

ANTENNA SPACE

Horizons (South)

Curated by Robin Peckham

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When Antenna Space celebrated a tenth anniversary just a couple short years ago, the world was in a weirdly fragmented state. We called the exhibition “Horizons,” after the hypothetical event horizon of an expanding cosmos, the place from which no signal could ever be received; we speculated that hope was our lone defense against the impossible—a protest against the infinite.

Today, the world remains fragmented, perhaps even more so than it was in those strange, post-pandemic days, when travel was again possible but the urge to connect felt like a distant memory. We see our technical networks breaking into closed circuits, China building and exporting a global alternative, Europe planning its own civic social networks, the United States a chaotic morass held together by the thin glue of fascism and artificial intelligence. For the first time in living memory, we are living in a truly multipolar world.

And yet, for those of us who were committed to living an actually-existing multipolarity from the beginning, none of this comes as a surprise. If “Horizons” represented a gesture of hope within the infinite void, an antenna extended without expectation, then let “Horizons (South)” stand as a celebration of finitude. Every choice, every action stands for a rejection of everything else that could possibly be done with this particular fragment of time. Bringing this group of artists and this sensibility of contemporary art to this place means something. We have to want it to mean something.

Are we as lonely as we were in the summer of 2023? Surely not, but we are less disoriented. We are more able to sit with the finitude of dislocation and disconnection.

Antenna continues to do the work of weaving an energy field. Here, this finite space consists of two rooms, one a bit larger and open to the horizon, the other a self-contained airlock. The airlock hosts two of the clusters that appeared in “Horizons”: a loose affiliation of gothic ink, a kind of tongue-in-cheek punkification of an aesthetic world, and another anchored in the space of the symbolic codes of painting. The viewing deck hosts three clusters: a concern with the circulation of images in, a belief in the magic of transfiguration, and an insistence on spatial structure. A final cluster spans both rooms, spilling out through both sides of the narrow gap between them, circling the edge of the black hole that is the fragile, misshapen body in the vacuum of deep space.

A body is a human-shaped volume; a gallery is an indentation in space-time; art is a field of intensities. There is a magnetism to the form of things, and this horizon is an attractor that continues to play itself forward into the unknown, carrying onwards towards a point of no return.

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就在幾年前，天線空間慶祝十週年時，世界正處於一種奇怪的割裂狀態。我們將展覽命名為“視界 (Horizons)”，靈感源自於那宇宙膨脹的假設性“事件視界” (event horizon)，來自永無訊號傳回的地方。我們曾想：我們賴以是抵禦不可能、抗議無限的唯一防禦，是我們的願力。

如今，世界依然分裂，甚至比後疫情時代那段怪異時期更甚，雖然已經恢復出行，但是渴望聯繫的感受卻恍若隔世。我們看到技術網絡正在破碎成一系列閉環：中國構築並輸出著另一種全球圖景，歐洲正在規劃著自己的“公民社交網絡”，美國是一片由法西斯主義與人工智能勉強粘合的混沌沼澤。有生以來第一次，我們真正置身於多極世界。

然而，對於我們這些從一開始就致力於實踐的多極化的人來說，這一切並不意外。如果說「視界」是在無盡虛空中一種代表希望的姿態，是不帶期待伸出的觸角，那麼就讓「視界 (南天) Horizons (South)」成為對有限性的慶祝。每一個選擇，每一個行動，都意味著對特定時間點中所有其他可能性的拒斥。將這群藝術家以及對當代藝術的感知帶到這裡的舉措意義非凡，或者說，我們必須賦予其意義。

我們是否還像 2023 年夏天那樣孤單？當然不，至少我們已不再那麼迷惘。我們更能坦然面對錯位與被隔離的有限性。天線持續編織著能量場。這裡，有限的空間由兩個展廳構成：一間稍大，向地平線敞開；另一間則是獨立的「氣閘艙」。「氣閘艙」包含「視野」中出現過的兩個集群：一組略帶哥德式墨韻，是對美學世界半開玩笑式的龐克化，另一組則根植於繪畫的符號編碼空間中。「觀星台」展廳則呈現三個集群：一組關注影像循環、一組信奉變形魔法、一組堅持空間結構。最後一個集群穿過兩個房間，從它們之間的狹窄通道兩側溢出，盤旋於那個黑洞的邊緣——真空深淵中脆弱而畸形的軀體。

身體，是人形的容器；畫廊，是時空中的一處凹陷；藝術，是一片強力場域。萬物之形自帶磁性，這片地平線便是一個引子，持續將自身推向未知，一路向前，直至無法回頭。