



VINCE BRIFFA

MALTA



The artist in residency programme has given me the chance to travel to and observe the rural landscape of Friesland, particularly the open spaces of the countryside. Coming from a small rocky and hilly island, this drastic change in scenery, together with its different set of colour palettes have had a great impact on the way that I have previously considered landscape and its objects.

The original concept of looking at landscape through a cow's eyes has been extended to focus on the great expanse in front of the animal's eyes. During this residency, I have also become very interested in the outbuildings and other rural architecture that are so common to the farming community, and also to the grazing cows. What I have been fascinated with is largely their minimal aesthetic, during different times of the day and night and under different weather conditions. When seen at night or particularly in a foggy day, these structures take on an almost ghostlike appearance.

The serenity of these forms, combined with the muted tones of the overall scenery give the works produced in the residency a timeless sense of beauty. The series leaves out any unnecessary detail taken from the landscape to give importance to the monumental minimalism of form, where detailed realism also gives way to quiet abstraction.

I do not use any form of photography, or indeed do not sketch on site. I prefer to deeply observe the landscape during my visit and rely on the images that my memory produces of the objects when I am back in the studio. In this way, I am unshackled of any unnecessary visual reference during the painting process and can afford to reduce the work to its bare essentials, without becoming illustrative.

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