Michal Finegold

michal@shmonster.com | Greenwich, CT | 917.747.7518 | www.michalfinegold.com

SOFTWARE DEVELOPER & COMPUTER GRAPHICS PROFESSIONAL

Accomplished leader with 15+ years of experience in software development, computer graphics, and product management. Possess a unique combination of technical and artistic skills, adept at leading the development of software tools for both internal stakeholders and consumers. Experienced in high-end CG projects for film, episodic content, and advertising. Pioneered the integration of generative AI workflows into the visual effects pipeline, significantly reducing project delivery costs.

WORK HISTORY

Founder & Product Manager, Shmonster | 01/2016 - Present
- Conceptualized, designed, and led the product development of 5 original interactive mobile apps in the creative educational space, overseeing their creation from inception to execution
- Completed projects within short timelines and on tight budgets by utilizing agile methodologies, leading to repeat business from satisfied clients
- Performed market research and implemented user experience design principles resulting in positive user feedback and nearly **1 million downloads** of the company's flagship app, PuppetMaster
- Secured a **utility patent** for PuppetMaster's innovative techniques of intuitive rigging and motion capture animation, opening up new partnership avenues for the company
- Delivered presentations at numerous technology and education events, attracting high-paying clients, facilitating widespread adoption of company apps in schools, and earning accolades from prestigious organizations such as the American Association of School Librarians
- Crafted games that use custom web-based databases to dynamically generate gameplay content, fostering diverse gaming experiences and allowing for seamless live updates without extensive development cycles

Computer Graphics Supervisor, CoSA VFX | 05/2022 - 03/2024
- CG Supervision on multiple network, cable, and streaming shows
- Implemented new generative AI workflows for the company using Stable Diffusion
- Projects include *Tom Swift*, *Mysterious Benedict Society*, *Station 19*, and *Westworld*
- Led teams of CG artists to complete shots for clients and meet tight deadlines
- Taught team members best practices and helped them solve technical and artistic challenges
- Facilitated effective communication and collaboration among teams, stakeholders, and clients
- Designed and implemented customized pipeline tools based on input from CG artists and supervisors

Computer Graphics Technical Director, Multiple VFX Studios | 07/2007 - 04/2022
- Implemented and supervised visual effects work on many film, television, and advertising projects, at companies such as **Weta Digital**, **Framestore**, **Animal Logic**, **Method Studios**, **The Moving Picture Company**, **The Mill**, and many more
- Notable projects include *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*, *Station 19*, *Westworld*, *Happy Feet Two*, *Captain America: The First Avenger*, and the *Geico Gecko* commercials
- Contributed as a 3D artist and digital compositor, primarily focusing on lighting, compositing, and look development, with frequent work as a generalist as well
- Oversaw teams and provided mentorship to junior staff members
- Conducted R&D as a pipeline developer, designing, building and maintaining tools for 3D and 2D artists
- Designed user-friendly UI/UX for pipeline tools and provided training and technical support, resulting in increased adoption among artists
- Effectively facilitated cross-disciplinary communication between diverse art and technology departments to ensure smooth collaboration, efficiency, and productivity

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Instructor, School of Visual Arts | New York, NY
• Created and taught Lighting and Rendering Course for BFA

Adjunct Instructor, Bloomfield College | Bloomfield, NJ
• Created and taught 3D Modeling Course for Creative Arts and Technology Department

3D Artist & Technical Assistant, Charlex | New York, NY
• Worked on high-end television commercials for prominent consumer brands, including **Proctor & Gamble**, **Verizon**, and **AT&T**
• Production work focused on materials, lighting, and compositing
• R&D work developing and maintaining production pipeline tools
• Designed and implemented the front end of a new web-based render submission system

Software Engineer, VCON | Herzliya, Israel
• Multithreaded programming, developing the VCON Conference Bridge - a server that enables video conferencing between multiple endpoints
• Redesigned the code for a new version of the product

EDUCATION

Master of Science in Digital Imaging and Design | New York University
Graduated with distinction, thesis recognized with honors, received partial academic scholarship, focus on 3D

Bachelor of Science in Physics and Computer Science | Tel Aviv University
Received partial academic scholarship from Physics Department

CORE COMPETENCIES

Software Development, Visual Effects, Product Design, Art Direction, Project Management, UI/UX Design, Object-Oriented Programming, Database Design, Leadership, Problem Solving

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming Languages & Frameworks: C++, C#, Objective-C, Swift, Python, MEL, TCL, SQL, Unity, ARKit, HTML, CSS, JavaScript

Development Environments: Apple Xcode, Microsoft Visual Studio, Google Colab, Sublime Text

VFX: 3D, 2D, Design, Look Development, 3D Lighting, 3D Modeling, Shaders, Animation, Dynamics, Particles, Rigging, Rendering, Texturing, Digital Compositing, Motion Graphics, Editing, Scripting, Generative AI

Computer Graphics Software: Maya, Houdini, ZBrush, V-Ray, Arnold, RenderMan, 3Delight, Mental Ray, Mantra, Nuke, Photoshop, After Effects, InDesign, Premiere, Final Cut Pro, Motion, Shake, Stable Diffusion, Midjourney, Runway, Leonardo, ComfyUI

Emerging Technologies: AR, VR, Computer Vision, Motion Capture, Machine Learning, AI

Platforms: iOS, Android, Windows, macOS, Linux, ChromeOS, Web

Project Management Tools: Trello, Figma, Git

Math & Quantitative Analysis: 3D Math, Linear Algebra, Probability Theory, Data Science, 3D Geometry

Traditional Art: Drawing, Painting, Sculpture