

MAF'J ALVAREZ



Summary

I'm a senior service designer and Interaction designer for screen based and immersive media, a practicing digital artist and creative technologist based in Brighton, UK. You can count on over 15 years of inquisitive creative growth and innovation, developing the skills needed to meet the demands of a changing digital landscape. I do this through participative and lean UX, agile practices, purposeful play, rapid prototyping and visual storytelling. I'm friendly and able to communicate well with stakeholders and team members, where I bridge the gap between user research, client requirements and technical development.

Moving forward, I am looking for opportunities to flourish into a technological future which is able to learn from nature, embrace diversity and expand awareness to bridge the gaps. I am a quirky, playful, neurodiverse human with a pragmatic approach who thrives in an agile, playful work environment.

Skillset

- User research / discovery
- Workshop facilitation / participatory design
- Storyboarding / sketching / illustration
- Stakeholder engagement
- Personas / user journeys / concept dev
- Information architecture / wireframes
- Iterative design / agile workflow
- Interface design / prototyping
- English (native) / Spanish (near native) / Italian & Portuguese (basic working) / French (basic)
- Immersive experience design
- Art direction
- Pitching / public speaking / panels
- VR development and prototyping
- 3d modeling
- Unity3d development for VR
- Html / CSS / jQuery
- Github (Unity3d)
- HTC Vive / Oculus / MMR
- GDS / Open source / Creative Commons

Experience

2021 - present Digital artist & creative technologist - Root Interactive

Working under my own company Root Interactive Ltd as resident artist and creative technologist in immersive digital media based at Fusebox Brighton, I have worked on a variety of digital art projects and commissions including *EVA Quantica VR* commissioned by the National Gallery and presented at Brighton Festival 2022, and *INTER/her* - a VR experience with artist Camille Baker exploring the hidden world of female reproductive health and illness. I've mentored on a VRlab for film makers in Norway and run VR Hackjams for creatives new to VR in Nottingham. I am currently working with Universities and arts institutions on short experimental R & D workshops, talks and panels exploring immersive media. I work with producers and art directors to produce early interaction designs and prototypes of immersive experiences. I'm currently developing workshops to teach introductory VR practices using a multiplayer VR sandbox platform called 'Holospace' which reduces complexity and technical knowledge needed to get started with prototyping in VR.

Mar 2022 Interaction Designer - Methods (contractor) at Department for Education

Alpha phase GDS prototype development of an improved 'Find a course' website for the National Careers Service (not yet live) to help improve navigation and results on the search feature. My role was to design, test and present iterative development for different user 'mindsets' working closely with the user researchers and product team.

2019-2021 Interaction Designer - CapGemini (contractor) at HMRC

I worked with a very large, complex new digital tax service for the UK Government - Capital Gains Tax for UK Property. Working closely with product owner, business analysts, performance analyst, user researcher, service designer, front and back-end developers, my role was to design user flows and develop the comprehensive prototype for user testing sessions with remote participants, presenting to policy team and GDS assessment panels at all phases as well as participating in cross-government COVID design hack days.

Nov 2020 Founder - Inkibit Immersive collective

Discovery and founding of a new creative technology collective to promote early stage playful prototyping and development of VR and other emerging immersive technologies for the arts, cultural and educational sectors. Training and development of Holospace - a multiplayer, accessible workflow in Unity3d and Probuilder with Photon for the Oculus Quest.

- Oct 2018** **UX Lead - Schroders (6 months contract)**
 Lead UX designer on a joint venture project. Establishment of a Lean UX practice embedded within a collocated and distributed agile team. Two week sprint cadence with user research and testing, analysis, stakeholder playback, UI design, sketching, journey mapping and user flows, interactive prototyping, design system and pattern library.
- Mar 2018** **Service designer/UX lead - Lifebox discovery, Equal Experts (Contract)**
 One-week discovery sprint for a medical startup at a private hospital. Working alongside a business analyst, delivery lead and technical lead. Included User research, business process mapping and analysis, stakeholder interviews, participatory personas, user journey mapping.
- 2017-2018** **Associate Interaction designer with Equal Experts, HMRC, Worthing (3-month contract)**
 UX designer on Help To Save app for Next Generation Consumer mobile app team:
 1 - Discovery material and gamification concepts to help users build a saving habit with the help of the app. Working with behavioral economists and researchers across HMRC.
 2 - Mobile app interfaces in Android and iOS for iterative development of the live app.
- 2016-2017** **Service designer/UX Designer with Equal Experts, HMRC, Worthing (1 year)**
 Interaction designer responsible for the development of user journeys, information architecture and prototyping using GDS patterns and prototyping kit. Involved in organizing and running client meetings and collaborative design workshops, attending user research sessions and working closely with researchers and content designers to produce iterative solutions. Projects were 'Agents' and 'Country by Country Reporting'.
- 2010 - 2015** **Service designer/ UX designer at Aptivate, Brighton (5 years)**
 Aptivate is a UK based NGO that provides IT services for international development. It produces web-based database applications using open source software for clients such as the World Health Organisation, Unicef, WWF and WaterAid.
- 2005 - 2010** **Web designer - Limbic Fishnet, Brighton**
2005 - 2006 **Artist and Workshop leader - Campbell works, London**
2004 - 2005 **Creative Programmer - Samba Xchange, Creative Partnerships, London/Rio**
2002 - 2004 **Team administrator - Access Technology Support Unit, RNIB, London**
1999 - 2000 **Systems administrator/trainer - Reigate School of Art, Reigate**

