

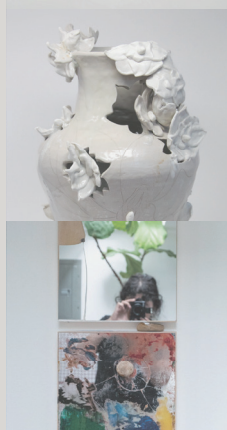
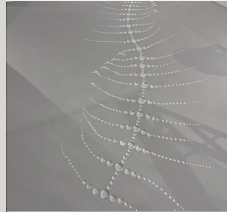
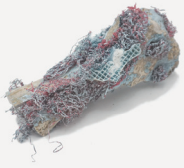
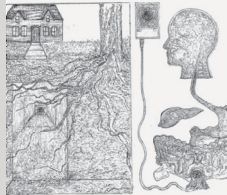
# Expressive Bodies

Aug 12 - Sep 12, 2025

Artists:

Liu Shiming

Andrius Alvarez-Backus, Juliette Roy Batanero, Jorè Griténaitè,  
Samuel Horgan, JOHANNA, Yiting Li, Larissa McPherson,  
Jonathan Wenur, Jordan Winiski, Sachigusa Yasuda, Lite Zhang





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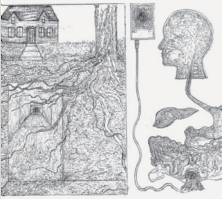
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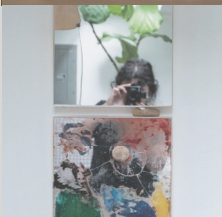
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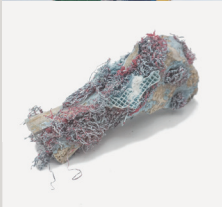
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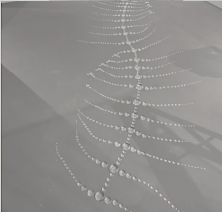
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*Expressive Bodies* takes the sculptural practice of Liu Shiming as its point of departure, where gesture, bodily presence, and material intersect to prompt a rethinking of the expressive potential of the body. In Liu's work, the human form carries memory, labor, emotion, and cultural continuity. It is grounded and immediate—caught in the midst of motion or pause, marked by tenderness, resilience, and care. Whether hunched in work, curled in embrace, or poised in quiet reflection, Liu's bodies speak through posture and form shaped by lived experience and rooted in human connection.

This exhibition brings together artists who are recipients of the Liu Shiming Scholarship, as well as students and recent graduates from partner institutions. Their works extend Liu's attention to the body into new materials, narratives, and frameworks, offering expanded reflections on what it means to represent, inhabit, and move through the body today. Each artist also contributed a response to a sculpture by Liu, reflecting on its resonance with their own practice.

Curator: Ashley Wu

Executive Curator: Melissa Lazarov



**Expressive Bodies**

**Body as the  
site of intimacy**

The body is where connection and desire are expressed,  
sometimes visible and at times withheld. Some works crystalize  
ephemeral moments, while others make room for what  
remains unspoken.

# Andrius Alvarez-Backus

MFA '25, Columbia University, USA



*Be With Me (Not Here, Not There Either)*

2024-25  
Dried Manila palm leaves, pigmented  
beeswax, aluminum  
96 × 28 × 28 in.

Drawing from the artist's intercultural romance, the work uses botanical materials native to both partners' homelands to root personal longing in shared heritage. Beneath the leaves, a pair of beeswax-cast feet peek out, hinting at how love and desire often exist at the edge of visibility.



*Wherein I Long to Love You Longer*

2024  
Assorted textiles, cotton rope, tempera,  
bandage clips, chalk pastel, oil pastel, acrylic  
86 × 81 × 28 in.

Referencing the body in fragments and repair, the work hints at intimacy marked by both rupture and resilience. Severed ropes suggest disconnection, while bandage clips and stitching point to a will to mend. In its doubled form, the diptych speaks to closeness strained but not broken.

## Andrius on Liu Shiming's *Wrestling* (1988):



*Wrestling*

1988  
Bronze  
14 1/8 × 11 × 13 in.

Liu Shiming's *Wrestling* (1988) resonates with me not only for its formal beauty but for its deeper meditation on connection forged through struggle. The two entangled figures, simultaneously at odds and in union, evoke the tension between distance and closeness that I explore in my own practice. Where Liu draws from the ancient Chinese tradition of wrestling to express the dualities of human experience (rivalry and tenderness, confrontation and communion), I approach intimacy through the lens of queerness, using mixed-media assemblage to articulate the contradictions of desire—namely, its capacity to both bond and estrange.

In my sculptures and paintings, doubles become propositions for imperfect but enduring unions. I repurpose domestic

objects and reclaimed textiles to suggest couplings marked by gaps in age, geography, time, or culture. In other words, I use abstraction and doubling to honor pairings shaped by the very tensions they seek to overcome. Much like the wrestlers in this sculpture, the implied figures in my work are locked in a kind of intimate choreography, where closeness emerges not despite difference but through it. There is a kind of erotic optimism in that: the belief that friction can be generative, that distance can be bridged through the rigorous muscle memory of longing. In this light, *Wrestling* and my own artworks marry the ache of separation and the pleasure of nearness.



# Juliette Roy Batanero

BAH '25, LABA Valencia, Spain; Liu Shiming Scholar '25



*Stills from Abrazo*

2023  
Epson Enhanced Matte  
8 × 12 in.

Two figures cling to one another—not only in affection, but in fear of separation. Their embrace becomes a refuge, expressing vulnerability, need, and the desire to stay close in a world that threatens to pull them apart. In this simple act, intimacy is distilled to its most essential form: to hold, and to be held.



## Juliette on Liu Shiming's *In Love* (1983):



*In Love*

1983  
Bronze  
3 1/4 × 3 1/8 × 2 1/2 in.

The gaze and body language of the model—or models—I am portraying are the most important elements for me. I often start with unconventional poses or explore more unusual movements, inspired by works like Liu Shiming's *In Love* (1983).

I enjoy getting abstract and metaphorical through framing and cropping, focusing on the details that matter most to me in both photography and video. For example, a close-up of two models' fingers almost touching, or capturing the intensity and curiosity in their gaze as they look out at the world they inhabit.

