

The Sun-setting Light on Winter Solstice in the Summer Palace

冬至颐和园观金光穿洞

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Winter solstice will be the perfect day for you
to look at the sunlight shining and drifting in bridge tunnels
against lake water or ice
at the sun-setting moment.

When the reflected beams from lake water
brighten the tunnels inside
of the seventeen-arched marble bridge,

You will be lucky to see the light spectrum by nature
while walking by the Summer Palace Lake.

Photographers will take photos in zeal
from the multiple locations high or low
to capture the transient seconds
of silence and rich hues
on a winter afternoon of coldness.

Unsurprisingly
You will be thrilled by
the huge number of visitors
standing in the freezing cold winds
with cameras fixed to tripods,
or holding their cellphone cameras
zooming in for the bridge tunnels.

As light dims with the setting sun
warm rays linger on
emitting from the huge golden globe
which is lowering itself inch by inch
towards the southwest hill ridge.

The tender light travels across the skies
above the winter fields barren and wild
pouring over the iced lake surface and
meeting the south façade of marble bridge.

Through the tunnels
the softened light is mirrored from lake surface
being projected to the interiors of tunnels
and radiated in differing colors
of golden, yellowish or orange.

The interiors are lit brilliant
in contrast with shades over
white marble slates of north side.

The magic light show lasts for minutes
shifting from warmer golden to dimmed gray
when the sun is hidden behind the hills
and darkness looms.

This is the once-in-a-year
moments of splendor
that can only be spotted
on the days around winter solstice.

The December Solstice stages
the show of light and hues
when the sun has traveled
to the southernmost tip of its winter path
before moving in the orbit northwards anew.

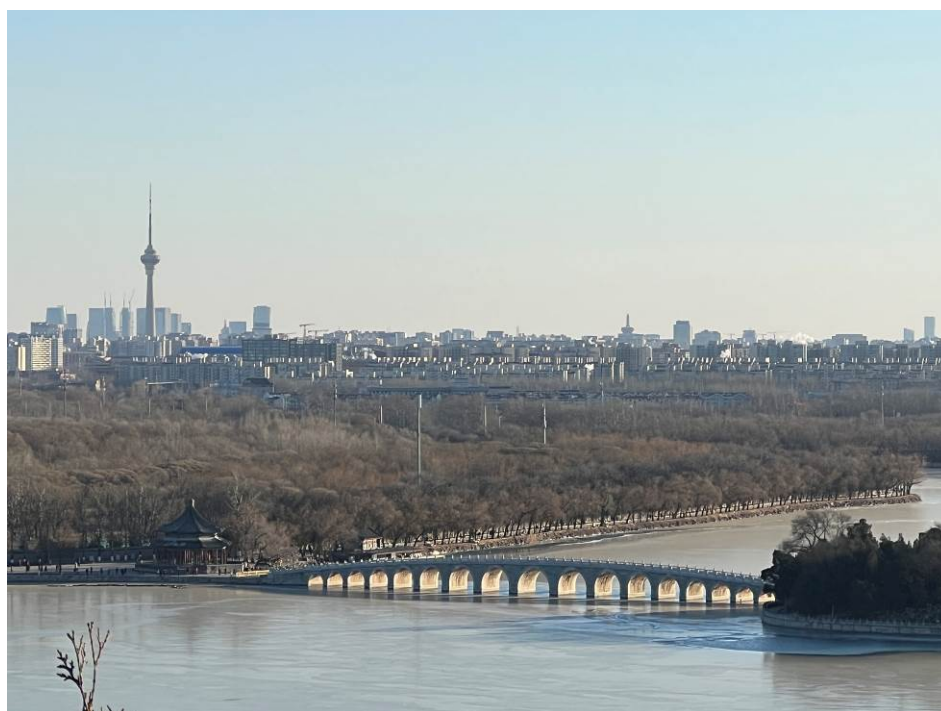


Figure 1. Sunlight is radiating in the tunnels of bridge.

