News from Nanjing University of the Arts

The 2026 Jiangsu Provincial Postgraduate Academic Innovation Forum on "Intelligent Art Future: Art Production in the Age of Artificial Intelligence" was held at Nanjing University of the Arts.

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On November 21, the 2026 Jiangsu Provincial Postgraduate Academic Innovation Forum on "Intelligent Art Future: Art Production in the Age of Artificial Intelligence" was held at Nanjing University of the Arts. Zhang Jie, member of the Standing Committee of the Party Committee and Vice President of Nanjing University of the Arts, attended the opening ceremony and delivered a speech. More than 200 people participated in the forum, including relevant leaders from the Graduate School, Academic Affairs Office, School of Cultural Industries, and School of Digital Arts of Nanjing University of the Arts, as well as experts, scholars, and postgraduate representatives from over 60 universities at home and abroad, including Tsinghua University, Nanjing University, Southeast University, Sichuan University, Minzu University of China, Central Academy of Drama, China Academy of Art, New York University, Plymouth University, and Macau University of Science and Technology. The opening ceremony was chaired by Wang Chen, Dean of the School of Cultural Industries of Nanjing University of the Arts. Xu Qian, doctoral supervisor at Nanjing University of the Arts, and Gao Kaihao, a master's student from Jiangsu Normal University, spoke as representatives of faculty and students.



This forum was guided by the Jiangsu Provincial Academic Degrees Committee Office, hosted by the Jiangsu Provincial Steering Committee for Postgraduate Education in Arts, and organized by Nanjing University of the Arts. It was co-organized by the Graduate School, School of Cultural Industries, School of Digital Arts, the China Cultural Industry Management Professional Committee of Nanjing University of the Arts, the Zijin Cultural and Creative Research Institute (a research base of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism), the Nanjing University of the Arts Chinese Cultural Heritage and Digital Innovation Laboratory (a laboratory of philosophy and social sciences in Jiangsu Province), the Jiangsu Provincial Collaborative Innovation Center for Cultural Creativity in Higher Education Institutions, and the Jiangsu Provincial Research Institute for Cultural Technology (Virtual Reality). Academic support was provided by the National Social Science Fund of China's Arts Discipline Innovation and Practical Research on Artificial Production under the Background of Artificial Intelligence" and the National Social Science Fund of China's Cultural Heritage Special Project "Research on the Policy Mechanism of Cultural and Creative Industries in Promoting the Protection and Inheritance of Cultural Heritage."



In her address, Zhang Jie pointed out that Nanjing University of the Arts (NUA), as the host institution, has always adhered to the educational spirit of "broad yet concise, profound yet beautiful, and constantly evolving," and is committed to cultivating high-level art talents with both national sentiment and social responsibility. In the 2026 ShanghaiRanking's Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) for Chinese Universities, all six of NUA's disciplines were listed, including one top-tier discipline and four first-class disciplines, placing its comprehensive academic strength among the top art colleges in China and universities in Jiangsu Province. Facing the opportunities and changes brought about by artificial intelligence, NUA continues to promote the interdisciplinary integration of art studies with digital humanities, computer science, and cultural industries, relying on key laboratories and research platforms to contribute NUA's wisdom to building an independent knowledge system for Chinese art studies. She hoped that young researchers would possess both the innovative spirit to "venture into uncharted territory" and the scholarly perseverance to "sit on the sidelines," daring to raise genuine questions in human-machine collaboration, and embracing the future and living up to the times with solid and compassionate research.

The forum, themed "Intelligent Art Future: Art Production in the Age of Artificial Intelligence," invited several renowned experts from home and abroad to focus on how artificial intelligence can empower the production, inheritance, and revitalization of cultural heritage. Keynote speeches and discussions covered topics such as digital preservation, knowledge production, artistic innovation, dissemination and display, and industrial applications. The keynote speeches were moderated by Zhou Jian, Dean of the School of Digital Arts at Nanjing University of the Arts.



Wang Chen, in his presentation titled "From Technological Presence to Value Realization: The Stages and Shifts in the Digitalization of Cultural Heritage," systematically analyzed the relationship between current digital technologies and cultural heritage protection, focusing on the development process from digital preservation to cultural dissemination, and then to knowledge integration and the application of digital technologies. He stated that with the continuous development of digital technology, the digitalization of cultural heritage is showing a trend from archival preservation to "living" in the present. The possibility of cultural heritage "living" in the present is becoming increasingly widespread and significant, requiring us to continuously increase the intensity, breadth, and depth of our research.