I love working with photography, but I never rule out exploring different formats. I enjoy blending the techniques I already know with new ones—just as Liu Shiming did in

his work by combining various sculptural techniques. For me, this means mixing still images to create an art video or developing something more tangible, like a photo book.

# Samuel Horgan

MFA '26, University of Georgia, USA; Liu Shiming Scholar '24



*Endoscopic Palace*

2024  
1/48 mixed media model with  
endoscopic cameras  
36 × 24 × 24 in.

*Endoscope Palace* draws parallels between the human body and built environments, likening the endoscopic probe to a tool that navigates both internal organs and underground systems. Through scaled models, video, and drawing, the work maps a shared anatomy of pipes, passages, and hidden voids. What begins as examination becomes excavation, revealing how bodies and cities alike hold buried histories, vulnerable architectures, and the potential for rupture.

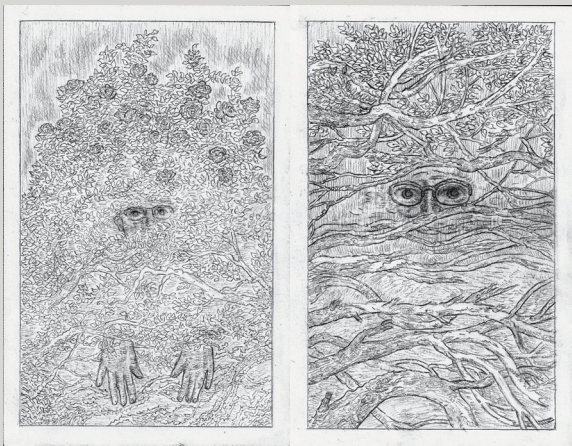


*Glass Block Window Primal Scene*

2024  
1/48 mixed media scale model with  
video monitor  
50 × 12 × 12 in.

Through a personal excavation of memory and place, the piece entwines subterranean space with formative experiences of intimacy, discovery, and transgression. The basement becomes both physical site and psychic terrain where desire is glimpsed, buried, and unearthed. What begins as recollection becomes a meditation on how place, history, and the unseen shape experience.



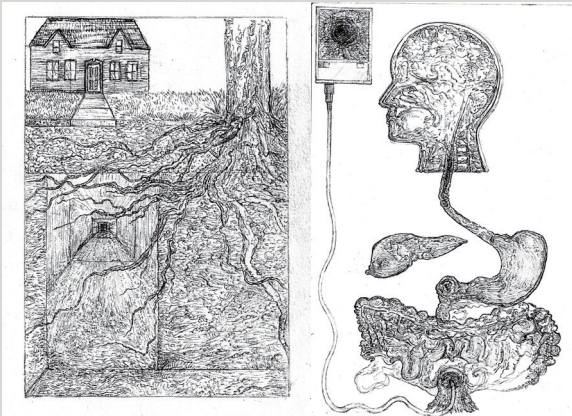


Left:  
*Untitled excerpt from Thunder Perfect Mind*

2025  
Mechanical pencil on paper  
8 × 5.5 in.

Right:  
*Untitled excerpt from Thunder Perfect Mind*

2025  
Mechanical pencil on paper  
8 × 5.5 in.



Left:  
*Basement Cross Section*

2024  
Mechanical pencil on paper  
8 × 5.5 in.

Right:  
*Endoscope Cross Section*

2024  
Mechanical pencil on paper  
8 × 5.5 in.

## Samuel on Liu Shiming's *Educated Youth Janitor* (1981):



*Educated Youth Janitor*

1981  
Ceramic  
8 1/4 × 3 1/4 × 3 1/4 in.

I like art about janitors because for many years I was a janitor. Growing up in the labor culture of the industrial Northeast, it was taken for granted that manual work itself was an intellectual pursuit. Working has always been the germ of my politics, and that of my union forebears in the USW, AA, and IWW. So when I look at *Educated Youth Janitor* (1981), I have a feeling of kinship and solidarity. Liu Shiming has imparted the figure with the type of dignity that she deserves, representing the janitor as a vital subject and her task as a site of recognition. The subtlety of her gesture, the quality of the ceramic surface, gives the depiction a manner of warmth. The soft curves of broom and shoulder belie the solidity of her substance, the character that is drawn from the clay. The artist's hand has rendered the worker's hand with respect. I think this is the consideration that makes it such a compelling figurative work.

# Body and Displacement

Migration shapes how we move through the world and understand who we are, with the body as the site where these experiences are felt and negotiated. These works reflect on what it means to carry memory, adapt across cultures, and search for belonging in unfamiliar places.



# JOHANNA

MFA '24, Columbia University, USA; Liu Shiming Scholar '24



*Foundation*

2025

*"The quick brown fox  
jumped over the  
lazy dog"*

2025

silkscreen, acrylic,  
pencil, inkjet, and  
silver leaf on wooden  
blocks  
16 x 44 x 2 in.  
AP

Silkscreened images of families crossing barriers and border walls in the United States and Hungary stretch across a constructed wall of wooden blocks. Stars painted across the surface echo those on the US and EU flags, evoking both division and the hope of unity. A cut-out fox, drawn from the familiar pangram "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog," recalls a tool used in language learning and typing practice—an early exercise in adapting to new systems of communication. As such, the fox becomes a symbol of agility, resilience, and cultural adjustment. Together, these elements reflect on the experience of migration: leaving one place behind, navigating barriers, and adjusting to new languages and norms while holding on to memory and the idea of home.



## JOHANNA on Liu Shiming's *Worship* (1980):



*Worship*

1980  
Bronze  
4 1/4 × 21 1/2 × 7 3/8 in.

Liu Shiming's *Worship* (1980) serves as a powerful exploration of spiritual devotion, where the figure's body—reduced to flowing lines—becomes a symbol of surrender and transcendence. The abstract form invites reflection on physical endurance and the quiet humility inherent in spiritual practice. This theme of transformation through devotion connects deeply with my own artistic practice: an exploration of the human condition that emphasizes both spiritual surrender and the complexities of self-awareness and transformation.