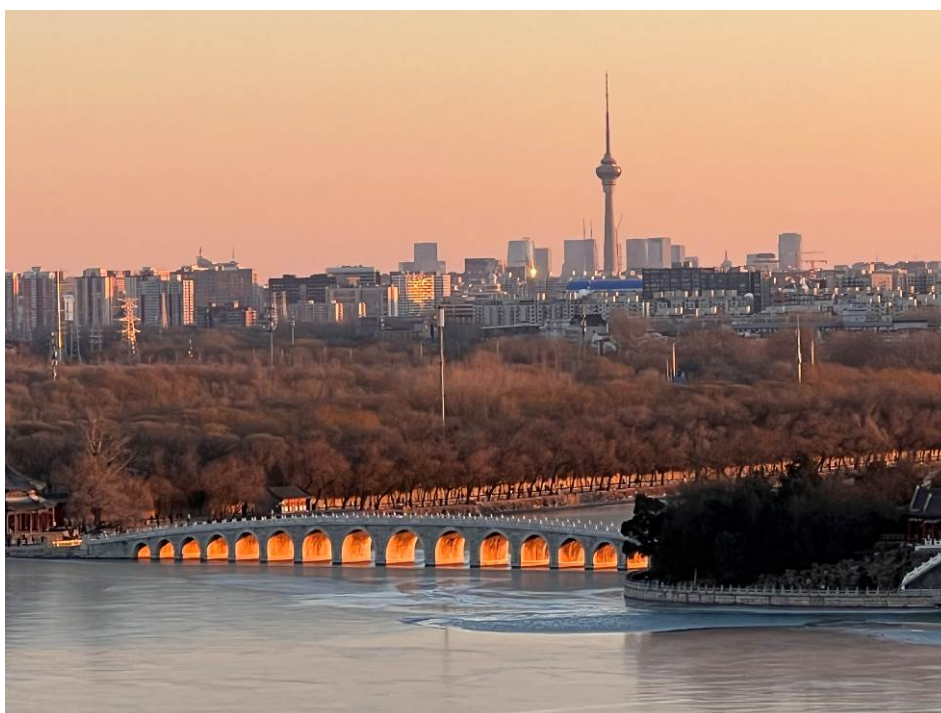


Figure 2. Golden light is projected over the tunnel surface slates.

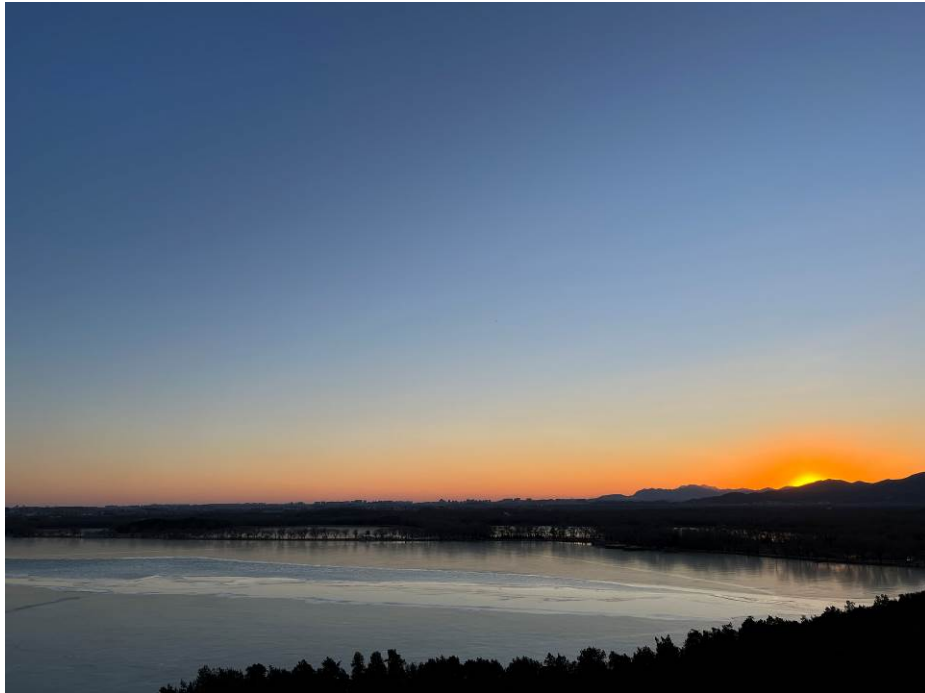


Figure 3. Dimmed light from setting sun over lake surface.



Figure 4. Sketch of tree branches, hill ridges and marble bridge against twilight.

With heart-felt love for natural scenery and cultural heritages, He biked around Beijing in days sunny or rainy, shooting the skylines over the West Mountains or high-rises in downtown with his cell phone cameras as the lights built up and faded away. He wrote verses for memory of the sights and sounds he came across.