

Zhuanxu Xu

Scholar and Visual Artist

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Pronouns: she/her

Professional Profile

Interdisciplinary scholar and visual artist whose research and creative practice focus on trans political economy, critical theory, and Marxist political philosophy. My work bridges these theoretical frameworks to explore complex social and political concepts through both scholarly writing and visual media. This academic inquiry is complemented by an established creative career, including an international exhibition record and recognition such as New Contemporaries.

Education

- 2021–Present **MPhil/PhD in Culture, Communication and Media**, *University College London*, London, UK
- 2018–2020 **MFA in Fine Art**, *Goldsmiths, University of London*, London, UK
Passed with Distinction
- 2014–2018 **BA in Environmental Design**, *Communication University of China, Nanjing (CUCN)*, Nanjing, China

Academic Appointments

- 2025 **Associate Lecturer, MA Design for Social Innovation and Sustainable Futures**, *London College of Communication, University of the Arts London*, London, UK
- Designed and delivered lectures, seminars, and specialised workshops focusing on decoloniality and aesthetics.
 - Developed course materials, including syllabi and reading lists, and prepared all materials for VLE dissemination.
 - Assessed and graded student coursework, providing constructive feedback to support their academic development.
- 2025 **Associate Lecturer, MA Design for Art Direction**, *London College of Communication, University of the Arts London*, London, UK
- Mentored students in developing their creative projects from concept to final execution.
 - Facilitated group critiques and individual tutorials to foster critical thinking and practical skills.
 - Collaborated with senior module leaders on curriculum planning and student assessment.
- 2024 **Teaching Assistant, Gender and Digital Media (Critical Studies)**, *UCL Institute of Education*, London, UK
- Provided administrative and pastoral support to a diverse cohort of over 40 MA students.
 - Led seminar discussions, facilitated student debates, and managed online learning forums.
 - Supported the module leader with course administration, including managing student records and tracking assignments.
- 2023 **Teaching Assistant, Digital Media Theory (Production)**, *UCL Institute of Education*, London, UK
- Assisted students with practical, production-based projects for the MA module ‘Digital Media: Production’.
 - Provided technical support and creative guidance during workshops and lab sessions.
- 2016–2017 **Library Assistant**, *Communication University of China, Nanjing (CUCN)*, Nanjing, China
- Managed the circulation desk and acted as the primary point of contact for all user inquiries.
 - Catalogued new acquisitions and maintained the library database using the Alma system.

Publications

- Forthcoming 2026 *Peer-reviewed Article*: 'From Critique to Creation: Art's Dual Role in the Degrowth Paradigm', in *Wenhua Zongheng: A Journal Of Contemporary Chinese Thought*.
- Forthcoming 2026 *Chapter Contribution*: 'Kuaxingbie and Transgender in the Age of Digital Platforms', in *Gender and Digital Media: A Critical Companion* (Routledge).
- 2019 *Chapter Contribution*: 'A Critique of Paul McCarthy's Sailor Meat, Sailor's Delight (1975)', in the first edition of *The Art Columnist* (Goldsmiths Press).

Awards and Grants

- 2025 **Solo Exhibition Funding, 'Sojourners of Singing'**
Successfully negotiated and secured a funding agreement with the Quanzhou Local Government to cover all exhibition costs.
- 2024 **UCL IOE Centre for Doctoral Education Conference Grant**
Authored a successful grant proposal to secure funding for academic conference attendance.
- 2023 **UCL LGBTQ+ Equality Implementation Group (LEIG) Grant**
Co-authored a successful funding proposal and managed the project budget for the Trans-inclusivity Seminar Series at IOE.
- 2022 **Tour de Moon Production Grant**
Secured a national arts grant to fund the production of the short film 'The Lunar Month'.
- 2021 **Bloomberg New Contemporaries**
Selected for the prestigious national award for emerging artists through a competitive application process.

