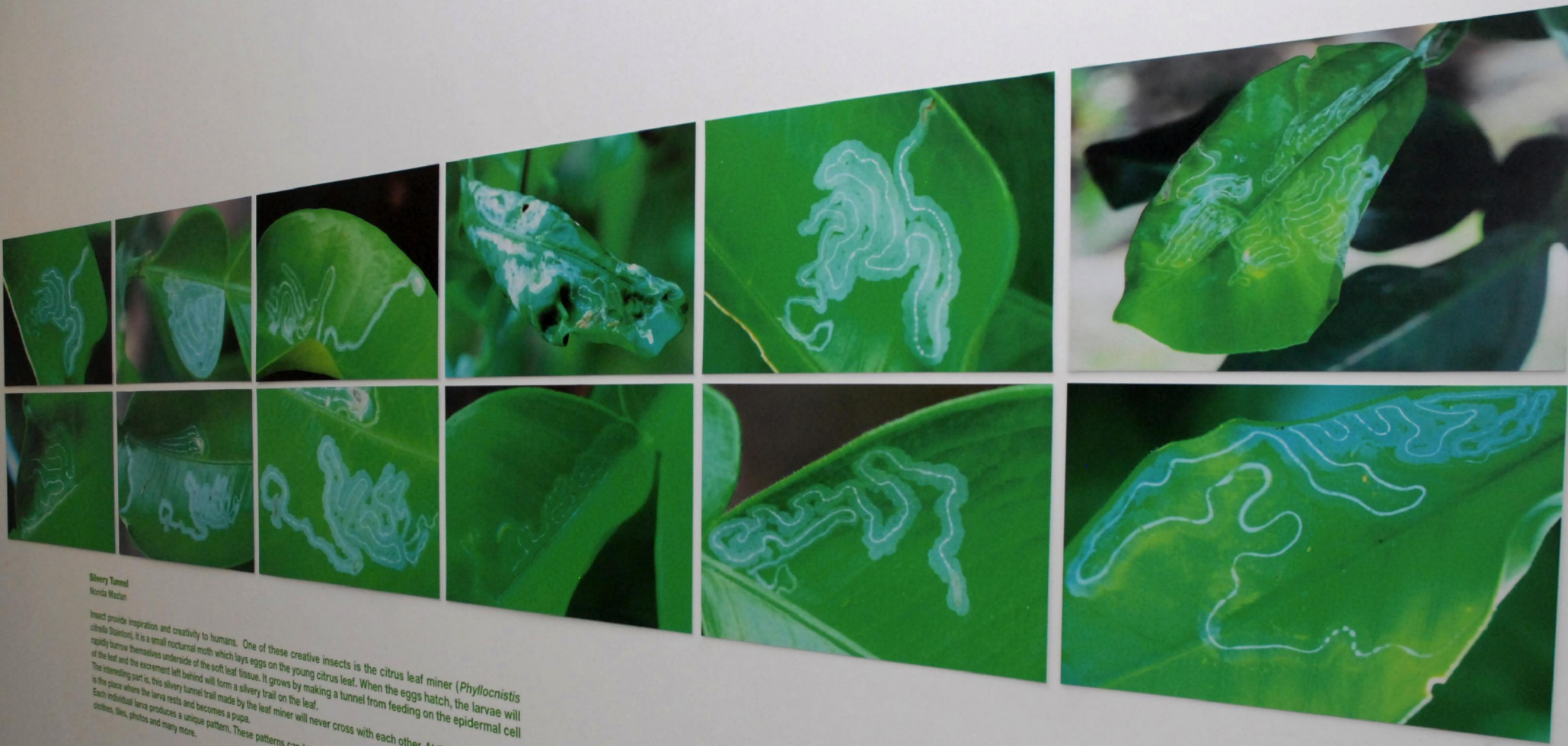


# Silvery Tunnel

Norida Mazlan

Human has been living together with millions of insects species for as long as the world exists. Thus the relationship of human and insect was formed in many ways. One of the forms is the work of arts. Insect provide inspiration and creativity to humans. One of these creative insects is the citrus leaf miner (*Phyllocnistis citrella* Stainton). It is a small nocturnal moth which lays eggs on the young citrus leaf. When the eggs hatch, the larvae will rapidly burrow themselves underside of the soft leaf tissue. It grows by making a tunnel from feeding on the epidermal cell of the leaf and the excrement left behind will form a silvery trail on the leaf. Looking closely, we could see that at one end of the trail is thinner while the other end is thicker. This is correlated to the larva size. The interesting part is, this silvery tunnel trail made by the leaf miner will never cross with each other. At the end of the line is the place where the larva rests and becomes a pupa. This happens after 7-14 days. The hard work of the larva can be seen as an interesting snake-like pattern. Each individual larva produces a unique pattern. These patterns can be seen printed in many human art media such as clothes, tiles, photos and many more. So, next time when you are looking for an idea for your arts, just look around you and you may find inspiration from small insects.





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