Yicheng Zhang

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Education

Ph.D in Electrical Engineering | University of California, Riverside 09/2021 - present
M.S. in Computer Engineering | University of California, Irvine 09/2018 - 06/2021
B.S. in Electrical Engineering and Automation | Sichuan University 09/2014 - 06/2018

Work Experience

Associate Instructor | University of California, Riverside 06/2024 - 09/2024
Lecturing for upper-division undergraduate class CS 153 - Design of Operating Systems

Research Intern | Pacific Northwest National Laboratory 06/2023 - 09/2023
Research on micro-architecture security in multi-GPU systems

Research Area

Hardware security; AR/VR Security; Side-channel Attacks; Machine Learning; Computer Architecture

Technical Skills

Programming Languages & Software: C++, Python, CUDA, TensorFlow, MATLAB, PyTorch, Verilog, Xilinx Vivado, Unity, Unreal Engine

Selected Courses: Autonomous Cyber-Physical Systems (A+), GPU Architecture & Parallel Programming (A), Advanced Operating Systems (A), Pattern Recognition (A), Advanced Computer Vision (A), Advanced System Security (A), Machine Learning & Artificial Intelligence (A)

Selected Projects (Full Publication List)

Research Intern | Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Richland, WA 06/2023 - 09/2023
Covert and Side Channel Attacks on Multi-GPU Systems *(SEED'24 , under review in ASPLOS'25)*

- Identified a novel contention-based leakages vector on NVIDIA Multi-GPU's NVLink interconnect.
- Performed covert and side-channel attacks on the NVIDIA DGX system and Google Compute Platform.

Accuracy-Constrained Efficiency Optimization for Detecting Drainage Crossing *(SC Workshop'23)*

- Demonstrated the efficacy of resource-aware Neural Architecture Search (NAS) in refining the hyper parameters of SPP-Net, leading to significant enhancements in inference efficiency.
- Performed comprehensive profiling of the drainage crossing detection models on GPU systems, pinpointing the performance bottlenecks unique to single GPU configurations.

Research Assistant | University of California, Riverside, Riverside, CA 09/2021 - present
Shared State Attacks in Multi-User Augmented Reality Applications *(Usenix Security'24)*

- Demonstrated a series of innovative and robust attacks on multiple AR frameworks with shared states, focusing on three publicly accessible frameworks from Meta and Google.
- Proposed several potential mitigation strategies that help enhance the security of multi-user AR applications.

AR/VR typing inference using head motion tracking *(Usenix Security'23)*

- Developed a system named **TyPose** that autonomously deduces words and characters typed by users from their head motion sensor data.
- Collected tens of user traces depicting AR/VR typing behavior and conducted a thorough evaluation of our attack on these traces, achieving a high level of accuracy.

Side-channel attacks on AR/VR systems via Rendering Performance Counters *(Usenix Security'23)*

- Introduced a taxonomy outlining potential targets and sources of leakage for software-based side-channel attacks on AR/VR systems.
- Demonstrated five end-to-end side-channel attacks across three distinct AR/VR-specific attack scenarios, achieving a high degree of accuracy.

Research Assistant | University of California, Irvine, Irvine, CA 08/2018 - 06/2021
Remote Side-Channel Attack on FPGA to Steal Neural Network Structure *(IEEE TIFS'21 , FPGA'21)*

- Developed a novel FPGA power side-channel-based attack on Machine learning models.
- Employed a range of classifiers including Nearest Neighbors, Gradient Boosting, Decision Tree, RandomForest, Neural Network, Naive Bayes, AdaBoost, and XGBoost to effectively recover hyper-parameters of the victim model from side-channel leakages.

Model Stealing Attacks via GPU Context-Switching Side-Channel ***(DSN'20)***

- Developed a novel GPU side-channel based on context-switching penalties.
- Implementation of LSTM-based inference model to identify the structural secret of CNN models.

Presentations and Talks

- "Accuracy-Constrained Efficiency Optimization and GPU Profiling of CNN Inference for Detecting Drainage Crossing Locations" at SC'23 Workshop, Denver, CO, USA, November, 2023
- "It's all in your head(set): side-channel attacks on augmented reality systems" at USENIX Security'23, Anaheim, CA, USA, August, 2023
- "Poster: Stealing Neural Network Structure through Remote FPGA Side-channel Analysis" at FPGA'21, virtual, February 2021
- "Leaky DNN: Stealing Deep-Learning Model Secret with GPU Context-Switching Side-Channel" at DSN'20, virtual, June 2020

Media Coverage

Side channel attacks on AR/VR headset via rendering performance counters

- Reported by **UCR News**, **ZME Science**, **Tech Xplore**, **Analytics Insight**, **Gillett News**, 2023

AR/VR keylogging from user head motions

- Reported by **UCR News**, **Fagen Wasanni**, **Analytics Insight**, **Game Is Hard**, **Knowridge**, **Inside**, 2023

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant at University of California, Irvine

- Organization of Digital Computers (EECS112) — Spring 2021
- Next Generation Search Systems (CS125) — Winter 2021
- Object Oriented System & Programming (EECS40) — Fall 2020
- System Software (EECS111) — Spring 2020
- Continuous-Time Signals and Systems (EECS150) — Winter 2019

Academic Supervision and Mentorship

- Gabriel Haresco — UCR CSE, 2023–Current
- Clarity Shimoniak — UCR CSE, 2023–Current
- Cheng Gu — UCR CSE, 2022–Current
- Xuchang Zhan — UCI EECS, 2019-2020, Now at VISA

Honors and Awards

- International Peer Educator Training Program Certification (IPTPC) Level 1 — 2023
- Student Travel Grant for IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy — 2021,2022
- Student Travel Grant for ACM Conference on Computer and Communications Security — 2021
- Student Travel Grant for USENIX Security Symposium — 2021
- Dean's Distinguished Fellowship Award (UC Riverside) — 2021
- Sichuan University Scholarship (China) — 2014–2018

Volunteering, Diversity & Inclusion

- **Challenge Course Judge** at Inland Empire Regional Seaperch Competition 2024
- **Volunteer** at ACM ASPLOS 2024 2024
- **Volunteer** at IEEE International Symposium on Secure and Private Execution Environment Design (SEED) 2024
- **Mentor** at UCR Graduate Student Mentorship Program (GSMP) 2022-2023
- **Volunteer** at 120th Anniversary of Sichuan University 2016.9