Yuxiang (Sean) Ren

Product Designer, AI Experiences

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Authorized to work in the US without sponsorship

SUMMARY

Product designer for **AI experiences**: how people and AI agents work together, and how **people stay in control of the decisions that matter**. I work from user research to coded prototypes, with a background in **fine art**, **graphic design**, **entrepreneurship**, and **software engineering**.

SELECTED AI PRODUCT EXPERIENCE

Founding Product Designer (Design Consultant), To-Dear | TODEAR LIMITED | Contract, Remote — May 2026 – Present

An AI companion app for people who struggle to start and keep going

- Lead product design for an app that pairs emotional support with proactive follow-ups. Work on a 5-person product and AI engineering team, owning feature definition, user flows, interaction design, visual direction, and the rules the AI agents follow.
- Reframed the original parent-relationship model into two AI companions with separate memories for feelings and for tasks, which the team **adopted as the product foundation**. Through **agent testing with AI engineers**, defined how each message is routed to one companion, and turned multi-agent capabilities into editable plans, human confirmation, and quick actions that reduce conversational overhead.
- Built the **bilingual prototype** used by product and engineering to align implementation, iterating with Claude and deciding after each round what to keep or change, plus a **98-screen dev-ready handoff** in English and Chinese. To-Dear was **accepted into HKSTP's Ideation Programme**, with up to **HK$100K in funding**, and is moving toward launch.

Research & Interaction Designer, Relay | NC State Graduate Design Studio — Aug 2026 – Present

Orchestration, decisions and management for engineers who run many AI coding agents at once

- Designed a human-in-the-loop system where agents check each other's work and **the engineer keeps the judgment calls**. **Semi-structured interviews** with 4 software engineers and 3 moderated concept tests showed that engineers couldn't review every change, and that most changes only needed a heads-up.
- Defined when agents handle a change on their own, flag it, or escalate it, then designed a live view of every agent, a feed of flagged changes, escalations that explain why a person is needed and show the evidence, and a hold-to-confirm step for changes that can't be undone.
- Built a playable prototype with Claude Code and rebuilt it twice after tests; **a staff engineer gave version one high praise compared with their company's internal tool**. Also built a Three.js walkthrough of the research for the **Fall Symposium (Dec 2026)**.

Product & UX Designer, Merlin | NC State with the Laboratory for Analytic Sciences (LAS) — Feb 2026 – May 2026

Releasing one intelligence report at five classification tiers

- Designed an AI-assisted review workflow for intelligence releasers handling **high-stakes information**, where the AI assists and **the releaser keeps the final decision**. Research showed the bottleneck was helping reviewers cross-reference reports, preserve meaning across classification tiers, and see where human attention was needed.
- Owned the dashboard and prioritization experience, local node view, and overall visual direction, and created the shared Figma system that let a 3-person team build separate flows as one product. Designed the product intro video and presented to intelligence-community stakeholders; it was featured by LAS, and the team received **an LAS letter and NSA coin**.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Digital Designer, Ten Gun Design | Remote — Jun 2022 – Sep 2022

- Sole designer for KP Corp's full-site redesign, giving its move from commercial printing to data-driven communications a more tech-forward identity. Designed it end to end, from information presentation and responsive layouts to scroll interactions and hover states.
- Partnered with an art director, PM, and developers through launch; four years on, the redesign **remains the foundation of KP's live site**, and its shared sections and cards let KP's team add new industries such as Elections and Utilities on its own. Also designed the Xbox One hub, section pages, and story template for an Xbox exhibit in New York.

UX Designer, Future House Studio | Remote — Jun 2022 – Aug 2022

- Brought in after earlier UI concepts missed stakeholder expectations; redesigned MagnifiU's interface and introduced coaching and positivity-focused community experiences, **approved by the lead stakeholder and moved into development**.

E-commerce Operator & Designer, Family Business — Aug 2024 – Jun 2026

- Co-built a family business with about 20 domestic and international stores in home and pet goods. Owned product imagery and listings plus the Shopify storefront, selection, SEO, pricing, and promotions; generated an **estimated $200K+ in sales and 5,000+ orders in a peak month**.

Graduate Teaching Assistant, NC State University | D100 Design Inquiry I — Aug 2026 – Present

- Lead a weekly discussion section of **31 first-year design students**, mentoring them in turning ambiguous briefs into concepts of their own.

EDUCATION

North Carolina State University | Master of Graphic & Experience Design (MGXD) — Aug 2025 – May 2027 (expected)

BrainStation | Software Engineering Diploma — Apr 2024 – Jul 2024

Maryland Institute College of Art | BFA, Graphic Design — Aug 2018 – May 2022

SKILLS

Design: Product, interaction, UI and visual design, AI agent and conversational UX, human-AI interaction, design systems, accessibility (WCAG)
Research: User interviews (semi-structured), moderated concept tests, usability testing, agent testing
Build: Figma, React, JavaScript, Three.js, HTML/CSS, GitHub, Claude Code, Cursor, Figma Make, After Effects
Languages: English, Mandarin Chinese