

SCREEN
MELANCHOLY
鬱卒的平面
LI YI-FAN
李 亦 凡

TAIPEI FINE ARTS MUSEUM OF
TAIWAN COLLATERAL EVENT



La Biennale di Venezia

61. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Eventi Collaterali

Taipei Fine Arts Museum of Taiwan Press Release

7 MAY 2026, Venice

SCREEN MELANCHOLY: LI YI-FAN www.taiwaninvenice.org

at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

Artist	Curator	Organizer
Li Yi-Fan	Raphael Fonseca	TAIPEI FINE ARTS MUSEUM OF TAIWAN
		www.tfam.museum

Taipei Fine Arts Museum of Taiwan is pleased to present the Collateral Event **Screen Melancholy: Li Yi-Fan** at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia. The exhibition will be held at the Palazzo delle Prigioni from May 9 to November 22, 2026, featuring a new work by **Taiwanese artist Li Yi-Fan** and curated by **Raphael Fonseca**, curator of visual arts at Culturgest, Lisbon and Porto, Portugal. Both from a generation that witnesses the birth of internet technology, they explore the complex relationship between imagery, technology, and hu-man experience in a dialogue that goes beyond regions and cultures.

Li works across painting, animation, game engines, and generative imagery to explore how images shape human perception, storytelling, and self-understanding in an era of information overload. Through dark humor, sarcasm and jump-cut narratives, he manipulates his puppet-like persona, revealing how contemporary modes of viewing are mediated by software and algorithms, and questioning how individuals reposition themselves amid infinitely reproducible images.

Originally conceived in Portuguese as *Melancolia de tela*, the exhibition title evolves across languages, unfolding new nuances that reflect on how screens mediate everyday life and shape the ways people perceive and experience the world. At the same time, the work responds to the theme of the Biennale Arte 2026, **In Minor Keys**, often associated with the melancholic atmosphere evoked by its musical metaphor.

The exhibition marks Li's third new creation employing game engine as a method for image production. He has further developed this into a site-specific piece unprecedented in his career, continuing his monologue narrative while reflecting on image-making tools within the "Software as a Service" framework. He addresses the Palazzo delle Prigioni's historical and architectural context by transforming the space into a dynamic stage. As viewers immerse themselves within this former prison, the shifting scenes within the video mirror the physical surroundings. Together with the puppet-like characters, they experience the dissolution of boundaries between "reality" and "virtuality".

This exhibition presents an installation integrating video and mixed media that encompasses the entire space. It marks the first such endeavor by the Taipei Fine Arts Museum since it began hosting exhibitions at the Palazzo delle Prigioni in 1995. Large-scale customized sculptures of fragmented limbs will be arranged throughout the space, resonating with characters emerging from the video as a juxtaposition of fictional and physical sensory experiences within the space. The unified whole of sculpture, video, and sound invites viewers to experience, at their own pace, the emotional and cognitive dissonance, and perceptual fatigue the artist explores. This leads to the core question posed by the exhibition title: "When life is short but knowledge is boundless, how do we respond to the world through 'melancholy'?"

Li Yi-Fan shared: “I hope to bring audience into a surreal space where they feel like viewing and at the same time being viewed. Just like the protagonist in this current work, the characters I animate feel like toys and like witnesses. The performance is real, but it is routed through a proxy body. In an age of information overload, this indirection might just be the barrier that keeps us safe enough to be vulnerable.”

Further addressing how relevant the exhibition is to our modern life **Raphael Fonseca** commented: “Yi-Fan’s absurdly humorous approach weaves the mundanity and anxiety in daily life into his unique, poetic examination of our identities in a world reshaped by technologies. The work gives audience infinite room for questioning, both the blurred boundaries between ‘real’ and ‘digital’, and more importantly, what exactly does it mean to be ‘human’?”

From lectures about computer animation to normal mapping, Li focuses on how images become increasingly generative in real time and infinitely replicable. In the exhibition, he transforms a feeling familiar to many people in Taiwan—living long-term alongside uncertainty—into humor, articulating how personal anxieties resonate truthfully with others on the island. He suggests that each of us contains something of the prisoner, the puppeteer, and the puppet. Rather than offering solutions or moralizing responses to the post-fictions and digital narcissisms of the twenty-first century, the artist brings the audience back to respond to the world with “melancholy”. Surrounding this, several keywords further guided the creation of this new work:

- The nature of **viewing** and how it evolves when computer graphics offer humanity a fresh way of browsing at excessive information
- **Body** as manipulated puppet-like protagonists, prompting viewers to question how the information we perceive online are filtered and dictated by algorithms
- The tension between humanity and technology especially since **AI-generated** images further influence perceptual structures.

