

PRESSBOOK

XU Zhen

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## 'Civilization Iteration': Introducing Xu Zhen's first Solo Exhibition at Galerie Perrotin

[A.theartling.com/en/artzine/2017/06/22/civilization-iteration-xu-zhen-solo-exhibition-galerie-perrotin/](http://theartling.com/en/artzine/2017/06/22/civilization-iteration-xu-zhen-solo-exhibition-galerie-perrotin/)

Xu Zhen, born in 1977, is a Shanghai-based artist internationally renowned since late 1990s. In 2001, he became the youngest Chinese artist to represent the country in the 49<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale. He is also recognized for his label, *MadeIn Company*, under which he has produced his artworks since 2009.

Last year in 2016, Xu Zhen became one of the spotlights of 'BENTU: Chinese artists in a time of turbulence and transformation'; a group exhibition curated by Laurence Bossé, and Philip Tinari at Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris. Showing what the curators believe to be the main figures of Chinese contemporary art today, this exhibition focused on how these artists re-explore the present China as their home. Certain installations highlight the confrontation of the East with the West, including Xu Zhen's monumental sculpture, *Eternity-Tianglongshan, Grottoes Bodhisattva, Winged Victory of Samothrace* of 2013.



Exhibition view, Xu Zhen, 'Civilization Iteration' at Galerie Perrotin Paris. Photography: Claire Dorn, courtesy of Galerie Perrotin.



Xu Zhen. *Evolution-Statue Mbole Ofika, Misaka Mikoto* (2016). Mineral-based composite, mineral pigments, stainless steel, aluminium. 300 x 100 x 90 cm. Photography: Pramesti Widya.

This summer 2017, Xu Zhen is back to impress art enthusiasts in Paris with his first solo show in Galerie Perrotin. 'Civilization Iteration.' A total of 27 pieces of artworks varying from sculptures, paintings, and video art are presented in two galleries and their garden. Welcoming visitors to the exhibition are two intriguing sculptures, *Evolution-Statue Mbole Ofika, Tatenashi Sarashiki* and *Evolution-Statue Mbole Ofika, Misaka Mikoto* of 2016.



Exhibition view, Xu Zhen, 'Civilization Iteration' at Galerie Perrotin Paris. Photography: Claire Dorn, courtesy of Galerie Perrotin.

Next, *Eternity-Six Dynasties Period Painted Earthenware Dragon, Sleeping Muse* of 2016 await as we continue our visit in the main gallery. Through *Eternity* and *Evolution*, his two most famous series that can also be seen in this exhibition, Xu Zhen refers to ancient art objects from various parts of the world. These cultural symbols lose its real context in the face of globalization. "People even turn to the Net, using search engines to make up their own pictures of the origins of civilization," as stated in the official visitor's document from Galerie Perrotin.





Xu Zhen. *At what age did you lose your innocence?* (2016). Mirror polished stainless steel, metal chains. 75 x 97 cm. Photography: Pramesti Widya.

Attracting everyone's attention is his *Metal Language* series made out mainly of mirror-polished stainless steel. Taking its influence from graffiti, a total of six mirrors present radical phrases from political cartoons – in golden metal chains! Viewers may enjoy taking pictures of themselves reflected on the mirror.



Exhibition view, Xu Zhen, 'Civilization Iteration' in Galerie Perrotin Paris. Photography: Claire Dorn, courtesy of Galerie Perrotin.



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After a visit in the main gallery, visitors are led outside to enter the second gallery just opposite. Here, two sculptures from his *Eternity* series – *Eternity-New 40403 Stone Statue, Aphrodite Holding her Drapery*, and *Eternity-Northern Qi Dynasty painted Bodhisattva, Belvedere Torso* – are installed in harmony with three red paintings hung on the walls. These sculptures once again juxtapose Asian and European sculptures to evoke viewpoints “vis-à-vis” cultural mix or hybridization.





Xu Zhen. *Under Heaven-2232UW1169* (2016). Oil on canvas, aluminium. 300 x 200 x 15 cm. Photography: Pramesti Widya.

More than ordinary oil on canvas works, the series of red paintings from his *Under Heaven* series of 2016 introduce an original technique of applying layers of paint using a piping bag. No brushes were used in the making of these unique paintings. By adopting this method, Xu Zhen hopes to stress the importance of creating a new approach.

'Civilization Iteration' opens for public from Tuesday to Saturday at 11 am to 7 pm, the 18<sup>th</sup> May to 29<sup>th</sup> July 2017. More information about Xu Zhen and his first solo exhibition at Galerie Perrotin can be found [here](#).



