Haochen (Jimmy) Xu

Unreal Director · Cinematic Environment Designer · Practice-Led Researcher

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Profile

Unreal director and practice-led researcher investigating how spatial narrativity, material traces, and atmospheric cues shape digital experience. Through real-time worldbuilding in Unreal Engine, I study how composition, lighting, and virtual camera movement guide perception, memory, and affect. My work focuses on how subtle spatial adjustments and withdrawn objects contribute to storytelling.

Core Skills

- Cinematic environments & worldbuilding
- Spatial atmosphere & lighting design
- Narrative & perceptual sequencing
- Real-time production & virtual cinematography
- Previs & layout design
- Creative collaboration & art direction

Software: Unreal Engine, Blender, Maya, Rhino, ZBrush, Substance Painter, Houdini, Marvelous Designer, Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Premiere Pro, Metashape, Reality Capture

Projects

Where Memory Ends — Short Film   *Apr 2025 – Sep 2025*
Director · Writer · Environment Designer
SCI-Arc

- Directed and designed the film, shaping its visual language around memory and identity.
- Focused on atmosphere, lighting, and camera movement; screened at the SCI-Arc exhibition.

Terraform — Short Film   *Jan 2024 – Apr 2024*
Co-Director · Environment Designer
SCI-Arc

- Designed a virtual world integrating architecture and landscape to explore transformation.
- Developed spatial rhythm through lighting, composition, and pacing.

Millennium Guardian — Short Film   *Jul 2023 – Mar 2024*
Director · Environment Designer
Taiyuan University of Technology

- Used photogrammetry to reinterpret the Longmen Temple through real-time rendering.
- Designed spatial composition and atmosphere, merging reconstruction with storytelling.

Experience

Eon Visuals — 3D Designer (Previs/Environment/Story)   *Sep 2025 – Dec 2025*

- Served as previs and environment designer on Monsters, the official music video for Wes Scantlin (Puddle of Mudd).
- Designed the opening room and corridor environments, shaping spatial rhythm, atmosphere, and visual tone.
- Developed real-time cinematic blocking, camera choreography, and narrative pacing in Unreal Engine.
- Collaborated closely with the director and art team to define story beats, mood, and overall sequencing.

Shanxi Radio and Television Station — Production Intern   *Jun 2024 – Sep 2024*

- Captured and processed LiDAR and photogrammetry data of the Pagoda of Fogong Temple for digital reconstruction.
- Created cinematic heritage environments in Unreal Engine for a cultural TV production.
- Translated architectural artifacts into immersive virtual spaces.

OX3 Production — Production Intern   *Jun 2024 – Aug 2024*

- Edited video content to study pacing, rhythm, and compositional flow.
- Collaborated with art directors to refine tone, mood, and continuity.
- Experimented with virtual background design using Unreal Engine.

Education

Southern California Institute of Architecture — Master of Science in Fiction and Entertainment   *Sep 2024 – Sep 2025*
Southern California Institute of Architecture — Bachelor of Architecture   *Sep 2019 – Apr 2024*