

XU ZHEN®: Three Taels of Cuteness, One Catty of Greatness

Artist	XU ZHEN®
Curator	Lu Mingjun
Opening	November 10, 2021 15:00 – 19:00
Exhibition Period	November 11 – December 31, 2021
Venue	MadeIn Gallery, No.1, -1F Sunken Garden, Lane 9 Qufu Road, Jing'an District, Shanghai

MadeIn Gallery is pleased to present XU ZHEN®'s solo exhibition "Three Taels of Cuteness, One Catty of Greatness" on November 10th, 2021. This is the third solo exhibition of XU ZHEN® at MadeIn Gallery after "Hello" in 2019, which will present a large-scale contemporary artwork *Base*, and a new painting series "Passion". The exhibition continues XU ZHEN®'s focus on new technologies, the excess of knowledge and information, the evolution of human intellect, as well as his ceaseless exploration of the diversity of creative media, with a high degree of sensitivity and new expansion of visual creation in the context of the post-globalization era.

Base is the latest work created for this exhibition. The audience will enter a scene similar to a mobile phone store, where each mobile phone is playing a variety of contents generated in the course of use. While we use mobile phones to capture and process information every day, algorithms and big data continue to generate marketing content and manipulate our behavioral expectations. Increasingly dense and fast information improves our intelligence, but at the same time it does not leave time for individuals to contemplate. On the screen of mobile phone, on the fingers that are hitting keyboard, information economy and technological capitalism occupy more and more the time of life. Perception, sensibility and desire are installed on devices as apps on our mobile phones, which we are constantly tapping on and upgrading.

The entire work takes the life in each device as a fact, an event and new information, and continues to use and announce it. Today, our love, curiosity and beliefs, our bodies, actions and emotions have all become data. How we could be better processed as data, will be the reality of daily life.

"Passion", a series of paintings with abstract expressionist style on the surface, is not only a derivative of smart social media, but also a representation of daily life on the Internet. They are based on a great invention - screen capture on mobile phone. All pictures are translated from screenshots of WeChat conversation - that is, all kinds of cropped and smeared conversation screenshots that we constantly forward across different

WeChat groups every day. Artists retain the "cropping" structure when painting, some can see the "avatar", while others don't. The free writing with abstract expressionistic style, not only highlights the traces of "smearing" when forwarding, but also pours all kinds of emotions which are often seen in chatroom into the picture vividly, such as roasting, prattling, arguing, raging, abreaction and the sense of powerlessness. At this time, painting is not so much a fierce reaction to a mental state, but as a release and solution to self-depression, anxiety and excitement. The artist confronts and dispels this unavoidable absurd situation in a more direct way. The exhibition site endows these extra-large scale "mobile phone screenshots" with a unique sense of sacredness - in recent years, screenshots have indeed played an important evidential role in some noted incidents, they are like an invisible spiritual cage, locking everyone's mind in it with all kinds of information that is hard to distinguish between genuine and false. This series retains the order of painting, but at the same time, it also completely destroys - or completely ignores - the order of painting.

The exhibition is jointly presented by MadeIn Gallery and ShanghART.

About XU ZHEN®

XU ZHEN®, founded by artist Xu Zhen in 2013, is the flagship art brand of MadeIn Company. Born in 1977, Xu Zhen is a leading Chinese artist and curator, and the founder of MadeIn Company. XU ZHEN® is committed to art creation and cutting-edge culture development. Through collecting and appreciating artworks and events produced by XU ZHEN®, users can enjoy spiritual aspirations and life experiences of the finest quality.

Xu Zhen (Artist, Curator, MadeIn Company Founder. Born in 1977, lives and works in Shanghai) has been considered as an iconic figure in Chinese contemporary art. In 2004, Xu won the prize for 'Best Artist' at the Chinese Contemporary Art Award. His practice covers various media such as installations, video, painting and performance, etc.

Xu Zhen has exhibited internationally, at museums and biennales, such as, Venice Biennale (2001, 2005), The Museum of Modern Art (New York, 2004), Mori Art Museum (Tokyo, 2005), MoMA PS1 (New York, 2006), Tate Liverpool (2007), Hayward Gallery (London, 2012), Lyon Biennial (2013), Armory Show (New York, 2014), Long Museum (Shanghai 2015), Al Riwaq Art Center (Qatar, 2016), Sydney Biennial (2016), Guggenheim Museum (New York, 2017), Sharjah Biennial (2019), Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles, 2019), National Gallery of Australia (Canberra, 2020), among others.

About Lu Mingjun

Lu Mingjun, PhD in History, Young Researcher of the School of Philosophy, Fudan University, curator and artistic director of Surplus Space. Recent curated exhibitions include “Frontier: Re-assessment of Post-Globalisational Politics”(2017, Shanghai; 2018, Beijing), “Assembling” (2018, Shengyang), “hic sunt leones” (2019, Wuhan, Beijing), and “River flowing without a Beacon, 1979” (2019, Beijing). Recent publications include Poetic Justice (2019, Henan University Press), and “Revolution of Art and Modern China: Radical Origin of Chinese Contemporary Art” (2020). Awards: 2015 Awarded the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation China Research Grant; 2016 Recipient of the Yishu Award for Writing on Contemporary Chinese Art; 2017 Awarded Asia Cultural Council Fellowship. 2017 Recipient of the CCAA Chinese Contemporary Art Critic Award. 2019 Recipient of the AAC Chinese Contemporary Art Curator Award.