

Shuyi Yin, PhD

Architectural Historian and Preservation Scholar

sy2813@columbia.edu | +1 (267) 275-2518

RESEARCH PROFILE

Research focus: heritage documentation, architectural photography, photogrammetry, material culture of documentation, photographic archives and documentary media, history of preservation practices, conservation history and theory, heritage governance, and histories of measurement and representation.

Profile: My work examines how architectural and urban heritage has been recorded, measured, visualized, stored, and governed through changing documentation technologies, from nineteenth-century survey photography and photogrammetry to the institutional standardization of photographic archives and early digital systems.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Historic Preservation, Columbia University, 2025

Dissertation: From Plot to Bit: The Origins and Evolution of Digitization Technologies in Heritage Documentation (1850s-2000s).

Committee: Jorge Otero-Pailos (Advisor), Mario Santana Quintero, Erica Avrami, John Durham Peters, John May.

Affiliations: Columbia GSAPP Preservation Technology Lab; Columbia Center for Archaeology; Center for Comparative Media; Center for Comparative Literature.

M.Phil., Columbia University, 2022

Fields: International Heritage Preservation and Cultural Politics; Monument, Memory, and Representation.

Master of Environmental Design (M.E.D.), Yale University, 2018

Specialization: history and theory of heritage preservation, cultural politics, heritage in conflict, documentary media, and practices of evidence and representation.

Thesis: Preservation at War: Cultural Heritage and Its Media. Committee: Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen (Advisor), Francesco Casetti (Reader).

M.S. in Historic Preservation, University of Pennsylvania, 2015

Specialization: material culture and conservation science; architectural documentation.

Thesis: The Efficacy of a Borate and Penetrating Oil Preservative Combination for the Conservation of Exterior Wood. Advisor: Andrew Fearon.

Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.), Zhejiang University, 2012

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Visiting Fellow, Bard Graduate Center, Fall 2026

Rome Prize Finalist, American Academy in Rome, 2026

Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship (Israel), U.S. Fulbright Program, 2025

Research conducted at the UNESCO Chair in Urban Design and Conservation Studies, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem.

Supervisor: Michael Turner.

APT Conference Getty Scholarship, Association for Preservation Technology & The Getty Foundation, 2022

SAH Dissertation Fellowship, Nomination, Society of Architectural Historians, 2022

BOOK PROJECT

From Plot to Bit: Documentation as Infrastructure in Heritage Governance, Book manuscript in preparation

Developed from the fellowship project Documentation Technologies and the Governance of Heritage, 1850-1985.

This book examines how documentation practices became a governing infrastructure of heritage preservation. It traces the development of heritage documentation from nineteenth-century architectural survey and photogrammetry to postwar standardization and early digital systems, arguing that photographs, measured drawings, survey forms, technical standards, and data systems do not merely record heritage sites but help produce the evidentiary and institutional frameworks through which they become legible, administrable, and worthy of preservation.

PUBLICATIONS AND WORKS IN PROGRESS

Book Chapters and Proceedings

Yin, Shuyi. "From Bit to Plot: The History of Digitization Technologies in Architectural and Urban Heritage Documentation." In Humanities Research and Education on Architectural and Urban History, eds. Sander Münster, Piotr Kuroczynski, and Fabrizio Apollonio. Communications in Computer and Information Science, vol. 2931. Springer, forthcoming 2026.

Fearon, Andrew, and Shuyi Yin. "Exterior Wood Case Study #1: Steven and Toby Korman House." In The Buildings of Louis Kahn: Conserving Exterior Wood, 78-89. Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2019.

Fearon, Andrew, Jean Jang, and Shuyi Yin. "Going Grey: Mitigating the Weathering of Wood in the Architecture of Louis Kahn." In Wooden Artifacts Group Postprints: 44th Annual Meeting of the American Institute for Conservation, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 2016, 101-11. Washington, DC: AIC, 2016.

Articles and Essays in Progress

"Albrecht Meydenbauer and the Emergence of Photogrammetry in Monument Documentation (1850-1921)." Submitted to the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians.

"Architectural Photogrammetry as International Heritage Governance: Apparatuses, Institutions, and Archives, 1960-1985." Article manuscript in preparation. Planned submission to Technology and Culture.

"Documentary Autonomy and Infrastructural Diplomacy in Digital Heritage Governance." Article manuscript in preparation. Planned submission to the International Journal of Heritage Studies.

Dissertation and Theses

Yin, Shuyi. From Plot to Bit: The Origins and Evolution of Digitization Technologies in Heritage Documentation (1850s-2000s). Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2025.

Preservation at War: Cultural Heritage and Its Media. M.E.D. thesis, Yale University, 2018.

The Efficacy of a Borate and Penetrating Oil Preservative Combination for the Conservation of Exterior Wood. M.S. thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2015.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Columbia University, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation (GSAPP)

Instructor of Record, Introduction to Historic Preservation, Summer 2025.

Teaching Associate, Modern Building Technology, Spring 2024, with Theodore H. M. Prudon.

Teaching Associate, History and Practice of Historic Preservation, Fall 2020 and Fall 2021, with Jorge Otero-Pailos.

Teaching Associate, Modern American Architecture, Spring 2020, with Jorge Otero-Pailos.

Teaching Associate, Graduate Thesis Seminar, Fall 2019, Fall 2021, and Fall 2023, with Paul Bentel.