During the opening week of the Biennale Arte 2026, the Taipei Fine Arts Museum of Taiwan Collateral Event will be accompanied by **pre-opening and public programs on 7-9 May**. A talk between Li and Fonseca will be held at 4-5pm on 7 May, exploring the curatorial journey. From 5pm on each day, a work titled “**She seemed devastated, when I was weeping with joy**” by South Korean artist Eunju Hong, will be performed in dialogue with Li’s exhibition. The performance engages with contemporary cultural themes of life, physicality, melancholy, and falseness, sparking diverse reflections in viewers through their shared and divergent approaches. More events and details will be announced shortly. For detailed information, please visit TFAM’s official website (www.tfam.museum) or follow Taipei Fine Arts Museum on Facebook, or tfam_museum on Instagram.

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La Biennale di Venezia

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Exhibition Venue

Palazzo delle Prigioni
Castello 4209, San Marco, Venice

Opening Hours

9 May – 30 September 2026
Every Tuesday to Sunday, 11am – 7pm

1 October – 22 November 2026
Every Tuesday to Sunday, 10am – 6pm

Closed on Mondays,
Opened on 11 May, 16 November

Pre-opening

6 – 8 May 2026, 10am – 8pm

Opening Ceremony and Press Conference

7 May 2026, 6pm – 7pm

Pre-opening & Public Programs

Public Talk

7 May 2026, 4pm – 5pm

Speakers

- Li Yi-Fan, exhibition artist
- Raphael Fonseca, exhibition curator

Live Performance

"She seemed devastated, when I was weeping with joy"

7-9 May 2026, 5pm

Artists

- Eunju Hong, concept & Direction
- Isu Kim Lee, performer

Official Website

www.taiwaninvenice.org/2026

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#LiYiFan
#RaphaelFonseca
#TaiwaninVenice
#TaipeiFineArtsMuseum
#BiennaleArte2026
#InMinorKeys

OFFICIAL SUPPORT



台北市政府
Department of Cultural Affairs
Taipei City Government

Organizer





Li Yi-Fan ©TFAM

LI YI-FAN

Li Yi-Fan (b. 1989) lives and works in Taipei, Taiwan. He often explores the relationship between people and technology in the digital age with a unique sense of black humor. He excels at using self-developed game engines and, working as a one-person crew, improvisationally acting out the narratives that lie in the background behind image production. In recent years, with the support of such projects as the National Culture and Arts Foundation's "WSAD" and Taiwan Contemporary Culture Lab's "Toolkit of Madness," Li has conducted studies on machinima and developed a series of game-engine-based image production toolkits to create artworks such as *important_message_360.mp4*, *rewiring*, *howdoyouturnthison*, and *What Is Your Favorite Primitive*. He has also been featured in the 2020 Taiwan Biennial "Subzoology," the 2020 Digital Art Festival Taipei "01_LOVE," the 2021 Asian Art Biennial "Phantasmapolis," and the 2023 Taipei Biennial "Small World."



Raphael Fonseca ©TFAM

RAPHAEL FONSECA

Raphael Fonseca, born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, lives in Lisbon, Portugal. He is the curator of visual arts at Culturgest, Lisbon and Porto, Portugal, besides working as a curator-at-large of Modern and Contemporary Latin American Art at the Denver Art Museum. Recently appointed one of the chief-curators of the 37th São Paulo Biennial, happening in 2027. He is one of the curators for Counterpublic 2026, a Triennial opening next September in St. Louis, United States. He was the chief curator of the 14th Mercosul Biennial in 2025. From 2023 to 2025, ArtReview magazine listed him among the 100 most influential people in the global visual arts.

Notable projects include "Fullgás: Visual Arts and the 1980s in Brazil" (Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, 2024-2025); "Sandra Vásquez de La Horra: The Awake Volcanoes" (Denver Art Museum, 2024); "Memory is an editing station", 22nd SESC_Videobrasil Biennial (SESC 24 de Maio, São Paulo, 2023); "Sweat" (Haus der Kunst, Munich, 2021); and "Lost and Found" (ICA Singapore, 2019).



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TAIPEI FINE ARTS MUSEUM OF TAIWAN (TFAM)

Founded in 1983, Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM) is the very first museum of modern and contemporary art in Taiwan. Venturing into its 43rd year, TFAM has dedicated itself to the development of local artists in Taiwan while staying abreast of ongoing trends in international art scenes. It has pioneered the biennial trends for the region and overseen the operations of the Taipei Biennial since 1998, and the participation as Collateral Event at the International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia since 1995, coloring its visions with stronger overtones of global strategy. www.tfam.museum

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Screen Melancholy

2026, 60 min, video installation (screenshot)

© Li Yi-Fan. Courtesy of the artist and TFAM of Taiwan Collateral Event 2026

Screen Melancholy

2026, 60 min, installazione video (screenshot)

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