

Yiru Chen

(she/her)

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Portfolio: [yirucart.com](#)

NYS CERTIFIED TEACHER OF THE DEAF, ACCESSIBILITY ADVOCATE, FILMMAKER

My interdisciplinary practices honor the experiences of Deaf, disabled, queer, and diasporic communities. Working across U.S. and Chinese contexts, I approach access as a form of authorship. The thread throughout my career is cultivating the tools, spaces, and relationships that enable communities to create, lead, and shape their own narratives.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

English (Professional)

Chinese (Mandarin & Shanghainese, Native)

American Sign Language (Professional, ASLPI 3.0)

Chinese / Shanghai Sign Language (Intermediate)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

St.Francis de Sales School for the Deaf, New York

January 2022 - NOW

Classroom Teacher

Develop and implement individualized, accessible instruction using inclusive and arts-based approaches to support the academic, linguistic, social-emotional, and physical development of Deaf, DeafBlind, and DeafDisabled students. Promote equitable communication through ASL, spoken English, AAC, and student-centered language approaches. Collaborate with Teacher Assistants and Instructional Paraprofessionals to foster an inclusive classroom that builds independence and meaningful participation.

Disabled Talks, New York

October 2024 - NOW

Content Creator, Podcast Co-Host

Create and co-host Disabled Talks (残言片语), a mandarin podcast examining mainstream issues through a disability studies lens. The podcast challenges ableism and stereotypes by centering overlooked disability perspectives and exploring how disability shapes our understanding of society, culture, and everyday life.

HERE Arts Center, New York

March 2020 - August 2020

Artistic Programming Assistant

Support the planning and execution of artistic programs and events. Research accessible online performances and community resources during COVID-19. Coordinate schedules, artist and production communications, and accessibility for virtual performances and workshops.

Stephanie Black Films, New York

September 2019 - December 2019

Intern / Personal Assistant

Interned with award-winning documentary director Stephanie Black on a Jamaica Kincaid documentary funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Conducted archival research, contributed to script development and budgeting, supported narrative development, and provided creative input.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

New York State, Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Initial Certificate

Issued 12/13/2022, effective until 01/31/2028

Columbia University, Teachers College

September 2020 - December 2021

MA in Education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

GPA: 4:00

New York University, Tisch School of the Arts

September 2016 - December 2019

BA in Film and Television Production

Minor in Psychology and American Sign Language

GPA: 3.85

ASSOCIATIONS

Deaf Spotlight

Board Member / Board Secretary

ASL SLAM

Event Support, Volunteer, and Performer

World Federation of the Deaf (WFD)

Individual Membership

National Association of the Deaf (NAD)

Individual Membership

American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC)

Individual Membership

Filmmaker with Disabilities (FWD-DOC)

Film Resources Provider and Community Contributor

Shanghai iSigner Sign Language Center

Photographer, Education Outreach, and Event Support

SELECTIVE FILM PROJECTS AND AWARDS

- **DEPT/HELLOMONDAY SIGNS Case Study Film (2025)**

Director

Project for *SIGNS*, an AI ASL platform developed by Nvidia and the American Society for Deaf Children

- **Music Magic: Turning Accessibility into Art (2024)**

Director / Editor

Documentary short of “Broadway Beethoven”, Deaf musician and composer, Jay Alan Zimmerman

- **In the Green Room (2022)**

Video Editor

Commissioned by the Asia Society Museum for Women in Jazz project “In the Green Room”

- **No Rule is Our Rule: Video Diary of Eiko Otake and Wen Hui (2022)**

Chief Editor, Post-Production

Best Feature Documentary at Japan International Film Festival

Official Selection at San Souci Festival of Dance Cinema

Official Selection at Munich New Wave Film Festival

- **Handscape (2020)**

Director / Writer

Grand Jury Prize at Shanghai Queer Film Festival

Best Short Film & Best Sound Design at Winter Film Festival

Best Male Lead at British Film Festival

- **I Promise to Enter the Oversized Hat (2020)**

Editor, Post-Production

Exhibition at Milan Contemporary Art Center

- **Bedtime Stories (2020)**

Director of Photography

Official Selection of 8th Annual Katra Film Series Grand Finale

ART & CURATION PROJECTS AND AWARDS

- **Chinese Sign Language Theater for Deaf/CODA Youth: The Little Prince in Our Hands (2026-NOW)**

Teaching Artist, Director, and Producer

- **Brooklyn’s Deaf and DeafBlind Museum & Research Center (2025-NOW)**

Curator team and creator of accessible digital displays (exhibition slideshow, alumni interviews etc.)

- **#feelthemusic Deaf Music Project at Teachers College, Columbia University (2023-NOW)**

Event Curator, Producer, and Master of Ceremony

- **Chien Sauvage (2023)**

Lead Actress, Sign Language Performer

Official Selection at the 46th Moscow International Film Festival

- **The Hands (2023)**

Lead Actress, Sign Language Performer

Official Selection at SignLight International Film Festival

Official Selection at Outsider Garbatella Film Festival

- **Mirror of the Mother City (2023)**

Sign Language Performer, Choreographer

Commissioned by NYU Solidarity Week Marquee Event: Our Bodies, Our Stories

- **Song of a Lonely Bird, a Recreation (2018)**

Sign Language Performer, Choreographer

Collaborative experimental video art and performance piece with Jiaqi Liu

PANELS AND WORKSHOPS

- **Arts for All Abilities Conference, Presenter:** Visual Storytelling as Accessible Pedagogy (2026)
- **Society for Research into Higher Education, Presenter:** Deaf Perspectives on Time Inheritance (2026)
- **Shanghai Theater Academy, Presenter:** Sign Language and Deaf Theater in Drama Education (2026)
- **Elefam Conservation and Animal Welfare, Presenter:** Accessible Music Lessons for the Deaf (2025)
- **New York CN Culture Saloon (501(c)(3)), Panelist:** Ableism Bias in Artificial Intelligence (2025)
- **Knotting Code x LOOKFOR, Panelist:** Why Does a City Need a Deaf Film Festival? (2024)
- **New York CN Culture Saloon (501(c)(3)), Presenter:** Special Education and Disability Advocacy (2023)
- **NYU Global Disability Dialogue, Panelist:** Supporting Disability Advocacy with Artivism (2023)
- **Her Voices (US Consulate and UNFPA-supported program), Panelist:** Motherhood in Handscape (2022)
- **Adelphi University ARTIVISM, Panelist:** Deaf Music Project Documentary with Dr. Julia Silvestri (2021)