



Xin Liu

ABOUT

Born

1991 (Xinjiang, China)

Education

Tsinghua University in Beijing, China, BA and BEng; Rhode Island School of Design, MFA; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MS

Lives and Works

New York, NY and London, UK

About the Artist

An artist and engineer, Liu works in a variety of media and contexts, fusing art and science in sculptures, installations, videos, virtual-reality experiences, and publications, amongst other media. Through her work, the artist considers the personal implications of our technological advancements, constructing narratives that provide space to imagine ourselves in a world of rapidly expanding possibilities.

TEACHING CONNECTIONS

Media and Materials

installation
 performance
 sculpture
 video

Key Words and Ideas

environment	presence
exploration	prosperity
futurity	science
generations	space
loneliness	technology
pleasure	violence

Related Artists

Janine Antoni	Hannah Levy
Tauba Auerbach	Rafael Lozano-
Phyllida Barlow	Hemmer
Minerva Cuevas	Rachel Rossin
Jes Fan	James Turrell
Lynn Herschman	Anicka Yi
Leeson	
Loie Hollowell	

“In this calibrated and measured world, art allows beauty and emotions to be part of the process.” —Xin Liu

How to Use This Guide

Art21 encourages active engagement when teaching with our films. The questions and activities below are recommendations for incorporating Art21 films featuring Xin Liu into your classroom. Each class will likely require different adaptations for best results.

NOTE: Please view all films before sharing them with your students.

Before Viewing

Establish key ideas, in anticipation of viewing the film(s):

- ① What brings you pleasure?
- ② What are some meaningful objects in your life?
- ③ When have you explored a new place? What did you notice about that place?

While Viewing

Support active viewing, and pause the film to clarify particular ideas:

- ① Why is pleasure important to Liu?
- ② How does Liu transform objects or materials?
- ③ What does exploration mean according to Liu?

After Viewing

Follow-up on key ideas and synthesize information learned from the film(s):

- ① Why is pleasure important in art making?
- ② In the film, Liu makes oil sentient, or transforms it into a “living being.” If the objects important to you came to life, what would they say? How would they move? What would they do?
- ③ What is the relationship between immigration and exploration?

Related Activities

Engaging in creative activities after watching Art21 films can reinforce learning and stimulate ideas. Art21 encourages educators to adapt these activities to their classrooms.

- ✓ How can your body channel the movement of an environment? Spend some time in a natural environment (i.e. the forest, beach, park, etc.) and the same amount of time in a built environment (i.e. the grocery store, mall, an office, etc.) and mimic the movements you notice. Are there more graceful movements in the woods? More angular moves at the mall? Create a performance about the differences.
- ✓ What is celebrated in your hometown or community? Make a collage out of natural materials to represent those celebrations.
- ✓ If you could freeze time, what moment, day, or year would you want to capture? Make a sculpture of that time.