Yale University, School of Architecture

Co-Instructor, Contemporary Architectural Discourse, Spring 2018, with Jane Weng.

University of Pennsylvania, Graduate Program in Historic Preservation

Teaching Assistant, Conservation Materials Seminar: Wood, Fall 2014, with Andrew Fearon.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT

CIPA Heritage Documentation Emerging Professionals Leadership Team, 2023-present

Organizes international training, mentorship initiatives, and discussions on ethical and community-centered heritage documentation practices.

CIPA International Symposium on Heritage Documentation, Sessions Chair and Roundtable Closing Remarks, Seoul, 2025

Delivered closing remarks for the roundtable "People-Centered Digital Twin for World Heritage" and chaired two technical sessions on heritage documentation methodologies.

CHCD-International Symposium on Cultural Heritage Conservation and Digitization, Participant, Beijing, 2024

Participated in an international forum on documentation standards, digital heritage technologies, and cross-institutional collaboration in heritage conservation.

International Dialogue on Heritage, Conflict, and Shared Futures, Anthedon: Vision of Hope, Heritopolis Initiative, Participant and Rapporteur, Paris, 2024-present

Contributed to interdisciplinary dialogue on heritage documentation, stewardship, and cultural heritage in contexts of conflict and displacement.

Columbia University, Mentorship and Academic Community Building, 2019-2023

Mentored master's thesis students in historic preservation and served as a guest critic in preservation and architecture studios.

SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED TALKS

"Documentation Infrastructure and Ethical Challenges in Spatial AI for Cultural Heritage." CVPR 2026 SINT4CH Workshop, Denver, 2026. Accepted oral presentation.

"Beyond the Viewer: Documentation Standards as Governance Infrastructure in 3D Heritage." FAIR 3D HERITAGE Conference, Mainz, 2026. Accepted presentation.

"From Bit to Plot: The History of Digitization Technologies in Architectural and Urban Heritage Documentation." Cultural Heritage and New Technologies (CHNT), Humanities Research and Education on Architectural and Urban History, Vienna, 2025.

"Heritage Conservation from Bits: From Digital Documentation to Data-Driven Heritage Conservation." Roundtable on People-Centered Digital Twin for World Heritage, CIPA International Symposium, Seoul, 2025.

"Heritage Interpretation and Digital Twin." Guest lecture, UNESCO-WHIPIC, International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites, Sejong, 2025.

"Scaling Heritage: Albrecht Meydenbauer's Photogrammetry and Monument Documentation." Acts of Scaling Symposium, Harvard Graduate School of Design, Cambridge, 2025.

"Digitizing the Past: The Rise of 3D Scanning and Photogrammetry in Heritage Documentation (1980s-2000s)." London Heritages: Critical Questions - Contemporary Practice, University of Greenwich, 2025.

"The Emergence of Photogrammetry in Monument Documentation and Land Surveying, 1850s-1920s." DocTalks x MoMA, virtual, 2024.

"Sharing Architectural Heritage in Conflict Through Digital Media and Technology: The Production and Exhibition of the Palmyra Triumphal Arch Replica." Society of Architectural Historians Annual International Conference, Montreal/virtual, 2023.

"Intercultural Heritage Learning Through Digital Media and Technology: A Case Study of the Production and Exhibition of the Palmyra Triumphal Arch Replica." Association of Critical Heritage Studies Biennial Conference, Santiago, 2022.

"Digital Reconstruction of Monuments Destroyed During the Syrian Civil War." Association of Critical Heritage Studies Biennial Conference, virtual/originally London, 2020; American Comparative Literature Association Annual Conference, virtual/originally Montreal, 2021.

"Going Grey: Mitigating the Weathering of Wood in the Architecture of Louis Kahn." American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works Annual Meeting, Montreal, 2016.

EDITORIAL, CURATORIAL, AND PUBLIC HUMANITIES EXPERIENCE

Managing Editor, Future Anterior, peer-reviewed journal of historic preservation, Issue 17.2 "Fieldwork," 2020.

Editor, Future Anterior, 2018-2021.

Curatorial Team Member, U.S. Pavilion, Venice Biennale, MANY in Dimensions of Citizenship, Keller Easterling Team, 2018.

Curator, Yale Architecture Gallery Exhibition, Design Earth: Neck of the Moon, 2017-2018.

Editorial Assistant, Cabinet Magazine, 2017.

Producer, GSAPP Podcast, Conversations on Monuments, Preservation, and Protest, 2020.

Editor, Paprika!, 2016-2017.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Fulbright Postdoctoral Scholar, UNESCO Chair in Urban Design and Conservation Studies, School of Architecture, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem, 2025.

Professional experience in architecture and conservation across Shanghai and Tokyo, including Neri & Hu Design and Research Office, 2014, and Sou Fujimoto Architects, 2013.

Field conservation experience with PennPraxis, including lime-mortar repointing, selective brick replacement, stabilization work, and repair of historic wood shingles, 2013.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

CIPA Heritage Documentation | International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) | World Heritage USA (US ICOMOS) | Association of Critical Heritage Studies (ACHS) | Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) | Association for Preservation Technology (APT) | Heritopolis

LANGUAGES

English (fluent); Chinese (fluent); German (intermediate); Italian (basic); French (basic).