

Yixuan LIU 刘亦璇

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RESEARCH INTEREST

My research lies at the intersection of phenomenology, image theory, and aesthetics, with a particular focus on Maurice Merleau-Ponty. My doctoral project develops a phenomenological path from image experience toward an ontology of the image, arguing that images are not merely representations but reactivatable structures of sensible relations. My broader research brings Western philosophy and art history into dialogue with Chinese aesthetics and philosophy, with particular attention to questions of time and temporality.

EDUCATION

University of Fribourg, Switzerland, and **Leiden University**, the Netherlands 2024-present

- Doctoral Candidate in Philosophy (cotutelle PhD programme)
- PhD project: “The Temporality of Images: Merleau-Ponty’s Visual Ontology and its Resonances with Chinese Landscape Painting”
- Supervisors: Emmanuel Alloa (University of Fribourg) and Frank Chouraqui (Leiden University)

Husserl-Archives, KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium 2022-2024

- Research Master of Philosophy, Grade: Magna Cum Laude
- Thesis: “Who is Seeing What, from Where?: An Interrogation of Merleau-Ponty’s Concept of ‘Vision as Gesture’”
- Supervisors: Till Grohmann and Gabriel Lago de S. Barroso

IEEF, Université de Strasbourg, Strasbourg, France 2023-2024

- Learning French in Pôle Français Langue Etrangère, Institut International d’Etudes Françaises

Institute of Philosophy, KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium 2020-2022

- Master of Philosophy, Grade: Magna Cum Laude
- Thesis: “Necessity of Contingency: Merleau-Ponty’s Encounter with Saussure on ‘How Do Signs Work?’”
- Supervisor: Till Grohmann

Xi’an Jiaotong University, Shaanxi, China 2016-2020

- Bachelor of Arts, Philosophy, Average Score: 90.72/100
- Thesis: “Narrative, Goods and Local Community: A Reflection on the Debate between Alasdair MacIntyre and J. B. Schneewind”
- Supervisor: Jiaxin Wang (王嘉新)

National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan Area 2019

- Bachelor of Arts, Philosophy (Exchange), GPA (Grade Point Average): 4.3/4.3

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

1. Liu, Yixuan. 《从身体的时空到肉身的时空：梅洛-庞蒂时空现象学研究》 (*From the “Spatio-Temporality” of Body to the “Spatio-Temporality” of Flesh: A Study of Merleau-Ponty’s Phenomenology of Space and Time*). *French Philosophy Studies* 《法国哲学研究》, forthcoming (2026).

Peer-Reviewed Book Chapters

1. Liu, Yixuan, Li, Bohan, Li, Chengrun, and Sun, Chong. “Beyond Measurable Time: From Experimental Evidence to Philosophical Reflection in Homosexual Films.” In *Aesthetics in the Age beyond AI*, edited by Yan Bao, Ernst Pöppel, Maria Reinisch, and LaoZhu. Singapore: World Scientific, forthcoming (2026).
2. Li, Chengrun, Liu, Yixuan, and Montero, Maxime. “Language and Identity: A Case Study on the Development of

Yiddish.” In *Aesthetics in the Age beyond AI*, edited by Yan Bao, Ernst Pöppel, Maria Reinisch, and LaoZhu. Singapore: World Scientific, forthcoming (2026).

3. Tang, Jianing, Liu, Yixuan, and Feng, Hong. “The Temporal Constancy in Chinese Landscape Painting: A Cross-Cultural Dialogue from Homogeneous Time to Constant Time.” In *Aesthetics in the Age beyond AI*, edited by Yan Bao, Ernst Pöppel, Maria Reinisch, and LaoZhu. Singapore: World Scientific, forthcoming (2026).

Book Chapters under Review

1. Liu, Yixuan. “Learning to Step Back: Warburg’s Method of Keeping Distance and the Strategy of Slow Looking.” In *Learning to Look, Looking to Learn: The Power of Observation in Educational Settings*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Book Reviews

1. Liu, Yixuan. Review of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Investigations into the Literary Use of Language: Course Notes from the Collège de France, 1953*, translated by Bryan Smyth (Northwestern University Press, 2026). *Phenomenological Reviews*, invited review, forthcoming (2026).

