

# 薛莹：触及屋顶

yy?

*Reach the oooooooof*

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微信 Wechat @没顶美术馆 MAM  
Instagram @madeinmuseum  
地址 上海市崇明区绿华镇环湖西路没顶美术馆  
Address MadeIn Art Museum  
Huanhu West Rd., Lvhu Town,  
Chongming District, Shanghai  
网站 Website madeinmuseum.art

MadeIn Art Museum will present emerging artist Xue Ying (yy?)'s solo project, *Reach the oooooooof*, on June 22, 2024. Since 2018, yy? has been focused on and engaged in women's studies. Through the use of everyday materials and an interdisciplinary approach, this project explores the relationship between domestic labour and capital from a private perspective in order to identify the dilemmas women are facing today, feminist confrontational strategies, and more possibilities for female narratives.

## Artist's Statement

A month ago, I started MACHANG residency in Shanghai, Jiading. My temporary workspace was at JART, where two Mr. Ma run the transportation, production, and construction of artworks. I was able to observe the production site and material handling site more closely in my daily life. That's when Ladder was made. Materials used in this piece were typically left over scraps from making painting frames, transporting crates, or constructing the exhibition site. Seeing the back and corners of the capital factory was my job. In part of my previous practice, I discussed the utilitarianism of capital and its relationship to gender roles in society through re-making dysfunctional tools. A major interest of mine during my residency at MACHANG was not waste or flow of resources in art scenes, but rather the prevalence of explicit and implicit male and female labour, as well as the shock-absorbing buffer zones beneath what appears to be an orderly system and structure.

For years, I have been critical of women's roles at home—those moments when they are "expected to work." I often use everyday materials or tools that are instantly recognizable. I attempt to reproduce the symbolic, instrumentalized body of the woman in order to reveal the fact that domestic work is essentially a kind of shackle and that every moment of the housewife's life serves capital accumulation. Domestic work or the housewife, is not merely on the periphery of capital as a victim, but is equally at the centre of capital's exploitation, producing large amounts of surplus value. Domestic work largely guarantees capital all the labour it needs for its survival and expansion. The "domestication of the self" takes place in the "factory" as much as in the "home". A woman's dilemma is not separated by public or private spheres.

This project examines self-domestication, sacrifice, and dedication, as well as internalized trauma among generations of women in the family, and discusses the connection between interpersonal and intergenerational trauma as well as women's exploitation of capital. Home (Love?) has always been one of my most important motivations. For me, it can provide insights into many correspondences within society and community, as well as self-perception beyond the material world. We are changing constantly. 'Home' is changing in

society's perceptions as well. This is a narrative in the present tense. It encompasses physical shelter, links and bonds, rights and desires, motherhood, love, and individual experiences. Seeing the 'home' and seeing the women as they truly are enables me to see the larger community.

Silvia Federici once proposed: "The left believes that as housewives, women suffer not from the presence of capital but from its absence. Our problem seems to be that capital has never managed to enter our kitchens and bedrooms, leading to a dual consequence: we remain in a pre-capitalist, feudal stage, and whatever we do in our kitchens and bedrooms is irrelevant to social change. Clearly, if our kitchens do not belong to capital, our struggle to destroy them will never successfully lead to the decline of capital."

*Reach the oooooooof* is a reflection on female narratives based on the modest experiences of everyday women. Seeing what happens inside and outside the kitchen and the bedroom is illuminated by the fire of the stove, rediscovering the nature and scope of domestic labour itself. As Leguin writes in her book *What Women Know*: we need to rethink the meaning of home and nurturing as mankind's oldest, greatest, and most important intellectual labor.

(Courtesy of MACHANG)

### Xue Ying (yy?)

Xue Ying (yy? b. 1993), was born and raised in Shandong, China. Her works encompass social practice, installation, textiles, and text. She studied at the University of Leeds (Leeds, UK) and obtained a bachelor's degree in Fashion and Textiles in 2016. She then studied the Royal College of Art, London, UK obtaining her MA in Public Sphere in 2019. Her practice reflects her longstanding interest in the position of the women's subject within patriarchy, making critical social practices through researching feminist philosophies and activism, the power dynamics within the Asian family, also expanding the imaginaries around the polyphyletic community.