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

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles

1. **Lei, Z.**, & Li, S.* (2026). Safety Paradox: How Uncertainty Shapes Immersive Engagement 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. Zhou, Z., & **Lei, Z.*** (2026). Technology as a Structural Condition in Contemporary Art: Rethinking High-Tech and Low-Tech (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]. *ArtChina* (艺术当代)*, 25*(3), 106–110.
4. **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
5. **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

Conference Proceedings

1. **Lei, Z.** (2026). *Citation Hyperplasia*. In *Proceedings of the 19th International Symposium on Visual Information Communication and Interaction (VINCI 2026)*. ACM. Forthcoming.

Book Chapter

1. **Lei, Z.** (2025). Squid Game Virtuals (《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).

** Corresponding author.*

SELECTED CREATIVE WORKS

2026 *Optimal Solution* — Interactive Moving Image Installation
Citation Hyperplasia — Web-based Interactive Art
The Time Tunnel — Site-Specific Installation

RESEARCH METHODS AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

Research Methods	Qualitative and practice-based research: Interviews, participant observation, grounded theorising, user studies, Research through Design Quantitative and computational research: Experimental methods, statistical analysis, computational text and visual analysis Research software: NVivo, SPSS
Technical Skills	Programming: Python, C# Interactive and 3D development: Unity, Unreal Engine, Blender Generative AI: Image and video generation Visual design: Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign Moving image: Final Cut Pro, DaVinci Resolve

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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

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 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 the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) Annual Conference, 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 EXHIBITIONS

2026 *Futures Unbound (VINCI 2026 Art & Media Gallery)*, OōEli Tianmuli, Hangzhou, China
Reimagining Art in the AI Era (The 2nd China Conference on Computational Art [CCAC]) Exhibition, Shandong Museum, Jinan, China
Encountering (FIAP World Photographers Conference), Lishui Art Museum, Lishui, 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 *One and Every Lap: 6th Anniversary Special Exhibition*, L.A.P. Gallery, Wuhan, China
Through Different Lenses (Royal Art China Forum), 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 Cloud*, Hoxton Gallery, London, UK

2019 *Astonishment and Extension (Lishui International Photography Festival)*, Lishui Art Museum, Lishui, China

2018 *FLEA Art Exhibition*, ESÄ Gallery, Tourcoing, France

2016 *Experimental Art Committee, China Artists Association: Experimental Art Exhibition of Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts*, TAFA Gallery, Tianjin, China

CURATORIAL AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

2025 Executive Curator: *Secondary Enthalpy Change ('20 m^2' Series of Mobile Exhibitions)*, Tianhe City Shopping Centre, Tianjin

2024 Curator: *From End to Origin*, EKA · Tianwu, Shanghai, China
Co-curator: *The Condensation of a Cloud 2.0*, 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

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONOURS

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

PRESS AND RECOGNITION

2025 Work reviewed and featured by the *British Journal of Photography*
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: November 2026