

Zhiyun Lei

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RESEARCH AND CREATIVE PRACTICE AREAS

Generative Artificial Intelligence and Computational Art, Immersive Media and Virtual Reality, Interactive Art and Spatial Experience

EDUCATION

- 2022–2026 PhD Digital Media
Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST), Macao, China
Thesis title: 'Research on Site-Specificity and User Experience in Location-Based Virtual Reality'
- 2020–2022 MA Photography (Merit), Royal College of Art (RCA), London, UK
- 2015–2019 BFA Photography, Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts (TAFA), Tianjin, China
- 2017–2018 Exchange Student in Fine Arts (China Scholarship Council [CSC] Scholarship)
École supérieure d'Art du Nord-Pas de Calais (ESÄ), Tourcoing, France

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2026 *VINCI Art Gallery*, Tianmulu, Hangzhou, China
Saison Artistique <Project Cactus>, ADM Art Space, Versailles, France
- 2025 *A garden with bifurcated paths*, Tsinghua University Art Museum, Beijing, China
Allegory to Algorithm: Royal College of Art Photography Exhibition (Jimei x Arles International Photo Festival), Three Shadows Photography Art Centre, Xiamen, China
- 2023 *L.A.P. Gallery 6th Anniversary Special Exhibition*, L.A.P. Gallery, Wuhan, China
Through Different Lenses, Xiaoshan International Talent Club, Hangzhou, China
*Thermidorien * Cactus in Paris*, Tree Gallery, Paris, France
Wild Voice, TNT Contemporary Art Space, Shenzhen, China
Cactus by the Sea, Dalian City Museum, Dalian, China
8th China VR/AR Creation Contest, Beijing Normal University, Beijing, China
- 2021 *The Condensation of A Clouds*, Hoxton Gallery, London, UK
- 2019 *Lishui International Photography Festival*, Lishui Art Museum, Lishui, China
- 2018 *FLEA Art Exhibition*, ESÄ Gallery, Tourcoing, France
- 2016 *Experimental Art Committee, China Artist Association: Experimental Art Exhibition of Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts*, TAFA Gallery, Tianjin, China

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles

1. **Lei, Z.**, & Li, S.* (2026). Safety Paradox: How Uncertainty Shapes Immersion and Social Bonding in Location-Based Virtual Reality, *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction*, 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10447318.2026.2722788>
2. Jin, S., Fan, M.*, & **Lei, Z.*** (2026). Designing an Accountable Generative AI Co-Creation System for Museum Visitors: A Field Study at the Lanting Calligraphy Museum. *Heritage*, 9(8), 295. <https://doi.org/10.3390/heritage9080295>
3. **Lei, Z.**, Zhou, W.*, Yang, X., & Zhou, J. (2023). Enhancing the Chinese identity of young people in Hong Kong and Macao based on the creation of cinematic virtual reality art, taking the cinematic virtual reality work *I love being me: in my place, my home* as an example. *International Communication of Chinese Culture*, 10(2), 181-201. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40636-023-00276-6>
4. **Lei, Z.**, & Zhou, W.* (2023). Reinterpretation of the autonomy of art in the contemporary environment. *International Communication of Chinese Culture*, 10(2), 203-221. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40636-023-00277-5>
5. Zhou, Z., **Lei, Z.*** (2026) Technology as a Structural Condition: Reconsidering Contemporary Art from High-Tech and Low-Tech Perspectives (技术作为结构性条件：高技术与低技术视角下当代艺术的再思考) [Chinese]. *Art Contemporary* (艺术当代). Accepted for publication.

Contributions to Books

1. **Lei, Z.** (2025) Squid Game Virtuals Experience (鱿鱼游戏 VR) [Chinese]. In W. Zhou & X. Xu (Eds.), *Analyzing Development of Virtual Reality Art in China (2022-2023)* (中国虚拟现实艺术发展报告[2022-2023]) (pp. 282-285). China International Radio Press (中国国际广播出版社).

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

1. Li, F., **Lei, Z.***, & Kar, A. K. (2025, November). *Revitalizing Rural Value Through Digital Technology: A Comparative Case Study Based on Constructivist Authenticity*. Paper presented at the 2025 China Agricultural and Forestry Economics and Management Annual Conference, Changsha, China.
2. **Lei, Z.** (2024, September). *Monster Images in Artificial Intelligence Generated Film: Evolution from Myth to Cyberspace* (人工智能生成影像的怪物形象：从神话到赛博空间的演变) [Chinese]. Paper presented at the 26th Annual Convention of the China Association of Higher Education Film TV and Media Professional Committee (中国高等教育学会影视传媒专业委员会第26届年会), Shenzhen, China.
3. **Lei, Z.** (2023, June). *Enhancing the Chinese Identity of Young People in Hong Kong and Macao Based on the Creation of Cinematic Virtual Reality Art, Taking the Cinematic Virtual Reality Work I Love Being Me: in my Place, my Home as an Example*. Paper presented at IAMCR, Lyon, France.
4. **Lei, Z.** (2023, May). *Virtual Reality Art: An Extension of Site-Specific Art* (虚拟现实艺术：特定场

域艺术的延伸) [Chinese]. Paper presented at the conference for the 2nd Development and Innovation of Virtual Reality Art (第二届虚拟现实艺术创新发展论坛), Beijing, China.

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONOURS

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| 2023 | L.A.P. International Artist Residency Award, L.A.P. Gallery |
| 2022 | New Photography Prize, RCA |
| 2019 | Academy Award, TAFA
'New College, New Image' Excellent Work Award, Lishui International Photography Festival, Lishui
1839 Photography Award, Beijing |
| 2017 | National Scholarship, CSC, Beijing |

CURATORIAL AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

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| 2025 | Exhibition Production Director: <i>Secondary Enthalpy Change</i> ("20 m ² " Series of Mobile Exhibitions), Tianhe City Shopping Centre, Tianjin |
| 2024 | Curator: <i>From End to Origin</i> , EKA · Tianwu, Shanghai, China
Co-curator: <i>The Condensation of A Cloud 2.0</i> , Three Shadows Photography Art Centre
Academic Moderator: Contemporary Art Sub-forum, RCF China Forum, EKA · Tianwu |
| 2023 | Artist-in-residence: Wuhan Photography Art Center and L.A.P. Gallery, Wuhan, China |

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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|-----------------|---|
| 02/2025–05/2025 | Part-time Lecturer, Zhuhai College of Science and Technology, Zhuhai, China
Course: <i>Sketching and Drawing from Memory</i> |
| 01/2023–05/2023 | Senior Teaching Assistant, MUST
Course: <i>Digital Photography</i> |
| 10/2022–03/2023 | Part-time Lecturer, Communication University of Zhejiang, Hangzhou, China
Courses: <i>Advanced Digital Compositing</i> and <i>Digital Colour Grading</i> |
| 09/2022 | Part-time Lecturer, Jinan University, Guangzhou, China
Course: <i>Experimental Moving Image</i> |
| 05/2022 | Part-time Lecturer, Arts University Bournemouth, Bournemouth, UK
Conducted individual and group tutorials |

PRESS AND RECOGNITION

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| 2025 | Work reviewed and featured by the <i>British Journal of Photography</i> |
| 2022 | MA degree show work featured as the cover image of the RCA Photography Programme Online Degree Show |

ACADEMIC SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

2023–2024 Director of the Department of Academic Supervision, Royal Art China Forum

2020–2021 Student Representative, Photography Programme, RCA

Last updated: September 2026