

Along the Horizon

The horizon is an indistinct dividing line, in the distance yet underfoot.

In 2007, Yang Bodu subconsciously chose the museum, a space she was familiar with, to develop her series. Her early paintings roughly portrayed particular works of art in fictional spaces, based on source images. Sometimes, she selected certain details or blurred the works of art by presenting them from a wider perspective. As the series continued, she realized that what she wanted to depict was the atmosphere in these refined spaces:

“Walking from City Hall to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the roads were covered in snow. The museum was dim and silent, and sitting on a bench in front the paintings, with my back against the wall, I napped. The stillness startled me countless times. Each time I confirmed that I was there, I would close my eyes again and continue to sleep. The atmosphere of this space can always be felt. Regardless of the time or place, it exists as a stable presence, therefore, what I rendered has never changed.”

In more recent works from the *In the Museum* series, Yang Bodu retained common elements such as the entryways, decorative elements, and the scattered museum staff or visitors, but she often intentionally hides the works of art or leaves only a white canvas. When depicting outdoor scenes, she also aims to minimize any disturbances resulting from painting techniques or other elements. These spaces, composed of ordinary sunsets, lawns, flowering bushes, beaches, ground paving and architectural structures calmly approach similar scenes from our memories. When standing in front of a piece of work, our viewing perspective coincides with the frontal perspective of the work; in this somewhat familiar environment, we unconsciously confront the scenes invented by the artist. We seem to be stepping into this fabricated space and then become a part of it.

As a result, the space flows. In the museum, the artwork hung at the vanishing point touches the depths of our souls. However, what lies beyond the entryway in front of us? Do we choose to go left or right after walking through it? In *Nightfall*, the tall dark grey rectangular block ahead faintly beckons us, but... what is it? How far away is it? How do we get there? And would we really want to go?

Then, there stands the two-meter-tall black rectangular column, and peeking through the holes on all four sides, we see the same two doors opening to the left and right, and the mirror on the front wall reveals our own reflection.

Curator: Zhou You