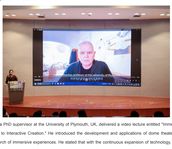
Yang Ming, Dean of the Xinhua News Agency's Future Media Research Institute, delivered a speech titled "Wall-less Labs: Paths to Cultural Heritage Protection and Inheritance in the Context of Digitalization." Drawing on years of practical exploration and innovative experiments, he began by analyzing human-machine collaboration in solving complex problems, focusing on multi-sensory perception and broadening research perspectives. He stated that it is crucial to break down disciplinary boundaries and expand beyond one's own field to discover many interesting and researchable topics. He emphasized the need to focus on perception and empathy in research, as well as a human-centered symbiotic relationship, to innovatively conduct cultural heritage protection, knowledge graph construction, and other collaborative explorations to build a new ecosystem.



Wang Qiang, a doctoral supervisor at Jiangnan University, delivered a lecture titled "The Reshaping and Knowledge Construction of Classic Chinese Design in the Age of Artificial Intelligence." Focusing on the traditional center of creation, he systematically analyzed the subjectivity of Chinese design and the contemporary relevance of Chinese creations from the foundations of traditional design, raising several issues worthy of contemporary consideration. He stated that focusing on the national strategy of constructing an independent Chinese knowledge system is the mission of our generation. We must deeply consider how to integrate, translate, and export Chinese culture in the context of current digital technology development; this remains a constant theme that we must continue to research.



Stavros Didakis, a professor at NYU Shanghai, presented a lecture titled "Artistic Practice as Computational Alchemy: Building an Ecosystem for Synthetic Intelligence." Drawing on his creative experience and award-winning works, he proposed a standard system for evaluating creativity, starting with its inherent qualities of originality, and then proceeded to analyze its practical applications. He raised the question, "How can we construct our synthetic intelligence ecosystem through practice?" This is a question worthy of further research.



Mike Phillips, a PhD supervisor at the University of Plymouth, UK, delivered a video lecture entitled "Immersive Dome: From Data Visualization to Interactive Creation." He introduced the development and applications of dome theaters, particularly the creation and research of immersive experiences. He stated that with the continuous expansion of technology, dome theaters are finding increasingly diverse applications, ranging from science museums and planetariums to digital performances, concerts, live sports broadcasts, and product launches, providing more application scenarios for future art production.



At the opening ceremony, the organizers officially announced the results of the selection of outstanding papers and innovative projects. Since the forum launched its call for papers in June, it has received enthusiastic responses from academic circles and young graduate students across the country. They directly addressed the real-world pain points of intelligent creation in vertical fields, focusing on exploring the digital revitalization of cultural heritage, innovating contemporary expression, and integrating intelligent sensing technology into modern art and design. This fully demonstrated the keen insight and research enthusiasm of young researchers in the cutting-edge field of artificial intelligence, highlighting their diverse and innovative research perspectives and their sense of responsibility rooted in reality. The forum received over 200 academic and innovative achievements from more than 60 universities. After rigorous review, 3 papers received a Special Excellence Award, 6 received First Prizes, 12 received Second Prizes, and 15 received Third Prizes, with 78 papers selected for inclusion. For innovative projects, 2 projects received First Prizes, 4 received Second Prizes, and 6 received Third Prizes, with 12 projects selected for inclusion. Zhang Jie and Liu Hongzhe, a third-level staff member of the Graduate Education Department of the Jiangsu Provincial Department of Education, presented awards to the winning students.



During the forum, the organizers focused on the theme of artificial intelligence empowering the protection, inheritance, and revitalization of cultural heritage. They set up presentations by the Smart Artificial Intelligence Graduate Innovation Project Team and five sub-forums for graduate student academic paper presentations, organizing in-depth discussions and exchanges among participating young scholars on related topics. The organizers invited Dr. Ma Xiaosong, a doctoral supervisor at Nanjing University of the Arts, and faculty members from the School of Cultural Industries and the School of Digital Arts to moderate the presentations and provide commentary.







The Jiangsu Provincial Graduate Academic Innovation Forum, themed "Intelligent Art Future: Art Production in the Age of Artificial Intelligence," is distinctive and thematically focused, consistently concentrating on the latest research in artificial intelligence. It brings together renowned scholars from home and abroad, as well as young graduate students from universities across China, to deeply explore the integration of artificial intelligence with cultural heritage protection and artistic production. Since its inception two years ago, the forum has become a high-level brand academic innovation forum for the reform and innovation of graduate education in the new era. It is conducive to promoting and enhancing the academic research and innovative practice capabilities of graduate students in cultural and artistic fields, contributing Nanjing University of the Arts' strength to supporting the high-quality development of the national cultural industry and cultivating high-level academic innovation talents.

(Edited by: Xu Le; Proofread by: Hu Longfei; Reviewed by: Li Zhipeng; Contributed by: School of Cultural Industries)

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Contact Us
Secretary's email address: lahwl@nua.edu.cn
Postal address: Nanjing University of the Arts
Address: No. 74, Beijing West Road, Nanjing, Jiangsu Province
Postal code: 210013