Skye (Xinyi) Gao CV

Creative Technologist, Designer, Multi-disciplinary Artist

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BIO

Skye (Xinyi) Gao is a **creative technologist, designer, and multi-disciplinary artist** currently based in Cambridge, MA. Her work spans across interactive experience, multimedia installations, bio-inspired design, and creative computing.

Driven by a deep engagement with technology, Skye finds herself at the nexus of **human, artificial, and natural intelligence.** Her most recent research interest explores **how advanced computational systems can reshape human experiences and understanding from a more-than-human perspective.** Beyond her speculative explorations, Skye also addresses pressing social and cultural phenomena, reflecting on the juxtaposition of life and death in the digital era and its implications for (post)human conditions.

Skye holds a Master of Design Studies (MDes) degree at Harvard Graduate of Design with a concentration in medium/technology and a B.Sc in Interactive Media Arts from NYU Shanghai. Her work has been featured in exhibitions at the MIT Museum Studio and Compton Gallery, On-Display Harvard, School of Visual Arts, Media Architecture Biennial, NYU Abu Dhabi Art Center, NYU Shanghai Interactive Media Arts Program, Future Lab, and M50 Shanghai.

EDUCATION

2024
Harvard University Graduate School of Design
Master in Design Studies - Technology / Medium Domain

2024
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Media Lab, Art, Culture & technology, MIT Museum Studio
(Cross-registration)

2021
New York University Shanghai,
Bachelor of Science - **Cum laude with honors** in Interactive Media Arts

2019-2020
New York University
New York University Abu Dhabi
Study Away Program

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Design Researcher — *Swimming in a Sea of Invisible Waves*

Harvard metaLab | 2023.5 - 2023.8

Collaborated closely with a diverse team of designers and researchers at Harvard metaLab on a pioneering project at the intersection of radio wave technology and design, aimed at raising public awareness about the significance of often-overlooked technologies in daily life. Conducted extensive research on the history and science of radio technologies, unearthing pivotal milestones, breakthroughs, and influential figures that have shaped the landscape of modern communication. Led the design and development of an interactive front-end interface that chronicles the evolution of radio technology, effectively engaging audiences across various age groups and knowledge levels.

Research Fellow — *Mixed-reality Sensory Experience for Inclusive Design*

Empathy Lab X NYU Shanghai | 2021.9 - 2022.3

Spearheaded in-depth research focused on sensory perception and the inclusive experience of individuals with various disabilities, including visual impairment, hearing impairment, and intellectual disability. Pioneered the development of an immersive storytelling experience, utilizing cutting-edge VR technology and physical computing. The objective was to authentically simulate the perspectives of individuals with visual impairment, with a key emphasis on fostering empathy and promoting inclusion within society.

Research Assistant — *Machine Learning Sensing Systems for Architectural Applications*

Supervisor: Stavros Didakis, Assistant Professor of Interactive Media Arts, NYU Shanghai | 2021.7 - 2021.9

Successfully developed and deployed a state-of-the-art machine learning sensing system tailored for architectural applications. This innovative system was built on IoT technology, integrating an array of sensors, Arduino Yun, NODE.js, MQTT, and MongoDB to achieve optimal functionality. Collaborated closely with a team of electronic engineers from DFRobot to oversee the design and manufacturing of the hardware systems. This collaborative effort ensured the seamless integration of hardware components, contributing to the system's overall efficiency and reliability.

Research Artist — *Remember Me Digitally: Digital Legacy through Electronic Media*
Dean's Undergrad Research Fund Recipient, NYU Shanghai

Supervisor: Eric Parren, Assistant Professor of Interactive Media Arts, NYU Shanghai | 2020.3 - 2020.12

Conceptualized and created a "Remember Me Digitally," a 7-day multi-media exhibition addressing the topic of death and legacy in the digital age. The exhibition utilized VR, digital fabrication, electronic crafting, and website construction to explore how digital media can reshape our understanding of memory and legacy. It featured immersive VR experiences to simulate post-mortem digital presence, interactive installations using electronic crafting to depict digital legacies, and a comprehensive website to document and share the exhibition's themes and works. This project won the "Most Popular Project" award at the Fall 2020 NYU Shanghai Undergraduate Research Expo and Poster Competition, highlighting its impact and resonance with the audience.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Outreach Director

Harvard Conflux | 2024.3 - ongoing

- Led outreach efforts to connect the community with external resources and opportunities by establishing partnerships with global institutions such as MIT, MassArt, Northeastern University, New York University, SVA, and Stockholm Art Gallery.
- Developed and implemented strategies for organizing workshops, mentorship programs, exhibitions, and conference awards to promote community engagement and participation in Conflux activities. Oversee the planning and execution of high-quality events to ensure strong community engagement and participation.
- Curated and managed international exhibitions, including a current project in Stockholm, Sweden, providing a platform for the community to showcase their work globally.

