

FASHION DESIGNER AND LUXURY

## **EXCLUSIVE: Miuccia Prada Teams With Artist Shuang Li for Miu Miu Show**

The artist has created a specific set installation and video for the spring show to be staged Tuesday in Paris.

By LUISA ZARGANI - OCTOBER 4, 2022



**MILAN** — Miuccia Prada’s curiosity and inquisitive mind are reflected in the scope of her far-reaching and thought-provoking collections, now designed with Raf Simons at the Prada brand, and singularly at Miu Miu, named after her nickname.

One of the designer’s longtime interests is art, especially contemporary art, and her passion has been channeled into the Fondazione Prada, first established in 1993 with her husband Patrizio Bertelli. She is known to surround herself with a close-knit group of friends, artists, directors and architects, and, while relying on Rem Koolhaas and the AMO agency to provide striking and intriguing sets for her shows, she also opens up to new input each season — cue the collaboration with film director Nicolas Winding Refn on the project called “Touch of Crude” for the spring 2023 Prada show presented in Milan last month.

The strong link with artists — and female artists in particular — is a key element at Miu Miu as well. For years the company has screened around the world its series of Women’s Tales, a collection of short films by international female directors, followed by conversations and panels related to the films and the role of women in cinema, for example. Prada has previously worked with artists Meriem Bennani on the Miu Miu spring 2022 show and with Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg on the fall 2022 show, both in Paris.

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This time, for Miu Miu's spring 2023 show, which will be staged Tuesday at the Palais d'Iéna in Paris once again, Prada is collaborating with Chinese artist Shuang Li, who conceived a video and set installation.



Li lives between Berlin and Geneva and her work comprises performances, interactive websites, sculpture and moving image installations, and crosses various mediums making up the contemporary digital landscape. She is said to explore how various forms of technology bring us into contact, and how they form part of a neo-liberal apparatus that regulates the body and desire. Her work is currently featured in the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, dubbed “The Milk of Dreams,” curated by Cecilia Alemani and running until Nov. 27.

While specific details about Tuesday's show set were kept under wraps, so as to surprise guests, here Shuang Li addresses how Miu Miu has grown into something of a manifesto for diversity and inclusion and women's empowerment. She underscored how Miuccia Prada champions “the individuality of the female artists she works with.”

**WWD: How did you approach the design of the set and seats? What guidelines did you receive from Miuccia Prada or what kind of exchange did you have?**

**Shuang Li:** From the beginning I was encouraged to approach it as if it were an exhibition of mine with a live element. Instead of receiving guidelines, it was more of an organic development process between me and Mrs. Prada as well as OMA and the entire Miu Miu team.

**WWD: Is the set connected to the collection?**

**S.L.:** The set was inspired by our desire to communicate, and I felt inspired by the overall brand message of empowerment and femininity and all of its facets. I would not say that it was directly inspired by the specific

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collection, more inspired by the work of Mrs. Prada and Miu Miu in general.

Miu Miu's timelessness is born out of impact of the '90s, an era that marks the beginning of a burst in communication, individuality, etc., and which has resonance in my work, and in many ways, is still propagating in the ways we think of a new kind of classic, but also the current cultural zeitgeist — it's no surprise that Mrs. Prada's sensibilities then are still as relevant and attuned to the moment of now. She's championed the individuality of the female artists she works with and affirms the world making they bring to the collection.

## **WWD: What message would you like to convey?**

**S.L.:** In general I'm fascinated by the fact that we live in a time characterized by hypercommunication. We feel as though our messages fly through the air and instantly arrive at their destination. In fact, there is a huge global infrastructure including undersea cables, satellites, and other pieces of hardware that work in an almost old-fashioned way to connect us all. I have always been interested in the glitches, the messages sent but not received, and our desire to be close to one another and times when that is not always possible.

But also artworks in general — the message they try to convey is usually not the message people receive. I'm constantly asked to explain my work and the cultural background to which it relates. But there seems to be so much explaining to do, and still so much that is lost in translation, partially if not completely. After I moved to Geneva, one day I was walking around the neighborhood and walked into a graveyard. I tried to read the French epitaphs using Google Translate. One of the translations said, "When you watch it Sky at night since I will live can I go in one of the stars. So this will be for you. Mom and Dad." These sentences don't make sense, yet somehow, they don't need to. I'd like to think that's how my work functions.

## **WWD: How did you meet Miuccia Prada?**

**S.L.:** Mrs. Prada, through Fondazione Prada, reached out to me because she had read an interview of mine, saw some of my works and wanted to learn more. Of course, I was thrilled to meet her and we developed a connection very organically.