In my work *Pietra 1* (2025), the mirror, partially cracked and smeared with paint, offers a metaphor for the fractured nature of identity and perception. The viewer's reflection is interrupted, suggesting that self-understanding is never fully complete or unambiguous. Like *Worship*, this work confronts the viewer with the idea that identity—whether personal or spiritual—is a dynamic and evolving process. The broken mirror, with its layers of paint, speaks to the ways experiences and time shape and distort our understanding of the self.

As for *Foundation* (2025) and "*The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog*," (2025) which features wooden blocks silkscreened with images of refugees, these works further extend the conversation about layered histories,

transformations, endurance, and humility. The blocks, combined with elements of storytelling, allude to the fragmented nature of human experience and memory—much like the smooth yet angular carving of the body in *Worship*, which suggests both physical strain and spiritual transcendence. The fox, poised in mid-air, symbolizes freedom and change, connecting to the fluidity of form in Shiming's work and suggesting that spiritual and personal growth is an ongoing journey.

In addition, the use of wood serves as a unifying material across these works, grounding themes of embodiment, resistance, and reflection. Liu's carved figure expresses spiritual humility through flowing, organic form. The block wall transforms wood into a political surface, layering imagery and critique. In the mirror piece, wood anchors fractured reflections and painterly marks, evoking rupture and repair. In each, wood is more than medium—it's meaning.

Delving into the complexities of human experience—surrender, introspection, transformation, and the continuous evolution of identity—I try to communicate the idea that both physical and spiritual states are in constant flux, a notion vividly portrayed in the abstract form of *Worship*.

# Lite Zhang

MFA '24, Maryland Institute College of Art, USA



*Bags in the Room  
(coming home)*

2023  
Dunnage bag  
47 x 24 in. or 94 x 47  
in. each

Used to fill gaps and absorb pressure during transport, dunnage bags become a metaphor for the artist's experience of living between China and the United States. Leaning against the walls, they echo a state of in-betweenness: never fully grounded, yet constantly bearing the weight of what surrounds them. The artist sees himself in these objects, shaped by cultural tension yet defined by neither place.

Their fragile material and inflated form speak to the quiet strain of navigating unfamiliar ground, maintaining form while adjusting to surrounding pressures.

## Lite on Liu Shiming's *Re-education* (1983):



*Re-education*

1983  
Bronze  
5 5/8 × 4 5/8 × 2 1/2 in.

The international landscape has always been turbulent, an endless tension that I find both fascinating and profoundly sorrowful. As someone who moves frequently between China and the United States, I often think about what it means to exist in an in-between space: not fully settled, not entirely free. This liminal state embodies both strength and fragility, purpose and impermanence.

This sense of suspended belonging echoes Liu Shiming's *Re-Education* (1983), which captures the quiet tension between an intellectual and a farmer during China's re-education movement. His bronze figures are bound together in proximity, shaped by ideology and historical circumstance. In my own installation, though abstract and materially soft, I aim to construct a similar space of confrontation—one that asks viewers to navigate invisible systems and the discomfort of being caught between places.

Despite the differences in our historical contexts—one marked by internal political reform, the other by global cultural negotiation—we share a common urgency: to use art as a record of the individual navigating structures larger than themselves. I see an unexpected parallel between re-education and studying abroad; both are forms of ideological reconditioning, framed as learning but shaped by systems of power.

Through this exhibition, I hope to bring our artistic voices into dialogue—bridging eras and ideologies within the gallery space. Between these soft barriers, the historical and the contemporary momentarily converge, asking not how we arrive but what it takes to stay whole along the way.

# Body as Medium

The body—whether as reflection, voice, physical trace, or metaphorical presence—becomes the material through which these works are made and experienced. It is approached as a means of making, essential to the very act of expression.



# Jorė Gritėnaite

BFA '24, MFA '26, Zürich University of the Arts, Switzerland;  
Liu Shiming Scholar '25

Photographer: Nolan Lucidi



## *Rare Cravings*

2025  
Sound composition  
7 minutes

The artist uses her own voice as both instrument and material, composing sound works from fragments of original and found text assembled into performative scores. Language becomes tactile, revealing shifting meanings and emotional textures.

## *The Riddle of the Rider*

2025  
Sound composition  
10 minutes

These compositions invite the listener to engage with sound as a form of embodied experience, where presence emerges through the act of listening.



## Joré on Liu Shiming's *Mother Returns* (1990):



*Mother Returns*

1990  
Ceramic  
6 7/8 × 5 × 4 3/8 in.

Madonna and Child is one of the most present and symbolically charged images for me—one that speaks beyond its religious connotations. The memory of my mother's pregnancies, of witnessing birth and breastfeeding, first introduced me to the mystery and power of the body. These experiences sparked both respect and curiosity about my own sexuality, along with a sense of possibility—the promise that I, too, might one day serve as a portal to life. To this day, it remains a symbol of what human bodies are capable of.

From an early age, the concepts, narratives, and experiences surrounding motherhood, girlhood, and womanhood have been central to both my personal perspective and my artistic practice. One of the earliest works I vividly remember making, as a child in a painting class, was of the Virgin and Child. I still recall carefully working on the golden halos for the mother and baby.

Later, themes of motherhood and the idea of maternal love were reflected in my poetry and sound works. Liu Shiming's *Mother Returns* (1990) reminds me of the same symbolic weight, though the work differs greatly from the traditional image.

It conveys an intimate feeling of affection between mother and child, free from the idealized distance often found in religious representations. Like many of Liu's works, *Mother Returns* draws inspiration from everyday life, something that is very familiar to my artistic practice.

This reimagining of mother and child offers a more human, relatable vision of the maternal image. It resonates with me, as my own work often reflects on human relationships, intimacy, and the complexities of womanhood in the contemporary world—of which motherhood is just one possible experience and expression.

# JOHANNA

MFA '24, Columbia University, USA; Liu Shiming Scholar '24



*Pietra 1*

2025

Oil and stone on  
mirror-mounted  
wood panel  
25 × 12 × 1 in.