Translations

1. Alloa, Emmanuel. 《经受一种经验：感受、身体可供性与自我的建制》 (*Undergoing an Experience: Sensing, Bodily Affordances, and the Institution of the Self*). Translated by Yixuan Liu. *French Philosophy Studies* 《法国哲学研究》, forthcoming (2026).

SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (including forthcoming)

- **“The Image among Images as a Relation of Relations: A Relational-Ontological Reading of Aby Warburg’s Iconology of the Interval”**
Inquiries into the Image: Art History, Visual Studies, Bildwissenschaft, Athens, Greece 2026
- **“Thriving Rather than Surviving in the Landscape of Pleasure: Umwelt, Instinct, and the Interweaving of Landscapes in Merleau-Ponty.”**
Fiftieth-Anniversary Conference of the International Merleau-Ponty Circle, Strasbourg, France 2026
- **“The Non-Neutrality of Generative Images: A Phenomenological Reflection on Technical Image Experience.”**
30th Annual Conference of Chinese Phenomenology, Beijing, China 2026
- **“From Unfinished Perception to the Unfinished World: Between Merleau-Ponty’s *Depth* and the *Farness* of Chinese Landscape Painting”**
European Society for Aesthetics Conference 2026, Jyväskylä, Finland 2026
- **“The First Fleeting Encounter with the Image”**
Research Colloquium Techniques of the Senses, University of Fribourg, Fribourg, Switzerland 2026
- **“Space-Time as What Takes Shape Between the Image and Us”**
2nd Leiden x Radboud Continental Philosophy Research Day, Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands 2026
- **“From Continuity to Succession: The Encounter between Phenomenology and the I Ching on *Time*”**
Philosophical Society of Southern Africa Annual Conference, Cape Town, South Africa 2026
- **“Beyond Visual Narcissism: Toward a Phenomenology of the Image: Merleau-Ponty’s Path from Mirror Experience to Image Experience”**
Sixteenth International Conference on The Image, Paris, France 2025
- **“From ‘Political as Such’ to ‘Political Subject’: A Phenomenological Reinterpretation of Carl Schmitt’s Political Philosophy”**
29th Annual Conference of Chinese Phenomenology: “System and Principles”, Changchun, China 2025
- **“Beyond Non-Self: Rethinking Narcissism through Chinese Poetic Tradition and Phenomenology”**
5th Biennial Conference of the European Association for Chinese Philosophy, Reykjavík, Iceland 2025

SELECTED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH TRAINING
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“Models of Dialectical Thought in Chinese and Asian Philosophy”

Summer School, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Sep 2026

“Way and Being: Between Daoist and Presocratic Approaches”

Summer School, Centre for Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Studies, University of Tübingen, Germany

Aug 2026

“Micro-Phenomenology” led by Professor Natalie Depraz

Master-Class, Research Institute of the University of Bucharest (ICUB), Bucharest, Romania

Jun 2026

“Tao of Philosophy: Laozi, Heraclitus, Parmenides and Heidegger”

Summer School, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China

Aug 2025

“The Power of Aesthetics”

Summer School, Shanghai International Studies University, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, and Verein Deutscher Wissenschaftler, Shanghai, China

Aug 2024

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Professional Memberships: Member of the European Society for Aesthetics (ESA)

Web profiles:

- Leiden University profile: <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/staffmembers/yixuan-liu#tab-1> ;
- University of Fribourg project page: <https://projects.unifr.ch/aesthetics-critique/team/yixuan-liu/>;
- Personal website: <https://yixuanliucyber.com/>

Additional skills and interests:

- Visual arts practice (painting, Chinese calligraphy);
- Literary writing (poetry, essays, and fiction)

Research Funding:

- **Prof. dr. R.A.V. van Haersolte Fund Travel Grant**, Leiden University Fund, 2026.
- **Travel Grant**, Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences (SAGW), 2025.