Art-tech Residency Director & Project Mentor

Harvard Conflux | 2024.11 - 2024.3

- Directed the Harvard Conflux 2024 Winter Residency, themed "*Symbiotic Perception*". integrating art and technology in a pioneering two-week program for approximately 15 undergraduates, spanning disciplines such as Computer Science, Robotics - Ecologies, Neuroscience, Biology, Architecture and Urban Planning/Design, History and Literature, and Mathematics.
- Established collaborations with leading artists and academics from various instituions worldwide, including MIT Media Lab and NYU Tisch School of the Arts, School of Visual Arts, Northeastern University, enhancing the residency with artist talks, technical workshops, field trips, and a mentorship program.
- Developed and implemented a comprehensive project-based curriculum tailored for non-art majors, emphasizing interactive media art, including creative programming, interactive installations, and bio design. Conducted a hands-on workshops on physical computing and interaction art, offered office hours, providing personalized guidance and fostering a supportive and creative learning environment.
- Led the curation of the residency exhibition, including project management, hosting events, coordinating with artists and participants, and creating visual assets for social media and the residency website to showcase the convergence of art and technology.

Fabrication Lab Assistant

Fabrication Lab, NYU Shanghai | 2021.7 - 2022.6

- Delivered personalized and expert one-on-one digital fabrication support to students, facilitating their proficiency in using laser cutting machines, 3D printers, and other relevant equipment.
- Led the design and construction of a dedicated long-term exhibition space using woodshop fabrication techniques, specifically tailored for showcasing exceptional student projects.

Visual Designer

Interactive Media, NYU Abu Dhabi | 2021.7 - 2022.6

- Created high-quality promotional posters and flyers for departmental events on a weekly basis, employing industry-standard design software such as Procreate and Adobe Illustrator.
- Spearheaded the conceptualization and execution of engaging 2D designs for the Interactive Media Department's highly anticipated public end-of-semester show, showcasing innovative artistic visions and technical aptitude.

Creative Design Intern

ACTIVATION NODEPLUS | 2021.7 - 2022.6

- Demonstrated exceptional creativity and design skills in producing compelling weekly social media promotional materials utilizing the Adobe Creative Suite, including banners, posters, and infographics, for esteemed clients such as SK-II and Dicos.
- Engaged in seamless collaboration with Marketing teams to devise and execute impactful social media campaigns, effectively aligning visual aesthetics with strategic marketing objectives.

Product Designer

Marketing & Communication, NYU Shanghai | 2021.7 - 2022.6

- Created captivating animated mascot stickers for use on WeChat and Instagram, as well as peripheral merchandise, to effectively promote the University's distinct visual identity and enhance brand recognition and identity.
- Demonstrated proficiency in product design by developing custom canvas bags and bracelets for the NYU Shanghai Class of 2018 graduation ceremony, employing specialized software such as Sketchbook Pro and Illustration to achieve visually appealing and functional end products.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant — *Graduation Course*

Harvard Graduate School of Design | 2024.1 – 2024.5

- Assisted Professor Allen Sayegh in teaching the course "Responsive Environment," focusing on creating technologically driven experiences within the built environment.
- Hosted a series of workshops on physical computing and sensing technology, guiding students in developing creative, interactive, and responsive applications in architectural contexts. Assisted in evaluating student projects and providing feedback to enhance their understanding and application of responsive environment design principles.
- ▸ Course Description

Workshop Instructor

Harvard Conflux | 2024.1

- Hosted a workshop on physical computing for participants from non-tech and/or non-art backgrounds, Introduced fundamental concepts of physical computing, including sensor integration, microcontroller programming, and real-time data processing, in an accessible manner.
- Designed and delivered hands-on sessions to guide participants in creating interactive experiences and design applications.

J-term Lecturer

Harvard Graduate School of Design | 2024.1

- Instructed a J-term course at Harvard GSD with the topic of "Networked Memory: Exploring the future of memory, space and technology" from both technological and conceptual aspect.
- ▾ Course Description

  Throughout history, humans have sought ways to externalize and share memories, from paintings and writing to photography and video. In today's digital age, our relationship with memory and identity has grown more complex, shaped by social media, wearables, and the constant recording of daily life. As we move towards a future where every aspect of our lives could be digitally preserved, important questions arise: How will these networked memories impact our experiences and sense of self? Can we remember everything, and should we? What happens when digital memories outlast us?

  This course encourages interdisciplinary dialogue on the challenges of memory in the digital era, exploring the potential and limitations of "total recall." It examines how physical spaces influence digital memory, and through workshops on interactive technology (e.g., Arduino, sensors, media design), students will prototype near-future scenarios. The course culminates in designing an interactive piece that reflects each student's vision of a future where memory is networked, monitored, and shared.

