

IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

“Coastline” by Zhang Xiao

10 February - 10 March 2012

Venue: Blindspot Gallery (24-26A, Aberdeen Street, Central)

Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 11:00am to 7:00pm

Closed on public holidays



Blindspot Gallery is pleased to present “Coastline” featuring emerging Chinese photographer Zhang Xiao’s award-winning series *Coastline* that focuses on the continuous 18,000 kilometres of China’s coastline. The series does not merely capture the seaside landscape of these coastal areas, but also witnesses the changes of China caused by its economic reform in the past thirty years. Zhang won the Prix HSBC pour la Photographie in 2011 with this series.

Zhang Xiao, who has found the sea fascinating since childhood, said, “the sea is the beginning of lives and dreams.” For him, the sea is a place of strong emotions and rich imagery. Since July 2009, he has started traveling to the eastern coast and photographing the ordinary people’s circumstances in the most developed areas of China - the coastline.

After thirty years of economic reform and opening up, with rapid economic growth and urbanization on the eastern coast, these areas have become the focus of China and even the world. These coastal areas are seen as “windows to the outside world”. They are also the dreams of many Chinese inlanders who move from the interior on a massive scale for a better living. While the rapid urbanization is continuously in developing, the growth of people’s spiritual life is slowing down and even stagnated. Zhang’s images reflect these intense conflicts hidden in the ordinary daily life in these coastal cities.

His images of seaside landscape are often infiltrated with bizarre artificial objects or constructions, with people performing different types of random activities. These images reveal a sense of surrealism and precisely capture the absurdity in today's China, reflecting the people's desires and conditions of contemporary China under the changes taking place along the coastline.

To Zhang, this series is a documentation of part of the existing conflicts in contemporary China; and through the series, he hopes he would also be able to find the homeland of his inner heart.



About Zhang Xiao

Born in 1981 in Yantai City, Shandong Province, China, Zhang Xiao graduated from the Department of Architecture and Design at Yantai University in 2005. Before becoming a freelance photographer in 2009, he worked as a photographer for Chongqing Morning Post. With his *Coastline* series, Zhang received The Photography Talent Awards in 2010 and the Prix HSBC pour la Photographie in 2011. He was also awarded the Three Shadows Photography Award 2010 and the MIO Photo Award 2010 with his other series. Zhang's work has been widely exhibited in China in recent years and in France in 2011. Zhang currently lives and works in Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, China.

About Blindspot Gallery

Blindspot Gallery is set up to bring contemporary photography, an art form that has entered the blind spot of the Hong Kong art market, to a higher degree of visibility. We feature both established and emerging photographers and artists, mainly from the region but also beyond.

For enquiries and media interviews, please contact Ms. Lesley Kwok at 2517 6238 or by email info@blindspotgallery.com.

Image captions:

Zhang Xiao, *Coastline No.2*, 2009, Giclée, 100 x 120 cm (Edition of 6) / 50 x 60 cm (Edition of 12).

Zhang Xiao, *Coastline No.14*, 2009, Giclée, 100 x 120 cm (Edition of 6) / 50 x 60 cm (Edition of 12).

(Image courtesy of the artist and Blindspot Gallery)