This work explores fragmentation, perception, and the passage of time. One mirror is chipped, the other shattered and painted, pairing clarity with disruption. A stone embedded in the surface breaks into the space of reflection, acting at once as a point of intrusion and a grounding presence. Cracks spread from this impact, recording an event that turns destruction into composition. Reflection draws the viewer in, dissolving the boundary between surface and image. Imperfection becomes a trace of time and force, suggesting that brokenness can give rise to new forms of beauty and meaning.

# Larissa McPherson

MFA '26, University of Georgia, USA



*Left: Specimen XIV*

2025  
Bone, Biodegradable PLA,  
Found Plastic, Found Carpet  
Foam, Found Netting, Acrylic  
Spray Paint, Brass  
7 x 3.5 x 2 in.



*Right: Specimen XII*

2025  
Bone, Biodegradable PLA,  
Found Plastic, Acrylic Spray  
Paint, Brass  
8 x 3 x 4 in.

Plastic and bone intertwine in the *Specimen* series, where the artist explores how environmental harm inscribes itself on animal bodies. Using found materials and 3D printing, the sculptures witness a biology reshaped by human impact, where synthetic matter binds to bone, coats surfaces, and infiltrates organic forms, imagining a future in which life and plastic are inseparable.



Larissa on Liu Shiming's *Cutting Through Mountains to Bring in Water* (1958):



*Cutting Through  
Mountains to Bring  
in Water*

1958  
Bronze  
34 × 37 1/2 × 18 in.

*Cutting Through Mountains to Bring in Water* (1958) symbolizes the reshaping of nature for survival and reflects the romanticism in humanity's desire to conquer it. This theme resonates with my work and the ongoing impact of human ingenuity on the environment. As technology advances, often in ways that reduce our dependence on nature, it also generates significant waste. Plastic, for example, represents a transformation of natural materials: fossils become fossil fuels, which are then used to produce many types of synthetic materials.

As we romanticize consumerism and "advancements," we increasingly reshape the natural world and the very structure of our planet. My work speculates on how these plastics might alter the structure of natural materials themselves, exploring themes similar to those in Liu's sculpture: the conquest and transformation of nature.

# Jordan Winiski

MFA '26, University of Georgia, USA



*Magnolia Self-Portrait*

2023  
Ceramics  
22 x 8 x 8 in.

Porcelain and stoneware come together in this sculptural self-portrait, where magnolia blooms rise from a fractured surface. The flowers recall the artist's childhood in South Carolina and cultural roots in China, linking memory to place through botanical form. Shifts in tone and glaze texture reward close looking, reflecting a process of self-exploration. The vessel becomes both a container and a portrait, shaped by layers of identity and heritage.



Jordan on Liu Shiming's *Human-shaped Jar* (2002):



*Human-shaped Jar*

2002  
Ceramic  
13 3/8 × 6 3/4 × 5 3/4 in.

I am drawn to this piece because of the fun, playful sense it gives me. Turning the arms into handles morphs the body and vessel into one visual form that is open to interpretation by the viewer.

The ruffles along the waist remind me of a twirled skirt in motion or doughnuts I used to eat as a kid. The hair also has that scalloped, poofy action. I enjoy that the

face is perpendicular to the body, facing upward, which adds a curious gaze, like a child looking up at the sky.

# The Gendered Body

Body emerges as a site shaped by expectation and redefined through resistance. Social codes, gender roles, and inherited ideals create tension between how bodies are perceived and how they are lived. Symbols and objects bound to identity are reimagined, transforming familiar narratives to challenge norms and expand meaning.

# Juliette Roy Batanero

BAH '25, LABA Valencia, Spain; Liu Shiming Scholar '25



Stills from *Zazel – Shot from a Gun*

2023  
Single-channel video  
1 minute 55 seconds

This video captures a rehearsal of choreographer Miriam Engel's dance work based on the life of Rosa Matilda Richter, the first woman to be shot from a cannon in a 19th-century circus. The piece reflects on how women's bodies have been subjected to extremes for entertainment while honoring Richter's daring act, which transformed risk into autonomy, even as it was consumed as spectacle.



## Juliette on Liu Shiming's *Female Model (Sitting)* (1983):



*Female Model (Sitting)*

1983  
Bronze  
8 × 5 1/2 × 5 1/2 in.

I was deeply drawn to Liu Shiming's female figures and the way he portrayed them, almost all of them in resting poses.

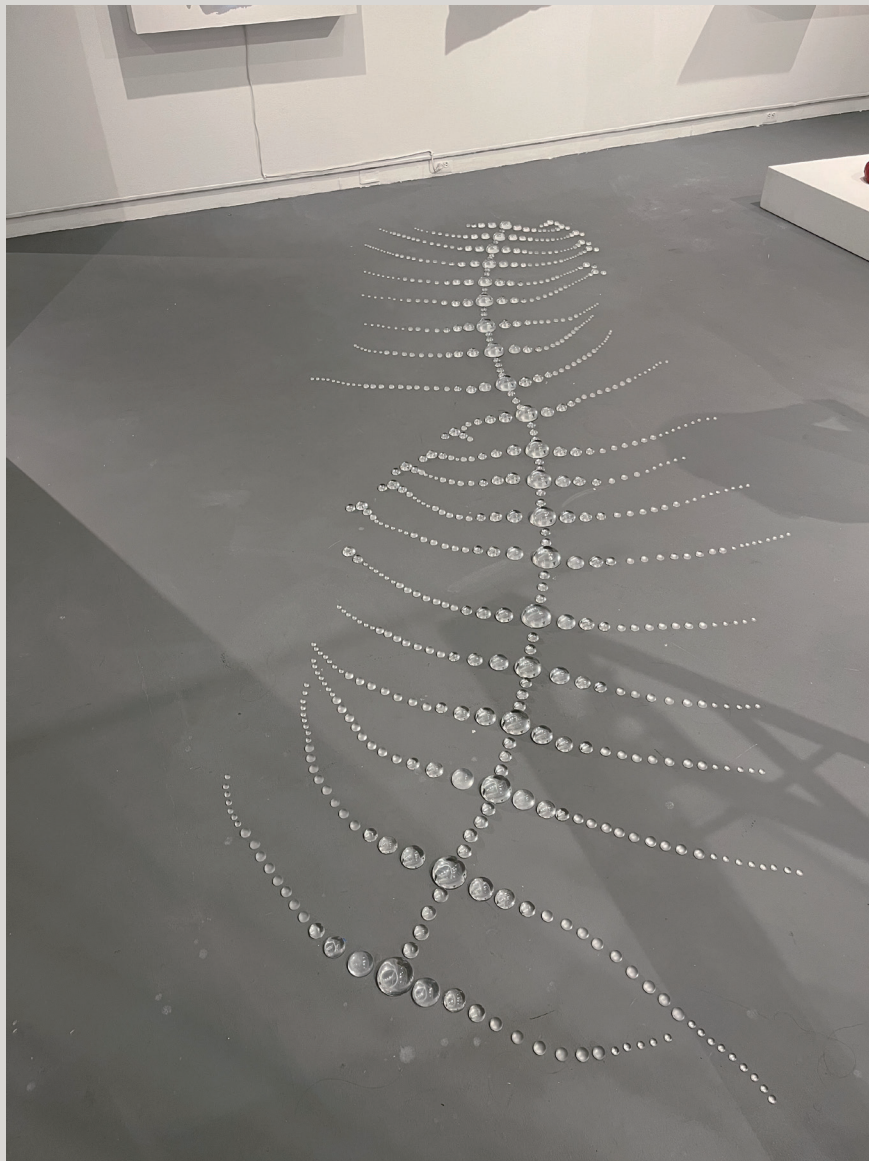
What I truly appreciated was his mastery in capturing each figure as she is. One sculpture in particular—*Female Model (Sitting)* (1983)—stood out to me. She's simply sitting, not doing anything specific, yet I was captivated by the strength and the gaze he conveyed through her.

