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| Yi In-sŏng (1953– ) |
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| Yi In-sŏng was a Western-style modernist painter born in Taegu in southern Korea. It was there that he learned the basic techniques of Western-style painting from Sŏ Tong-jin, the renowned watercolorist, before studying modernist painting at the Taiheiyō School of Fine Arts, Tokyo. During the 1930s, Yi's paintings won awards in Japan at official art exhibitions like The Imperial Exhibition of the School of Fine Arts (*Teiten*) and the Ministry of Education Exhibition(*Bunten*). In 1929, Yi's work was accepted into the Chosŏn Art Exhibition and, until 1944, both his watercolors and oils consistently won recognition there, forming the basis of Yi's reputation as perhaps the most famous and influential artist in colonial Korea. Yi painted mostly figures, still life, garden landscapes, and Western-style interior scenes in Impressionist and Post-Impressionist styles. Some of his oils on canvas identify him with the Local Colour style, which, among other things, promoted the portrayal of distinctively ethnic figures in local but exotic landscapes. It remains controversial, however, whether Yi's work should be understood as representing his historical consciousness as a Korean artist or as an opportunistic compromise supporting the colonialist strategy of encouraging nostalgic portrayals of the Korean countryside in order to position Korea as peripheral to the advanced centre of Japan. |
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| Further reading:  (Youngna, Yi In-song's Local Colors: Colonialism or Nationalism)  (Youngna, Modern and Contemporary Art in Korea) |