Lecture: Friday,
May 29, 2026, 12:30pm
(Pre-Lecture Reception, 12:00pm)

Jia Chen (Fudan University), "Rhythm, Nature, and Art in Dewey"

The notion of rhythm constitutes a pivotal position in Dewey's later aesthetic writings. It can be read from several points of view: materially, symbolically, physiologically, and artistically. This talk proposes two readings of this concept: (1) it deepens a major Deweyan theme of continuity with a subtle discussion of rhythmic variation. Rhythm depicts the expression of life's intrinsic needs, the accumulation and conservation of the organism's energy, and, ultimately, the realization of a consummatory experience; (2) Dewey demystifies the transformation from rhythm in nature to rhythms in various arts, outlining a metaphysics of art that centralizes the creative intelligence.

Jia Chen (PhD, UIUC) is Associate Professor of Philosophy from Department of Aesthetics at Fudan University. She contributed an essay on arts in Confucianism and Dewey in Confucianism and Deweyan Pragmatism *(University of Hawaii Press, 2021). Dr. Chen is currently a visiting scholar at NYU, writing a book on Dewey's Aesthetics and its links to the American art world.*

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Lunchtime Talks

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The Center for Dewey Studies is the home of research, publishing, and outreach focused on the life, work, and legacy of the American philosopher and educator John Dewey. Our Lunchtime Talks feature speakers researching Dewey and related thinkers, work in the pragmatist tradition, and work in a broadly Deweyan spirit.

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