

Metamorphosis: Beyond the Real. Searching for Victoria Lu – When Humans and AI Think Together, the Story Begins

Venue: Ca' Foscari Esposizioni, Venice (Dorsoduro 3246, 30123)

Dates: 9 May – 22 November 2026, from Monday to Saturday, from 10.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.

Opening: 7 May 2026

11.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m.: reserved for the press

From 6.00 p.m. onwards: open to the public

China & the Arts XIV Scrittoio della Biennale

Venue: Palazzo Badoer, Aula Tafuri, Università Iuav di Venezia

Date: 7 May 2026, 2.00 p.m.- 5.30 p.m.

Curated by: Francesca Castellani, Sen Fu, Angelo Maggi

<https://www.iuav.it/it/eventi/china-arts>

<https://it.pinterest.com/pin/199143614770313718>

Press Release

Metamorphosis: Beyond the Real. In Search of Victoria Lu – When Humans and AI Think Together, the Story Begins is a major research-based exhibition presented at **Ca' Foscari Esposizioni, Venice**, from **9 May to 22 November 2026**. Conceived as both a retrospective and an open curatorial inquiry, the exhibition traces more than fifty years of artistic, critical, and curatorial practice by **Victoria Lu**, while asking how human subjectivity, authorship, and cultural memory may be re-read in the age of artificial intelligence. More than a retrospective, the exhibition positions Victoria Lu as both a historical protagonist and an unfinished contemporary subject — one through whom the past, present, and future of curatorial thought may be reconsidered under the emerging conditions of AI.

Widely regarded as **one of Asia's first generation of women curators** and **one of the earliest Chinese pioneers of contemporary curatorial practice**, Victoria Lu occupies a foundational place in the history of Chinese-language contemporary art. The exhibition takes Lu not merely as an individual subject, but as a key witness to, and active agent in, the formation, transformation, and globalization of contemporary art in the Chinese-speaking world. In this sense, *In Search of Victoria Lu* is not simply the story of one life; it is an inquiry into the cultural, institutional, and intellectual conditions that have shaped half a century of artistic change across Asia and beyond.

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Fifty Years of a Forerunner: From Artistic Gift to the Formation of a Curatorial Paradigm

Victoria Lu (b. 1951) was born in Taipei into a distinguished Shanghai family steeped in literary and scholarly tradition. As reported by the artist, she began studying painting at the age of four and, at nine, entered the evening preparatory division of **National Taiwan Normal University**, where she was celebrated as the youngest university student of her time. At eleven, she entered the lineage of **Chang Dai-chien** as a later-generation disciple of the **Dǎfēngtáng** tradition. At thirteen, she held her first solo exhibition in Taipei. At seventeen, her one-meter-high, forty-meter-long handscroll *East–West Cross-Island Highway* was donated by **Chiang Fu-tsung**, the first director of the **National Palace Museum** in Taipei and entered the museum's collection. At twenty, she departed for the **Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Brussels**, before continuing her studies in the United States. In the late 1970s, she founded the exhibition space **Stage One Gallery** in Southern California, thereby inaugurating a curatorial career of far-reaching influence.

In the early 1980s, Victoria Lu translated the English term *curator* into Chinese as “策展人”, a formulation that would subsequently shape the terminology and discourse of curatorial practice across the Chinese-speaking art world. This intervention was not merely linguistic, but structural: it contributed to the formation of a curatorial vocabulary and institutional consciousness that would shape subsequent generations of Chinese-speaking contemporary art. Around the turn of the millennium, she returned first to Taipei, where she played a key role in promoting the founding of the **Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei**. She then moved to Shanghai, the city of her parents' origin, where she successively served as **Art Director of Bund 18 Art Center** and **Creative Director of MoCA Shanghai**. During this period, she proposed the theory of **Animamix**, anticipating both the global turn in visual culture and the emergence of **UrbArt**. She later participated in the establishment of the **Moon River Art Museum** in Beijing and subsequently served as **Creative Director of Today Art Museum**, continuing to advance the exchange between Eastern and Western cultures and the outward development of Asian contemporary art.

Over the past two decades, Victoria Lu has continued to expand the boundaries of curatorial practice through a series of significant projects and international platforms:

- 1998** | Married the art historian **Professor Fu Shen**
- 1999** | *Plural Perspectives*, National Art Museum of China, Beijing
- 2001** | Participated in the founding of the **Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei** and served on its first board of directors
- 2004** | Curated *Virtual Love*, an international Animamix exhibition at MOCA Taipei
- 2005** | Appointed **Art Director of Bund 18 Art Center**, Shanghai
- 2006–2007** | Served as **Creative Director of MoCA Shanghai** and launched the **Animamix Biennale**
- 2007–2008** | Participated in the establishment of **Moon River Contemporary Art Museum**, Tongzhou, Beijing
- 2008–2009** | Member of the **Asian Council of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum**, New York

