

自休而始

一个男人斜倚在公园长凳上、三个男女或躺或坐在草坪上闲聊嬉笑、一位年轻女子正坐在轻骑上享受一支烟的时光……面对福永大介这些大尺幅的画面，柔和的色调以及人物平稳的神情、漂浮的状态不由得让人放松，而后又随着时间的凝滞，开始不安地寻找“重力”。终于，在草坪尽头处那似乎喷着烟雾的工业设施、人物身上明显的单色调工作服、还有或掉落在地上或被捧在胸前如“夜光珠”般的安全帽，无一不指向真正的主角：劳动。

印刻在福永大介脑海中的第一幅画便是小时候跟随父母在美术馆看到的米勒（Jean-Francois Millet）原作《拾穗者》（英：The Gleaners；法：Des glaneuses），这或许是他关于劳动的初印象。加之福永大介从小居住在东京郊外，米勒画中的风景可以说恰好应和了他自身的原风景。然而，生长于日本经济高度成长期，关于劳动所引发的各种问题伴随着他的成长，也植根于他对劳动本身的思考。因此，可以说他对劳动的情感是矛盾的。

相较于米勒带有浪漫主义色彩地正面赞颂劳动之美，福永大介选择了那些劳动停顿的间隙，从人物的体态、神情，让人们想象、构建劳动的形状，这些人是在享受痛快劳动后的放松，或是因过度疲劳而陷入无力沉重。他通过绘画，以一种柔和的姿态，对抗劳动所引发的种种问题。回顾艺术家的早前创作——以拖把、轮胎等等劳动场景中的物为对象创作绘画，在他看来，“如果将世界看做是一整个戏剧的舞台，那么我想描绘的不是作为主角的英雄人物，而是在后台、在幕布后等待出场的那些物，那无所适从、躁动不安的样子，那些场景和物相遇时所激发的记忆和想象力”。

正如巴塔耶（Georges Bataille）曾经这么论述劳动：

“正是劳作使人脱离了其最初的动物性。正是通过劳作，动物才变成了人。劳作首先是认知和理性的基础。工具和武器的制造是这种让我们曾经所是的动物人性化的原始理性能力的出发点。人加工材料，他知道如何让材料符合他为之指派的目的。但这样的操作不仅改变了石头：他从石头上凿下的碎片把他所欲的形式赋予了石头。人自身也发生了改变：显然，正是劳作把他变成了人，变成了我们所是的理性的动物。”

物和人都因为劳作而发生了本质上的转变，也因此有福永大介的画中物与人是等价的，他所画的正是一整个因劳动而改变的世界，而这个世界正是因此刻停顿的瞬间而慢慢开启。

这些关于劳动场景的创作，实际上是他用绘画的形式记录的个人史，是他的个人回忆。可以说，画中的人物是一个个他自己，他们的“腿和胳膊里都充满了浅睡着的回忆”（普鲁斯特，《追忆似水年华》），之所以是“浅睡着的”，在于曾经的劳动让身体拥有了一种无意识的记忆。

因此，在他的画里劳动并不是作为一种社会生产关系的具体对象被呈现，而更多的是作为一种个人意识的对象，而这种对象在面对劳动这一社会产物时，所呈现的是一种游离的状态。这种游离实际上来自于对劳动抱持的怀疑：劳动究竟能不能将我们引向美好。

于是，艺术家极力抹平人物与背景之间的区隔，让他们呈现出一种近乎均质的粒子感，就仿佛是记忆的尘封状态，在这个问题得到解答之前，人们只能被禁锢其中。然而，轻柔暧昧的色调如同时光摩挲后留下的痕迹，那些微茫而跃动的色彩仿佛来自于光线在尘埃中的折射，时刻在变化着，似乎述说着这尘埃恰恰是梦生长的地方。

而这个地方也正好是因为“休憩（break）=间（ま，罗马音：ma）”的存在而生成。艺术家所关注的正是所有的“间”，这个在日本文化中至关重要的体现。它可以是绘画中的留白、余白，但它具备更为广泛的含义。它是艺术家与自己的回忆保持距离的“间”，是物与灵相对距离的“间”，是人与物相互对峙的“间”，正是因为有这样的“间”，人们得以处于一种静止、沉思的状态，并在一呼一吸之间，生出丰饶。