Associate Fellow

Interactive Media Arts, NYU Shanghai | 2021.8 – 2022.8

- Assisted in providing comprehensive academic support to foundational courses of Interaction Lab at the Interactive Media Arts program. This included coordinating with course logistics and technical consultants both during class sessions and regular office hours, ensuring a conducive learning environment for students.
- Conducted highly informative and engaging workshops on Javascript Programming, physical computing and digital fabrication aimed at empowering students with practical skills and knowledge in these disciplines.
- Curated the 2021 Future Lab Exhibition in Shanghai, along with over 15 art academies in China. The event showcased groundbreaking works at the forefront of interactive media arts, inspiring innovation and creativity within the artistic community.

Teaching Fellow - *Singularity Art-Tech Workshop*

NYU Shanghai & Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts | 2022.3 – 2022.5

- Assisted with daily teaching tasks, including classroom management, student support, and ensuring smooth delivery of course content. Prepared and developed comprehensive technical course materials focused on the integration of art and technology.
- Conducted a specialized workshop on IoT communication systems and real-time media design development using ESP32 and Unity, teaching participants how to design and implement connected art installations.
- Collaborated closely with faculty to enhance the curriculum and adapt teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of students. Provided expert consultancy on student projects, offering detailed guidance on technical challenges, creative solutions, and project development.

Teaching Assistant — *Foundational Course*

Interaction Lab, NYU Shanghai | 2021.7 – 2022.6

- Provided expert instruction and guidance to students in the ideation and development of innovative creative projects, centered around programmable electronics and digital fabrication techniques (laser-cutting, 3D printing, Arduino, Processing, etc.).
- Collaborated closely with faculty members to support lesson preparation, actively contributing to material organization and equipment setup on a weekly basis, ensuring the smooth execution of interactive and engaging learning experiences for students.

EXHIBITIONS

2024	O(perating) S(ystem) 1.1: interactive public installation, **Harvard GSD End of Year Show**, Harvard GSD Druker Gallery, Cambridge, MA
2024	**Symbiotic Perceptions**, Harvard SOCH, Cambridge, MA
2023	**Liminal Boundary:** light art installation, **MIT Museum Gallery**, Cambridge, MA
2023	Circadian Topographie*s:* mix-media bio art installation, **Porous Kinships**, SVA Fine Arts, New York, NY
2022	Oblique Obstruction: interactive public installation, **On Display Harvard**, Harvard GSD Tange Pavilion, Cambridge, MA
2021	Sentient Complex*:* interactive installation, **What's Next, Future Lab 2021**, Shanghai
2021	Sentient Complex: interactive installation, **NEO-Imaginaria**, M50 Brownie Project, Shanghai
2021	Sentient Complex: interactive installation, **Future Proof: IMA Capstone Exhibition**, NYU Shanghai, Shanghai
2021	EmotionWare: responsive wearable & platform, **Media Architecture Biennial 20' Students Awards Exhibition,** Media Architecture Biennale, Online
2020	EmotionWare: Responsive wearable & platform, **NYU Shanghai IMA Fall Show**, NYU Shanghai, Shanghai
2020	**Remember Me Digitally: Digital Legacy through Electronic Media**, NYU Shanghai 1250 Gallery, Shanghai
2019	Re-Shaping*:* kinetic light installation, **NYU Shanghai IMA Spring Show**, NYU Shanghai, Shanghai
2018	KaleidoShare: interactive installation for sharing experience, **NYU Shanghai IMA Spring Show**, NYU Shanghai, Shanghai

AWARDS

SVA Bio Art Residency
School of Visual Arts, NY
May 2023

MAB20 Students Awards
Media Architecture Biennale
March 2021

Cum laude (Latin Honors) in Interactive Media Arts
NYU Shanghai, Shanghai
May 2021

Harvard XR Hackthon Second Place
Harvard University, Cambridge
March 2023

Deans' Undergraduate Research Fund
NYU Shanghai, Shanghai
March 2020

NYU Shanghai Excellence Award
NYU Shanghai, Shanghai
May 2021

SKILLS

Programming 5
- JavaScript (Processing, Node.js, Express, WebSocket, P5.js, d3.js, MQTT, PoseNet)
- HTML5/CSS3
- Arduino C++
- Python
- OpenCV

Physical Computing & Fabrication 4
- Arduino, Raspberry Pi with further knowledge in electronics
- Digital Fabrication Techniques (laser cutting, 3D printing)
- PCB Design and Fabrication
- Basic Woodshop Tech

Creative Technology 9
- Node-RED
- IBM Watson (IoT)
- TouchDesigner
- Unity
- Blender
- Cinema4D
- Grasshopper
- MAX/MSP
- Autodesk Maya&Mudbox

Design 5
- Adobe Suite (Illustrator, Photoshop, After Effects, Premiere, InDesign)
- Davinci Resolve
- Procreate
- Sketchbook Pro
- Marvel

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