



The sense of touching my memories

Because of the nature of my work, I have traveled to many places.

I remember going up the gentle slopes leading up to the Marmottan Museum in Paris, back alleys that stretch from the square in front of Barcelona City Hall like fine veins, a large table at a restaurant in Dresden like a hideout, and a dusty shop window on the main street in New York's Queens. Some were places that became my favorite that I visited many times and some were places I knew would never visit again from the moment I was there. Of all these memories, why is it that split-second memories tend to be more strangely vivid in my memory? It may be the color of the eyes of the people I pass by on the street, a casual conversation I had with someone at a store, or the color of the dawn sky when I look back for a second; they are all sceneries that I know would never see again even if I visit the same spot.

Ai Ito's works (City series) are composed by weaving various sceneries this artist captured during her daily lives and travels. It may appear to be a large painting at first glance, but the screen is shaped by the layers of different pieces drawn, including various times, places, people, and buildings. It is a collage that combines different times in the same work, featuring the expansion of space and time vertically and horizontally on the screen. In addition, motifs captured from perspectives of different heights are inserted to create accents on the screen that feel flat.

As the exhibition title suggests, these works have been woven using the travel memories of the artist. All the woven pieces are unintentional and are therefore unforgettable, seeing that someone at the place at that time, seeing the time that I was alive. These are never-returning moments that no one thought would be recorded anywhere but they carry a certain texture because they are expressed using a multi-layer structured material called weaving that includes time vertically and horizontally in the texture.

Myself, who is living today, and myself who was traveling are certainly connected by land like this screen. However, when I trace the memory of my travels, I always get the sense that I am repeatedly seeing unforgettable sceneries through the pieces of myself that I left behind in all kinds of cities I visited. These pieces of myself are alternate existences living in various places that I myself today have not chosen to live in. When you meet these existences through these works, you will get a firm sense of touching your memories.