Beginning with a Break

In Fukunaga Daisuke's large paintings, a man reclines on a park bench, four people chat and laugh as they sprawl on a lawn, and a young woman sitting on a moped enjoys a cigarette. Of course, the gentle tones, the calm expressions, and the floating figures are relaxing for viewers, but because time feels like it's stagnating, those same viewers start to uneasily seek out a center of gravity. In the end, the industrial facility on the far end of the lawn spewing smog, the obvious monochrome work clothing that the figures are wearing, and the almost glow-in-the-dark hardhats scattered on the ground or held in the lap point to the true protagonist of the paintings: work.

The first painting that imprinted on Fukunaga Daisuke's mind was Jean-Francois Millet's painting *The Gleaners (Des glaneuses)*, which he saw on a childhood trip to a museum with his parents—this may have been his first impression of work. Moreover, he has lived in the countryside around Tokyo all his life, and the landscapes in Millet's paintings would have seemed familiar to him. However, Fukunaga grew up during a period of rapid economic growth in Japan, and his youth was marked by the various problems that arise from work, which in turn shaped his thoughts about work and gave him conflicted feelings about it.

Millet extolls the beauty of work in a romantic way, while Fukunaga chooses to focus on the breaks between bouts of work. The postures and expressions of his figures help the viewer to envision or build an image of work—the figures enjoy relaxing after a hard day or feel heavy and powerless due to overexertion. Through painting, he resists—though very gently—the various problems surrounding work. In

his early paintings, he focused on mops, tires, and other objects that often appear at workplaces. For him, “If all the world’s a stage, then I don’t want the hero to be the protagonist; instead, [I want to highlight] the objects that are waiting behind the curtain backstage, an uncertain and restless mood, and the memories and visions inspired by encounters with those scenes and objects.” As Georges Bataille once described work:

Of course, it is work that separated man from his initial animality. It is through work that the animal became human. Work was, above all else, the foundation for knowledge and reason. The making of tools and weapons was the point of departure for that early faculty of reason which humanized the animal we once were. Man, manipulating matter, figured out how to adapt it to whatever end he assigned to it. But this operation changed not only the stone, which was given the desired form by the splinters he chipped from it, but man himself changed. It is obviously work that made of him a human being, the reasonable animal we are.¹

The objects and figures in Fukunaga’s paintings are fundamentally transformed by work, which places them on equal footing. He paints a world changed by work, a world slowly unfolding because of this pause, this break in the action.

These paintings about work are records of personal stories and memories. We could say that the figures in the paintings are all representations of the artist; their “legs and [...] arms are full of torpid memories,”² as Proust wrote in *In Search of Lost Time*. In these torpid limbs, past work imbues the body with unconscious memory.

Thus, work in Fukunaga’s paintings is not presented concretely as an element in society’s production system. More often, it is part of an individual’s consciousness, dissociated from work as a social output. This dissociation actually stems from a question: Can work make us happy?

Fukunaga has painstakingly smoothed out the divisions between the figures and the background, presenting them with an almost homogenous granularity—it seems as if they are covered with a layer of dust. Before his question can be answered, people are simply confined within it. However, his soft, ambiguous tones are like the traces left after the caress of time. The hazy, quivering colors seem to come from light reflecting off of the dust, changing with each moment and telling us that this dust is where dreams grow.

This place exists because breaks (ま, pronounced “ma”) exist. Fukunaga Daisuke focuses on the breaks, these in-between moments that are critical in Japanese culture. They are the voids in paintings, but they have a broader meaning. These breaks are the distance that the artist keeps from his memories, the gap between the physical and the spiritual, and the opposition between people and objects. Because of these breaks, people can exist in a still, reflective state and something rich and fertile emerges between the inhale and the exhale.

¹ Georges Bataille, *The Tears of Eros*, trans. Peter Connor (San Francisco: City Lights Publishers, 1988), 41.

² Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time Vol. 4: Time Regained*, trans. Andreas Mayor and Terence Kilmartin, ed. D. J. Enright (New York: Random House, 1993), 11.

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