In my own work, I love to explore portraiture—but not traditional portraits. What I mean is that I begin by getting to know the personality of the person I am portraying. Then I start taking photos based on the emotion they transmit to me.

Like Liu, I aim to express emotion through movement, translating it into a specific expression unique to each person.

# Yiting Li

MFA '25, Maryland Institute College of Art, USA



*Spine*

2025  
Resin  
96 x 48 in.

Arranged across the floor, the semi-circular forms invite viewers into a shifting encounter, where reflections surface and fade. The work draws on the artist's mother's insistence that one must have the spine to live their own life, a lesson passed on in defiance of patriarchal expectations in China. Rather than depicting a literal body, *Spine* gives shape to a legacy of resilience, where strength resides not only in the flesh but also in values carried forward through acts of refusal and endurance.

## Yiting on Liu Shiming's *Mother Returns* (1993):



*Mother Returns*

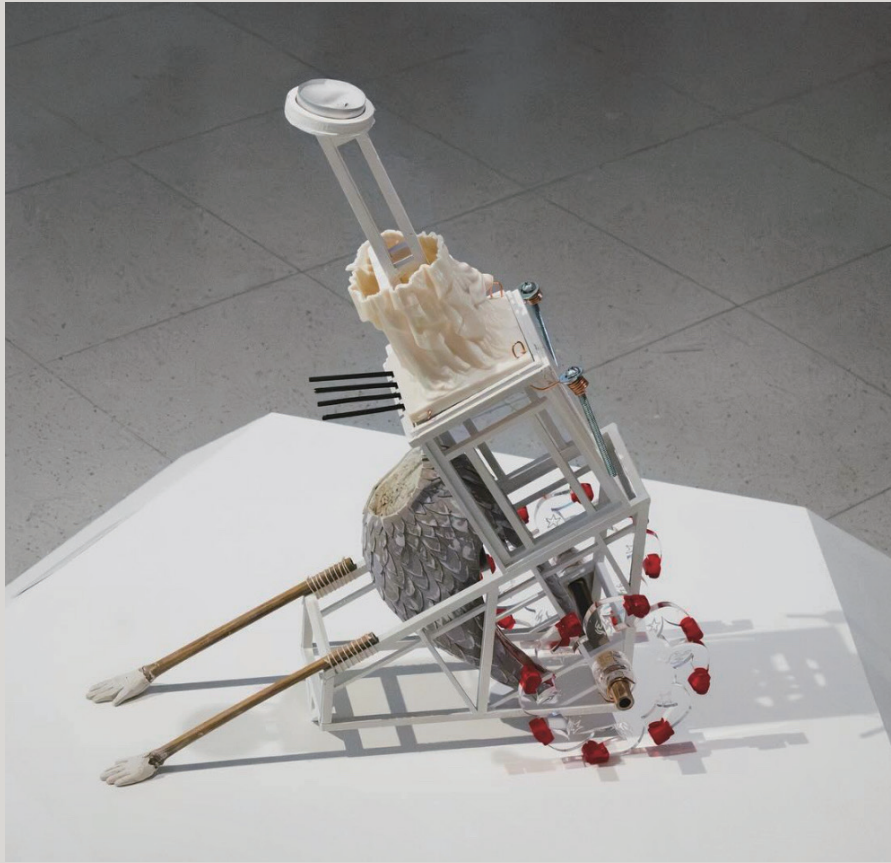
1993  
Bronze  
13 × 4 1/4 × 3 3/8 in.

Liu Shiming's *Mother Returns* (1993) captures a moment of suspended transformation. The mother's gesture evokes the body's expressive potential not through drama, but through quiet form and tension. As an artist working with textiles, polymers, and time-sensitive materials, I treat the body not only as a subject but as a vessel that stores emotional residue and cultural entanglements. My earlier background in fashion taught me to work with the body as a site of structure and meaning—a foundation that has since evolved into a sculptural process where materials become collaborators rather than tools. I approach them as active agents, capable

of remembering, resisting, and decaying. In my practice, the body becomes a vessel of cultural memory and emotional inheritance. Liu's attention to tactile form and interior life affirms my belief that the body and the mediums that shape it hold a language of care. His work reminds me that gesture and material can carry what words cannot.

# Jonathan Wenur

BFA '24, Rutgers University; Liu Shiming Scholar '23



*Hard Fire Chariot*

2024

Wood, bamboo, 3D print,  
acrylic, nail, lacquer,  
incense, string, copper wire,  
bolts, washers, foam, rice,  
clay, candle  
20 x 16 x 7 in.