Conference Presentations and Workshops

- 2024 **Presenter**, 'Transition as Unwaged Labour and Moving Beyond It', *Trans-inclusivity Seminar Series - Researchers' Panel, UCL Institute of Education*
- 2024 **Speaker**, 'Mapping Transgender Survival and Transfeminism in Contemporary China', *2024 Association for Asian Studies (AAS) Annual Conference (Panel Discussion)*
- 2023 **Presenter**, 'Materialities and lived experiences of trans people in contemporary China', *Violence, Gender and Discourse: an Interdisciplinary Workshop, UCL Institute of Education*
- 2022 **Participant**, 'Visual Culture and Transness Roundtable Discussion', *Feminist Gender Equality Network Conference: Living Gender in Diverse Times*
- 2019–2020 **Organiser and Facilitator**, 'Gender Politics in China (Mandarin, Cantonese, English)', *4-day reading group, A/part, Kowloon, Hong Kong SAR, China*
- 2019–2020 **Organiser and Facilitator**, 'Imaging Trans liberation and Its Practicability in China', *5-day workshop, A/part, Kowloon, Hong Kong SAR, China*
- 2019–2020 **Lecturer**, 'Gender Studies in China (Mandarin)', *Online Teaching Programme (10 lectures)*

Project Management and Curation

- 2025 **Freelance Editor**, *Community Documentary Project*, London, UK
Edited a community-funded documentary on the life of a Chinese trans elder, shaping the narrative and preparing the film for community screenings.
- 2022 **Producer**, 'The Lunar Month' (Short Film), *Tour de Moon*, London, UK
Managed the full production lifecycle, including creating production schedules, coordinating a cast and crew of 10+, and overseeing post-production to meet festival deadlines.
- 2022 **Co-Curator**, 'Trans Tales for Toxic Times', *Ugly Duck*, London, UK
Led on artist outreach, selection, and liaison for a multi-artist exhibition. Managed the event timeline, installation logistics, and promotional campaign.

2019–2020 **Lead Organiser, Workshops and Online Courses, *A/part and Online***, Hong Kong SAR, China
Independently organised and delivered a 5-day workshop and a 10-lecture online programme. Managed all logistics including venue booking, material creation, and participant registration.

Research Interests

Feminist and Trans Philosophy; Marxist Political Philosophy; Critical Theory; Contemporary Art Theory; Visual and Digital Culture; Affect Theory; Eco Socialism.

Skills

Project and Financial Management	Grant Writing, Budget Management, Financial Reporting, Funding Negotiation, Stakeholder & Artist Liaison, Curation.
Editing Software	DaVinci Resolve (Blackmagic Certified), Avid Media Composer, Adobe Premiere Pro, Final Cut Pro.
Creative Skills	Visual Storytelling, Narrative Pacing, Rhythm and Timing, Montage, Sound Design, Colour Grading.
Technical Skills	Media Management, Logging Rushes, Transcoding, Assembly Edits, Turnover Preparation.
Photo and Image Editing	Adobe Photoshop, Lightroom, Illustrator; Medium Format Film Photography.
IT and Systems	MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, Outlook), Alma (Library Management), Polaris ePoS & Polaris Data (Finance).
Academic and Research	Qualitative Data Analysis (NVivo), Reference Management (Zotero, Mendeley).

Languages

Mandarin	Native
English	Fluent
Cantonese	Native

Professional Affiliations

2023–Present	Active Member, UCL IOE LGBTQ+ Advisory Group (ILAG)
2021–Present	Affiliated Member, qUCL Research Network
2021–Present	Affiliated Member, Gender and Feminisms Research Network (GFRN)

Selected Exhibitions

2025	<i>Sojourners of Singing</i> (solo exhibition), Longgong Gallery, Quanzhou, China
2022	<i>Trans Tales for Toxic Times</i> , Ugly Duck, London, UK
2022	<i>FLOOR FIVE COLLECTIVE: FILM NIGHT</i> , Goldsmiths Centre for Contemporary Art, London, UK
2022	<i>Tour de Moon</i> , Leicester, Newcastle, and Southampton, UK
2021–2022	<i>Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2021</i> , South London Gallery, London and Firstsite, Colchester, UK
2020	<i>Goldsmiths MFA Degree Show 2020</i> , Goldsmiths, University of London, London, UK
2019	<i>Imagined Communities</i> , Crypt Gallery, London, UK
2019	<i>A Better Tomorrow</i> , The Artworks Creekside, London, UK
2019	<i>Interim+</i> , MFA Fine Art Studios, Goldsmiths, University of London, London, UK

2019 *Disidentification* (solo exhibition), A/part, Kowloon, Hong Kong SAR, China

Filmography

2022 ***The Lunar Month*** (17min / Colour / Digital & 35 mm)

Role: Director, Writer, Producer, Editor

Managed the full production lifecycle, including coordinating cast/crew and overseeing the post-production schedule to meet festival deadlines.

2020 ***One Narrow and Flimsy Grasp*** (23min / Colour / Digital)

Role: Director, Writer, Producer, Editor

Managed the entire post-production workflow, shaping the narrative from over 5 hours of raw footage. The film was selected for the Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2021.