

**GALERIE NATHALIE OBADIA**

PARIS - BRUXELLES

**Xu Zhen**

**没顶公司**  
MadeIn Company

*Prey*

24 May – 25 July 2013

18, rue du Bourg-Tibourg - 75004 Paris



Xu Zhen Produced by MadeIn Company - Prey-Guizhou - Hejiangzhen, Liling Village, 6th Group, 2014. Oil on linen canvas, golden-folied frame - 217 x 152,5 x 8 cm

Galerie Nathalie Obadia is very pleased to present the exhibition *Prey* by Xu Zhen Produced by MadeIn Company, the third project in partnership with the Chinese collective following *Sleeping Life Away* in Paris in 2012 and in Brussels in 2013.

On this occasion, Xu Zhen is showing a set of six large works from the series *Prey*. These paintings have been created using photographs as their starting point. Taken by a team from MadeIn Company, the photos are of the interiors of homes belonging to disadvantaged families in the provinces of Sichuan and Guizhou in China. Each painting is set in a large gilded frame and identified by a sign giving the geographic coordinates of the place where the photograph was taken: both elements are considered as integral facets of the work.

In this series, Xu Zhen comments ironically and shrewdly on the aesthetic links that exist between art and poverty. Executed with great technical skill using oil paints, and traditional Flemish framing and chiaroscuro, these destitute rural interiors are imbued with dignity and nobility by the application of this classic treatment.

It is by placing aesthetics and ethical principles at odds that Xu Zhen subverts moral standards and undermines the viewer's conscience, perturbing our criteria for the appreciation of beauty by presenting us with lavish destitution.

These figureless interiors feature filthy straw mattresses, dilapidated wickerwork baskets, rickety wooden beds and horsehair bedding with stained and patched linen on a floor made of beaten earth or dusty concrete. These sordid settings are only given a degree of warmth by traces of a human presence: a green bush bursting with leaf shoots, a poster of Mao on a cracked wall, a pair of elegant shoes, a violet net curtain with a golden fringe, reaping sickles and sticky kitchen utensils, half-empty white sacks of rice, a floral patterned quilt and a vivid blue jacket.

Xu Zhen and his production company MadelN Company – founded in 2009 by this multifaceted artist – cut a remarkable figure in the international art market. By reproducing in a catalogue an image clearly created with Photoshop of a painting from the *Prey* series on the wall of an opulent home, we are faced by photographs in luxurious houses of paintings based on photographs of deprived dwellings. The mixing of genres unsettles our perception of the collective's work and calls into question the contrivance of the meaning of the work, which has been disrupted by the binary though simple construction that sets poverty against wealth. We do not know whether the title *Prey* refers to Chinese peasants exploited by the rich or whether it is collectors and the art market that are the artist's target.

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*Xu Zhen Produced by MadelN Company was created in Shanghai in 2009.*

*Xu Zhen was born in Shanghai in 1977, where he lives and works.*

Since graduating from the Shanghai Art and Design Academy in 1996, Xu Zhen has become one of the most important figures on the Chinese contemporary art scene. He works as an artist, exhibition curator, art critic and businessman. In 1998 he founded the BizArt Centre in Shanghai, a unique and independent nonprofit institution. Its creative workshop, which operates in particular in commercial activities and the field of communications (graphic design and advertising), pays for the mounting of experimental exhibitions by young artists in Shanghai. In 2006 he helped in the launch of Art-Ba-Ba, an online contemporary art forum which is still one of the busiest discussion platforms for contemporary art and art criticism in China. In 2009, Xu Zhen decided to halt his own art practice and founded MadelN Company, dedicated to the creation of contemporary art. In 2013, MadelN Company launched the brand Xu Zhen.

Xu Zhen Produced by MadelN Company has had many solo exhibitions in leading international institutions. The Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing devoted a very large exhibition to it – *Xu Zhen: A MadelN Company Production* – in 2014, *MadelN Company* at the Minsheng Art Museum in Shanghai in 2012, *Xu Zhen: Forbidden Castle* at the Muzeum Montanelli in Prague in 2012, *Physique of Consciousness* at the Kunsthalle in Bern in 2011, and *Seeing One's Own Eyes: Middle East Contemporary Art* at the IKON gallery in Birmingham and the S.M.A.K in Ghent in 2009. In 2004, Xu Zhen won the prize for Best Artist at the China Contemporary Art Awards.

Xu Zhen Produced by MadelN Company has also been represented at important group exhibitions, such as *China China* at the Pinchuk Art Center in Kiev in 2013, *Mahjong: Contemporary Chinese Art from the Sigg Collection* at the Kunstmuseum in Bern in 2004, *The Thirteen: Chinese Video Now* at the MoMa PS1 in New York in 2006, *Art of Change* at the Hayward Gallery in London in 2012, and *Surplus Authors* at the Witte de With in Rotterdam in 2012.

The Chinese collective has also presented its works at many international fairs and biennials, such as the 7th Asia Pacific Triennial at the Gallery of Modern Art and Queensland Art Gallery in Brisbane in 2012, the 4th Guangzhou Triennial in China in 2012, the Busan Biennial in Korea in 2010, the 8th Shanghai Biennial in 2008, and in the Chinese Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2005. In 2001, Xu Zhen was the youngest Chinese artist to have shown at the Venice Biennale.

More recently, Xu Zhen Produced by MadelN Company stimulated great interest at its exhibition *Movement Field* at the Sucrière during the 12th Lyon Biennale in 2013, and was the guest of honour at the Armory Show in 2014.

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**Galerie Nathalie Obadia  
Bourg-Tibourg**

**Xu Zhen by MadelN Company**  
*Prey*  
24 May - 25 July 2014  
Preview on 24 May

**Mickalene Thomas**  
11 September - 28 October 2014  
Preview on 11 September

**Guillaume Bresson**  
5 November - 24 December 2014  
Preview on 5 November

**Valérie Belin**  
January - February 2015

**Jessica Stockholder**  
March - April 2015

**Galerie Nathalie Obadia  
Cloître Saint-Merri**

**Manuel Ocampo**  
*Notes from the Ste Anne Asylum*  
12 April - 31 May 2014

**Laure Prouvost**  
18 September - 31 October 2014  
Preview on 18 September

**Luc Delahaye**  
13 November - 17 January 2014  
Preview on 13 November

**Brenna Youngblood**  
January - March 2015

**Youssef Nabil**  
April - May 2015

**Galerie Nathalie Obadia  
Bruxelles**

**Valérie Belin**  
*Still Life*  
22 April - 21 June 2014

**Sophie Kujken**  
25 June - 26 July  
Preview on 25 June

**Michael DeLucia**  
6 November - 27 December  
Preview on 6 November

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