The war chariot becomes a platform where identity, power, and gender collide. Symbols associated with masculinity and conquest are reclaimed and reimagined through a queer and Asian lens. A McQueen heel, once rooted in feminine spectacle, now stands in for the rider, transforming a historic tool of war into a vehicle of defiance. Nationalist imagery, such as the Statue of Liberty, merges with personal and cultural signifiers, confronting how gender roles and inherited myths shape the objects and symbols around us.



## Jonathan on Liu Shiming's *Man with a Boat and Cormorants* (1986):



*Man with a Boat and Cormorants*

1986

Bronze

18 1/2 x 10 1/2 x 11 1/2 in.

The vertical transition in its rendering, from the abstracted, fused legs to a complete face, speaks to both Liu Shiming's mastery of the craft and how he processes memory. I often try to use my own memories as a primary reference, as it opens me up to more unique sensibilities, and then I question their distance from the objective moment. But Liu carves and shapes this figure in an unapologetic manner. Given the permanence of the material, I see that he likes to gesture toward the informality of things, yet he operates and shifts freely on a spectrum of figurative representation. I appreciate how he moves between a sort of serious idealism and the ordinary. Here, he captures an honest moment of labor,

but you can see he treats it with the same sense of belonging as men who fly or move mountains. I often see myself leaning toward the dramatic, often pulling from idealized representations of people and objects, which then manifest in constructions that speak with a sense of urgency. This idealism is also why I have a tendency to make all my sculptures tilt, as if they are heading somewhere. That's probably why I resonate with this sculpture: it has a sincere approach to representation that I'd like to return to someday.

# Sachigusa Yasuda

MFA '23, Queens College, CUNY, USA; Liu Shiming Scholar '23



*Fragmentation #3*

2024

Plaster, scraps of old clothes, found textile, thread, embroidery thread, yarn  
22 × 14 × 58 in.

Cast body parts, fabric scraps, and tangled threads are assembled into a sculptural form that speaks to the pressures women navigate in daily life. Drawing from memories of a mother's sewing and the labor of relatives in textile factories, the artist connects personal history to broader systems of gendered labor. Fabric, often linked to domesticity and care, becomes a stand-in for the body itself, frayed, burdened, resilient, marking the quiet strength embedded in overlooked forms of work.



*Footsteps in the Garden of Life and Death*

2025

Scraps of old clothes, found textile, cheesecloth, embroidery thread, thread, canvas  
41 × 67 in.

*Footsteps in the Garden of Life and Death* uses layered textiles and embroidery to reinterpret Botticelli's *Primavera*. Drawing on the myth of Flora—who steps over the footprints of her assailant, transforming them into flowers—the artist replaces those blossoms with embroidered herbs historically associated with women's health. The piece invokes embodied knowledge passed down through generations, using stitchwork to affirm the body as a site of healing and resistance. By blending embroidery and painting, the work challenges the gendered divide between fine art and craft, elevating domestic materials and techniques often dismissed in art history.

## Sachigusa on Liu Shiming's *Female Farmer Selling DVDs* (2004):



*Female Farmer Selling DVDs*

2004  
Bronze  
8 1/4 x 3 1/8 x 2 1/2 in.

When I saw Liu Shiming's sculptures, they were smaller than I had imagined, and I felt an urge to embrace them with both hands. The surfaces of the sculptures still showed traces of being shaped by hand, and I sensed a strong connection between the material and the sculptor's body, conveying a sense of deep emotion.

The woman depicted in *Female Farmer Selling DVDs* (2004) blend into the everyday landscape and, despite their presence, often go unrecognized. Liu Shiming approached these women with compassion, sincerity, and an absence of prejudice, preserving them in the form of sculptures. My work critically examines the assumptions we hold in our daily lives.

Liu's concept of visually preserving the memories of nameless women aligns with the purpose of my work. This experience also allowed me to reexamine my approach to art and observe Liu's creative process.

# Artist Biographies



# Liu Shiming

Liu Shiming is a revered Chinese artist whose works have had a distinct impact on the course of modern Chinese sculpture. Born in Tianjin in 1926, Liu attended the prestigious Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) in Beijing where he was part of the first generation of sculptors trained by the People's Republic of China to study both traditional Chinese art and French modernist principles. Receiving early recognition for his work, Liu's student project, *Measuring Land* (1949), was one of the first works exhibited abroad following the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

Liu Shiming led a quietly remarkable life. After graduating from CAFA with honors, Liu worked on monumental and heroic sculptures, gaining increasing recognition for his creativity and vision. Yet, just ten years after graduation, he made a radical change. Leaving fame and privilege behind, he moved to the countryside of Henan and Hebei provinces where he lived simply in small towns and villages. Here he observed and engaged with local people, following their customs and learning their folklore. It was during this period that he developed and honed his signature humanist style, honoring his cultural heritage while at the same time adapting more modern influences.

After returning to Beijing in 1975, he worked at the National Museum of Chinese History where he mastered clay and bronze reproduction and restoration techniques, deepening his knowledge and enhancing his love and respect for traditional Chinese art. Handling these ancient sculptures and relics significantly influenced his philosophy on art, supporting his belief in the importance of retaining our heritage while also being alive to the contemporary world. In 1980 he returned to work at CAFA, where he managed a small electric kiln, providing him with enormous freedom to create his unique clay works. But it wasn't until 1994 when he became an inaugural member of The Chinese Sculpture Institute that he began to exhibit his sculpture; he received including solo exhibitions at such major museums as the National Art Museum in Beijing and the Henan Art Museum.

Liu Shiming continued to create and exhibit his sculpture in China until his death in 2010. Less than decade later, Liu's sculpture began to be shown outside of China, appearing in public spaces and special exhibitions, notably at the Oculus in New York City and the Asian Cultural Center in Washington DC. More recently, he has shown in university galleries and museums throughout the US and Canada, with exhibitions planned for Europe in the next year. His works are in the permanent collections of the American University in Cairo, Egypt; Czech National Museum in Prague; Georgia State University, Atlanta; Henan Art Museum, Zhengzhou, China; Macaulay Honors College in New York City; and the National Art Museum of China and the National Museum of Chinese History in Beijing.

The Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing established the Liu Shiming Sculpture Museum in 2018, honoring his legacy and the historical significance of his works. In the Spring of 2024 The Liu Shiming Art Gallery opened in midtown Manhattan, dedicated to presenting the artist's work through both thematic and chronological exhibitions, and creating dialogue with other artists who work in the same or similar traditions.

# Andrius Alvarez-Backus

Andrius Alvarez-Backus (b. 1999, USA) is an interdisciplinary artist working across sculpture, drawing, and painting. Through the transformation of everyday objects, he amplifies their poetic connotations to evoke personal allegories of intimacy, embodiment, and memory. Using mixed-media assemblage, his practice interrogates how desire bridges beauty and abjection, and how the semiotics of materials convey cultural meanings.

He received his BFA from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art (2023) and his MFA from Columbia University (2025). His work has been shown internationally at the Wallach Art Gallery, Fragment Gallery, SK Gallery, Plato Gallery, Chelsea Walls, Black Brick Project, the Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition, and The Blanc, among others.

His first museum solo exhibition, *Desastre!*, was on view at the Fitchburg Art Museum from June through August 2023, where his work is also included in the permanent collection. Recent honors include the Richard Lewis Bloch Memorial Prize, the Martin A. Rothenberg Travel Fellowship, the D'Arcy Hayman Scholarship, and the Quinta Carolina Scholarship. He was the inaugural Nicholas Dahl Visiting Artist at the Provincetown Art Association & Museum in 2025 and will be an artist-in-residence at Smack Mellon from 2025 to 2026.

Alvarez-Backus currently serves as the Communications Manager at Queer|Art, the New York City-based nonprofit empowering LGBTQ+ artists across generations and disciplines.

# Juliette Roy Batanero

Juliette Roy Batanero (b. 2003, Spain) is a multidisciplinary artist raised in La Iglesuela del Tiétar, Spain, where she was encouraged early on to nurture her creativity across crafts, music, performance, and film. At sixteen, she received her first digital camera, marking the beginning of her ongoing engagement with photography and video.

She is completing a BAH in Photography & Video at LABA Valencia, where she has developed a distinctive approach blending conceptual and emotional depth. During her studies, she curated exhibitions, taught editing software, and worked closely with Cristina Casanova.

In 2025, she received a Liu Shiming Art Foundation scholarship to produce an analog photography photobook under the guidance of Vincent Urbani, with her work featured in *Express Bodies* at the Liu Shiming Art Gallery.

Juliette's practice explores human intimacy and the natural world, inviting viewers to reflect on narrative, emotion, and connection without preconceptions, while demonstrating her commitment to research, experimentation, and personal growth.

# Jorė Gritėnaite

Jorė Gritėnaite (b. 2001, Lithuania) is a Lithuanian artist based in Zürich. In 2024, she graduated with a BA in Fine Arts from the Zürich University of the Arts. She is currently pursuing an MA in Fine Arts at the same institution, along with a minor in Sound: Auditory Cultures and Sonic Arts. Her work has been exhibited in Lithuania, Switzerland, and Austria. In her artistic practice, Gritėnaite composes sound pieces based on both original and found text, using her own voice as a core medium. It is used as an instrument to explore the invasive and intimate qualities of sound.

# Samuel Horgan

Samuel Horgan (b. 1998, USA) is a writer and interdisciplinary artist from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and an MFA candidate at the University of Georgia (MFA '26). He has worked as a night-shift janitor, construction worker, apprentice private investigator, transient, and dropout novice in the priesthood. A childhood accident left him blind in one eye.

The primary methodology of his work involves collating different, often disparate, discourses into multimedia apparatuses that aim to articulate theory, conjecture, and speculative fiction by plastic means. His research interests include scale models, puppetry, theology, and the libidinal economy of technology.

# JOHANNA

JOHANNA (b. 1992, USA) is an interdisciplinary artist based in New York. Through a combination of photomechanical and traditional processes, she investigates the complex relationship between her cultural identities, that of a Latin American raised in suburban "white" America.

*"A feeling of belonging in neither place"*

Autobiographical in nature, her work references themes of education, identity, labor, politics, and time. She received a MFA from Columbia University and a BFA in Printmaking from SUNY Purchase College.

# Yiting Li

Yiting Li (b. 1999, China) is a multidisciplinary artist based in the U.S. She received her BFA in Fashion Design from Parsons and her MFA in Sculpture from MICA. Her practice explores memory, material transformation, and the diasporic body through experimental processes. Driven by her Cantonese heritage and background in fashion, she transforms tactile materials such as resin and textiles into ethereal forms. Her recent work draws on post-minimalist aesthetics and traditions within Chinese vernacular culture to explore the gendered body.

# Larissa McPherson

Larissa McPherson (b. 1999, USA) is a metalsmith and jewelry artist from Adairsville, GA. She is currently pursuing an MFA in Jewelry and Metalsmithing at the University of Georgia's Lamar Dodd School of Art. Larissa earned a B.S. in Psychology with a minor in Studio Art from the University of West Georgia. After studying metalsmithing with a former professor and joining the Metal Arts Guild of Georgia in early 2022, she began working in the field full-time.

# Jonathan Wenur

Jonathan Wenur (b. 1999, USA) is a multidisciplinary artist working in sculpture, video, installation, and craft. Drawing on Indonesia's history with the West, his practice engages architecture, iconography, and archival material to navigate geopolitical hierarchies and the aesthetics of power.

His recent work explores the concept of *lumbung*—the Indonesian communal rice barn—as both material and metaphor, addressing themes of sustainability, collective resource-sharing, and protection. He reimagines *lumbung* as anthropomorphized structures that house anatomical forms, invoking labor, resistance, and diasporic histories. Using elements such as woven baskets filled with rice, bamboo construction, and references to remittance systems, Wenur's sculptures critique extraction economies while proposing models of collective care and defense.

