Hanna Zhu

Artist and Doctoral Researcher

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Artist and PhD researcher working with fusion dance, experimental moving image and generative AI. My practice-based research examines how bodily experience guides work across media, and how generated material changes movement and authorship. Methods include documented improvisation, choreography and editing. My background spans a decade in analytics, digital products and creative-technology entrepreneurship.

Research Practice

PhD Researcher | Swinburne University of Technology

May 2025 - present | Centre for Transformative Media, Melbourne

Generative AI and human motion interaction, with a focus on embodied affect, cultural specificity and creative agency. Supervisors: Professor John McCormick and Associate Professor Max Schleser.

Human Architect and Researcher | Somatic-AI Lab

Independent solo research initiative on Somatic AI and embodied human-AI interaction. Research platform

Selected Exhibitions and Screenings

2026 | In-Between Realities at Good Design Week

Sarawak Science Centre, Kuching, Malaysia | 30 November - 6 December 2026

Fractal Being: The Land of All Lives. Selected for the international exhibition; forthcoming. Exhibition

2026 | MOCO Performance Promenade

10th International Conference on Movement and Computing, Montpellier, France, 23-25 April

ZAGHAREED: A Human and AI Co-Created Film Extending a Dance. Included in the performance programme. Programme

Selected Research Outputs and Presentations

2026 | How AI Leads in Creative Practice

From Mentorship Dialogues to Extended Narratives

Hanna Zhu and John McCormick. Short paper in the MOCO 2026 open proceedings, pp. 28-29; conference poster. Conference

2026 | ZAGHAREED research creation

Extending Human Dance into the Yet-To-Be-Known with Generative AI. Accepted research-creation presentation, Interactive Film and Media programme. Accepted submissions

2026 | Beyond Style Transfer

Cultural Protocols for Embodied Knowledge in Generative AI-Mediated Dance. Accepted for presentation, International Conference on Indigenous Knowledges, Systems, Wisdom and Technology, Bali, 4 September (CIKSWT2026-15).

2026 | Speaker, Vanishing Acts: Artificial Intelligence, Performative Knowledge, Sustainable Memory, University of Malta, 25-28 March 2026.

2026 | Fusion as Embodied Assemblage. Second Centre for Transformative Media Technologies symposium, Embodied AI; presentation forthcoming.

2025 | HDR research presentation, Creative Technology and Transformative Storytelling Symposium, Swinburne University of Technology and Auckland University of Technology.

Selected Artistic Work

Moving Image and Interactive Art

Botanical Flow | 2026

Hybrid web artwork in five episodes

Pairs recorded dance and AI-generated botanical films with practice notes and reflective writing. Embodied judgement guides selection, editing and the return to the original dance. View artwork

I/AI: Briefly Botanical | 2026

Experimental dance and AI moving-image work

Research-creation film exploring botanical embodiment through recorded dance and AI-generated imagery, including transitions between the filmed and generated material.

Qilin Dreamscape | 2026

Interactive real-time point-cloud artwork

Reconstructs Qilin paintings as shifting spatial forms that gather and disperse, with still and motion modes and orbit interaction. View artwork

Fractal Being: The Land of All Lives | 2026

Experimental movement film | Single-channel 4K, stereo, 2 min 27 sec

Dance, fluid ink imagery and documentary footage explore felt relations across bodies and scales. Non-AI proof of concept for the doctoral inquiry; editing as choreography. Project and film

ZAGHAREED | 2025

AI-assisted screendance and research creation

Extends a live dance into an AI-assisted narrative. Choreography by Olga Meos, reinterpreted with permission; Hanna Zhu is filmmaker and one of the original performers. Project and film

Dragon of the East Earth | 2024

Tribal Fusion dance film combining human performance and AI-generated dragons. Best Video Art, Five Continents International Film Festival; Honorable Mention, Athens International Monthly Art Film Festival. Watch film

Long Live the Dune in My Heart | 2024

Tribal Fusion dance film bringing bodily performance into a speculative desert with an AI-generated sandworm.

2023 | ELA, a cross-cultural Tribal Fusion dance video collaboration with Olga Meos, Türkiye.

Selected Film Festival Recognition

ZAGHAREED

Open World Toronto Film Festival - Best Experimental, 2026 Award record

South Film and Arts Academy Festival - Award Winner

7th RIFF-Roshani International Film Festival - Award Winner

Athens International Monthly Art Film Festival - Honorable Mention

East Village New York Film Festival - Finalist

Ramsgate International Film and TV Festival - Official Selection

Rome Prisma Film Awards - Selected / Monthly Pick

Golden Bridge Istanbul Short Film Festival - Official Selection

Dragon of the East Earth

Official selections: Cinema Carnival International Festival (Italy), Golden Bridge Istanbul Short Film Festival (Türkiye), Love and Hope International Film Festival (Spain), Fortean Film Festival (UK).

Education and Professional Practice

Education

**2025 - present | ** PhD in generative AI and human motion interaction, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia; ongoing.

2014 - 2015 | University of Pennsylvania, USA

Master of Science in Statistics, Measurement and Research Technology. Research on goal-setting and psychological well-being.

2011 - 2014 | University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, USA

Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts and Sciences, with Distinction in Mathematics and Highest Distinction in Psychology. Honours research presented at the 2014 Undergraduate Research Symposium and Psychology Honors Fair.

Teaching and Academic Engagement

2023 - 2024 | Guest Lecturer, Shenzhen Technology University

Lectures and workshops on AI-driven entrepreneurship, startup strategy, product development and project management.

2021 - 2023 | Guest Lecturer and Industry Partner, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts

AI and contemporary art workflows; mentoring and project-based support for applied AI initiatives.

2015 - 2016 | Graduate Statistics Tutor, Pennsylvania, USA

Research methods, statistical analysis and interpretation.

Creative Technology and Entrepreneurship

2024 - present | Co-Founder and CEO, Zero Tech

Creative tools and AI video products including AutoAE. Zero Tech / AutoAE won first place in the 2025 Swinburne Venture Cup. Company

Current | Founder and Creative Director, Zero AI Studio

Creative practice in AI-assisted moving image and visual storytelling. Studio

2021 - 2024 | Co-Founder and COO, BOOLV Tech

Led AI video product development and market operations, including multimodal video generation workflows.

Earlier Industry Experience

**2020 - 2021 | Analytics Leader, ByteDance | ** End-to-end B2B product analytics and cross-functional optimisation.

**2017 - 2020 | Head of Intelligent Data Platform, Vanke | ** Led a team of over 40 building data, business intelligence and AI platforms.

**2016 - 2017 | Analyst, Tesla | ** Global people analytics, data visualisation and reporting automation.

**2015 - 2016 | Analyst, Walmart | ** Statistical analysis and decision support for Global People Analytics.

Selected Honours and Fellowships

**2025 | ** First place, Swinburne Venture Cup, with Zero Tech / AutoAE.

**2024 - 2025 | ** EWOR Ideation Fellowship, exploring ventures at the intersection of art and AI.

**2019 | ** Elite Award, inaugural 30 Next-Generation Digital Economy Talents programme, announced at the Sixth World Internet Conference, Wuzhen.

**2014 | ** WorldQuant Foundation scholarship.

**2013 | ** James E. Spoor Psychology Scholarship; Honorable Mention, Interdisciplinary Contest in Modeling.

**Languages | ** Mandarin and English.