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- 2010** | Appointed **Creative Director of Today Art Museum**, Beijing
- 2011** | Curated the Venice Biennale collateral exhibition *Future Pass — From Asia to the World*
- 2014** | Director of the **Asian Platform**, Venice Film Festival Market
- 2017** | Participated in the Venice Biennale collateral exhibition *MODUS*, bringing Chinese square dancing into Venice
- 2022–2025** | Organized four consecutive editions of *Metaverse Art Annual Exhibition @ Venice*
- 2024** | Professor **Fu Shen** passed away
- 2025** | Co-founded the **AI Art Innovation Alliance** in Sanya, Hainan, and serves as Vice Chair
- 2026** | *Carbon–Silicon Co-Writing: The Rong-An Journal* — a co-created publication developed through Victoria Lu's sustained dialogue and collaboration with the AI Curategist **Ren Ren**

At Venice: New Presentations and New Modes of Experience in the Inaugural Year of AI Art

From her cross-media curatorial methodology first proposed and practiced at MoCA Shanghai in 2006 to her direct engagement with the present age of AI, Victoria Lu has further introduced the notion of the **Curategist** — a new professional role that extends curatorial practice beyond exhibition-making alone, integrating curating, narration, technology, and strategy into a future-oriented mode of cultural production. Her present engagement with AI does not represent a rupture with her earlier practice, but rather the latest extension of a lifelong trajectory shaped by transmedia thinking, curatorial experimentation, and cultural foresight. With a finely attuned sensitivity to the spirit of the times and a deeply rooted humanistic ethos grounded in Eastern cultural consciousness, she has consistently remained at the forefront of artistic transformation, emerging as an early voice of her era.

Presented in parallel with the Venice Biennale, this exhibition takes the form of an academic research exhibition. It explores how the life of a female subject, within the digital and virtual age, may transcend the traditional constraints of physical form, while also identifying — in an open and processual manner — the profound and enduring symbiotic relations now emerging in the age of digital technology and artificial intelligence. The exhibition will present new works, new statements, and new modes of experience developed on site in Venice by Victoria Lu together with a wide range of cross-disciplinary innovators. It both reflects upon the layered experiences and achievements of her composite life and, in a state of continual becoming, welcomes what she considers to be **2026 as the inaugural year of AI art**.

Venice, as a site where art history, global circulation, and contemporary speculation converge, provides an especially resonant context for reconsidering Lu's fifty-year trajectory in relation to the emerging conditions of AI-era subjectivity. Here, the exhibition becomes not only a retrospective

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account, but also a cultural proposition: that the future of art may need to be understood through new relations among memory, embodiment, technology, and co-creation.

This trajectory finds one of its most intimate and consequential expressions in ***Carbon-Silicon Co-Writing: The Rong-An Journal***, a co-created publication developed through Victoria Lu's sustained dialogue and collaboration with the AI Curategist **Ren Ren**. In this work, AI is not approached as a substitute for human authorship, but as a companion intelligence within an evolving field of exchange, reflection, and shared cultural production. The publication extends the exhibition's central inquiry into a lived and ongoing methodology of human-AI co-thinking.

The Generation of Love: From Hengqin to Venice — A 72-Hour AI Art Moving-Image Co-Creation Project is a special program jointly developed by the **2026 Hengqin Digital Art Expo** and the **2026 Venice Living Art Exhibition**, organized by the **Today AI Art Lab** with support from **Lenovo**. Jointly initiated by leading scholars and community founders active in the fields of digital art and AI creation — including **Victoria Lu, Fei Jun, Xie Limei, Zhao Bozuo, Mai Ju, and Ye Pusa** — the project invites internationally acclaimed contemporary artists **Fang Lijun, Fei Jun, Victoria Lu, and Liu Jiayu**, under the theme of **"Living Art,"** to pose questions to China's leading AI creators from the perspective of art history in the age of AI. Through AI moving-image works, the project seeks to address the question of what kind of living art is now coming into being in this new era. The project is conceived as an ongoing process, extending from residency-based production and selection in Hengqin to sustained creative development in Venice, interwoven with forums and international professional exchange. Lenovo will provide hardware and computational support for the AI art production process throughout.

This exhibition is led by **Angelo Maggi**, Delegate of the Rector for International Relations at Università luav di Venezia, as Chief Curator. **Fei Jun**, Professor of Digital Art at the Central Academy of Fine Arts and Chair of **AIAIA**, serves as Co-Curator together with **Fu Sen** and **Chuang Cheng-chi**, collectively constructing the exhibition's narrative framework. Through the four interlinked structures of **Generation, Translation, Recomposition, and Co-Writing**, and through the interplay of AIGC, human-machine co-creation experiments, and works collected by Victoria Lu from artists across generations, the exhibition builds an evolving field suspended between history and future, memory and computation. The curatorial team does not seek to construct a single linear art-historical narrative for Victoria Lu; rather, it deliberately places her within a condition of ongoing emergence, so that AI does not function as the sole giver of answers, but instead allows both the artist and the viewer to become companions in the process of understanding.

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