# Jordan Winiski

Jordan Winiski (b. 1999, China) is a third-year Master of Fine Arts student in Ceramics at the University of Georgia. She is from Greenville, SC, where she taught at local art centers and graduated from Furman University with degrees in Studio Art and Sustainability Science. She is passionate about teaching and values spending time outdoors. She enjoys sketching and photographing in nature to generate imagery and inspiration for her ceramic work. Jordan has completed residencies in Georgia and Massachusetts, has worked as a studio assistant for a local potter in Athens, GA, and is currently the Instructor of Record for Introduction to Ceramics at UGA.



# Sachigusa Yasuda

Sachigusa Yasuda (b. 1968, Japan) is a New York-based visual artist. She graduated from the Social Practice program at Queens College in 2023 and also collaborates on projects in both New York and Japan. She has exhibited at the California Museum of Photography, The Harold B. Lemmerman Gallery, The Blanc, Art Chicago, ISCP, 21\_21 Design Sight (Japan), Sezon Museum of Modern Art (Japan), The National Art Center (Japan), the Fukushima Museum (Japan), and more.

She is the recipient of grants from the Chen Family/Crystal Windows Scholarships, the Liu Shiming Art Foundation, Social Practice CUNY Fellowships, and the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan.

Her work has been published in *Hyperallergic*, *Frieze*, *Brooklyn Rail*, *Art in America*, *Art in Asia*, *DAMN Magazine*, *The Guardian*, *The Huffington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and more.

# Lite Zhang

Lite Zhang (b. 1998, China) is a Los Angeles- and Baltimore-based interdisciplinary sculptor whose practice explores spatial dynamics, materiality, and audience interaction. Through installations that incorporate found objects, sound, and tactile elements, Zhang creates multisensory environments that examine identity, memory, and social constructs.

He holds an MFA in Sculpture from the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) and is an alumnus of the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. His work has been exhibited at VisArts, Current Space, AREA 405, and SPCE Contemporary. In 2023, his solo exhibition *Same Roots* 同根生 at Pinkard Gallery reflected on diasporic belonging through symbolic material exploration.

Zhang has worked as studio manager for artist Alexandra Grant in Los Angeles and served in multiple academic roles at MICA. His cross-cultural experience and institutional engagements inform a practice that bridges personal narrative with collective space-making.

He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Amalie Rothschild '34 Rinehart Award and the 21st Annual Leadership Award. Zhang's work aims to foster sensory, conceptual, and communal resonance through experimental sculptural language.

# LIU SHI-MING ART FOUNDATION

# About Liu Shiming Art Foundation:

Established in 2021, the Liu Shiming Art Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that supports future generations of artists and art historians, encourages the creation of art and multicultural understanding, and shares the artistic legacy of acclaimed Chinese sculptor Liu Shiming (1926–2010) with a broader, global public through exhibitions, publications, and symposia.

## About Liu Shiming Scholarships:

The Foundation partners with educational institutions worldwide to award scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students interested in art, art history, and multicultural studies. Grants from the Liu Shiming Art Foundation include one-time, multi-year, and endowment funds that allow universities to designate a Liu Shiming Scholar and provide them with a \$3,000 scholarship (or an equivalent amount in local currency).

So far, the Foundation has partnered with 47 colleges and universities in 21 countries spread across five continents to create 50 annual Liu Shiming Scholars. We continue to seek out new partnerships with academic institutions demonstrating a strong commitment to fine arts, art history and multicultural study.

## CURRENT LIST OF LIU SHIMING SCHOLARSHIP PARTNERS

### NORTH AMERICA

Arizona State University\* – Phoenix, AZ, U.S.  
Bowdoin College – Brunswick, ME, U.S.  
Columbia University Department of Art History & Archaeology – New York, NY, U.S.  
Columbia University Columbia University School of the Arts – New York, NY, U.S.  
Georgia State University\* – Atlanta, GA, U.S.  
Macaulay Honors College (CUNY)\* – New York, NY, U.S.  
Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) – Baltimore, MD, U.S.  
New York Academy of Art – New York, NY, U.S.  
Queens College (CUNY)\* – Queens, NY, U.S.  
Queen's University\* – Kingston, ON, Canada  
Rutgers University Mason Gross School of the Arts – New Brunswick, NJ, U.S.  
Rutgers University School of Arts and Sciences – New Brunswick, NJ, U.S.  
UCLA – Los Angeles, CA, U.S.  
University of Georgia\* – Athens, GA, U.S.  
University of Hawaii at Manoa – Honolulu, HI, U.S.  
University of Texas – Austin, TX, U.S.  
University of Nebraska\* – Lincoln, NE, U.S.  
University of Oregon – Eugene, OR, U.S.  
Western University\* – London, ON, Canada  
University of British Columbia – Vancouver, Canada  
University of Tennessee – Knoxville, TN, U.S.  
University of Cincinnati-Ohio, U.S.

### ASIA & OCEANIA

American University of Beirut – Beirut, Lebanon  
Bar-Ilan University – Ramat Gan, Israel  
Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design – Jerusalem, Israel  
Chinese University of Hong Kong – Hong Kong, China  
Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts – Singapore  
National University of Singapore – Singapore  
University of Sydney – Sydney, Australia  
University of Auckland – Auckland, New Zealand  
University of Melbourne – Melbourne, Australia  
New York University Abu Dhabi – Abu Dhabi, UAE

### AFRICA

American University in Cairo – Cairo, Egypt  
University of Nairobi – Nairobi, Kenya  
University of Bamenda – Cameroon (Through Open Dreams)  
University of Cape Coast – Ghana (Through Open Dreams)  
Kwame Nkrumah university of Science and Technology (KNUST) – Ghana (Through Open Dreams)  
Cape Peninsula University of Technology – South Africa (Through Open Dreams)  
Tshwane University of Technology – South Africa (Through Open Dreams)

### EUROPE

American University of Paris – Paris, France  
Marist University – Florence, Italy  
Royal College of Art – London, UK  
Zurich University of the Arts – Zurich, Switzerland  
Valencia School of Art, Design, and New Media – Valencia, Spain  
National College of Art and Design – Dublin, Ireland

\* indicates public exhibition of Liu Shiming's artworks at university affiliated museum or gallery



15 E 40th Street, 5th Floor  
New York, NY 10016  
11AM - 5PM (Monday - Friday)

LiuShiming  
*Art* Foundation

LiuShiming *Art* Gallery