

IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

**“They”
by Zhang Xiao**

8 March - 5 April 2013

**Opening Reception and Book Signing: Thursday, 7 March 2013, 6:30 - 8:30pm
Artist will be present.**

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 delighted to present Chinese photographer Zhang Xiao's award-winning series *They*, which won the Three Shadows Photography Award in 2010. This will be Zhang's second exhibition at Blindspot Gallery, following "Coastline" last year.

Zhang created *They* series in over 3 years during his time working as a photojournalist in Chongqing city. Chongqing, as the largest and fastest growing city in China, probably represents the most extreme example of urbanization and rapid development in the country. Zhang photographed the people he encountered on his daily travels around the city. The characters in *They* are the ordinary people in real life - they carry out all kinds of mundane activities in public venues. In Zhang's

images, these ordinary people become the protagonists in the scenes they occupy, often seemingly departing from reality and entering a performance state.

They series perhaps reveals some loss of balance and normality caused by the rapid development of modern Chinese society. "Each of them has their own ordinary life...yet in the images they appear bizarre and absurd, as if they belong to another planet and are completely unique," Zhang said. Apart from its documentary nature, *They* series also reflects the artist's strong subjective point of view about contemporary life in China: kitschy, absurd, surreal and humorous.

Zhang used a basic, low technology Holga camera and expired films to photograph *They*, his choice of equipment enhances his expectation and imagination during the making, and increases the instability and uncertainty of the visual quality of the images. The effects of aberration and vignetting lead the viewers into a dreamy state, in Zhang's words, "This is not a real world... In a moment, they surpass themselves in reality just like sleepwalking."

With *They* series, Zhang participated in the Pluie d'Images 2013 in France from 19 January to 1 March and recently published a monograph also titled *They*, limited to 500 copies. The artist will host a book signing at the opening reception. Interviews with the artist are welcomed and can be arranged.



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 photography artist in 2009, he worked as a photojournalist for Chongqing Morning Post. Zhang won the Three Shadows Photography Award in 2010 with *They* series. In the same year, he also received The Photography Talent Award (France) followed by the Prix HSBC pour la Photographie in 2011 with his *Coastline* series. Zhang's work has been widely exhibited in China and overseas in recent years. He 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 scene, 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, *They No.5*, 2007, Giclée print, 80 x 80 cm (Edition of 6) / 40 x 40 cm (Edition of 12)

Zhang Xiao, *They No.4*, 2007, Giclée print, 80 x 80 cm (Edition of 6) / 40 x 40 cm (Edition of 12)

(Image courtesy of the artist and Blindspot Gallery)