Phillip Olarte

PRODUCT DESIGN PRINCIPAL | AI, XR & EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

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SUMMARY

Product leader with a Master's in AI/ML and 14+ years of experience building 0-to-1 products for global multi-site organizations and startups. I bridge the gap between Large Model technical constraints and fluid user experiences. Specialized in designing "human-in-the-loop" AI interfaces (Voice, Mixed Reality, GenAI) to give users precise control over their generative output. Proven ability to ship rapidly in startup environments (Storyverse, Paodao) with powerful storytelling and reduce the cognitive load of complex professional software. I thrive in environments where innovation and entrepreneurship drive positive change. Known for a low ego, collaborative approach, keeping teams focused on the big picture while staying grounded; prioritizing human connection, not just compute.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

STORYVERSE Built a multimodal AI character engine, defining novel interaction patterns for voice-to-action workflows. Solved key UX challenges in latency and hallucinogenic responses to create coherent storytelling experience & seamless creative loop.
CHALKNOTES Designed spatial canvas interface that solved for high-latency input in uncontrolled environments. Created novel interaction patterns that allowed users to maintain flow state while manipulating complex unpredictable experiences.
PAODAO INC Directed a complete product overhaul during extreme crisis conditions, managing a remote engineering team to deliver business intelligence features on a tight timeline.

CORE EXPERTISE

AI, Interaction & User Experience Design, Conversational & Multimodal UX, Experience Architecture, Physical–Digital Systems Design, Narrative-Driven Interfaces, Interactive Design, Human-Computer Interaction, **Human-AI Interaction**
Product, Systems & UX Strategy User Research & Insights, Journey Mapping, **Systems Thinking, Rapid Prototyping**, Wireframing, Information Architecture, Usability & Experience Metrics, Product Vision & Roadmap, Accessibility (WCAG), Design Systems
Emerging Technology & Innovation Applied Artificial Intelligence, **Large Language Models (LLMs), Agentic Systems**, Multimodal Machine Learning Workflows, Prompt Engineering, Immersive Media, Spatial & Geospatial Audio, Generative Audio Pipelines
Technical Product Leadership Gather Product Requirements, Translating User and Business Requirements to Technical Systems, Cross-Functional Collaboration, Technical Documentation & Communication, Design–Engineering Alignment,
Team Leadership Global & Distributed Team Leadership, Stakeholder Management, Strategic Alignment, Mentorship & Coaching, Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration, Executive Communication, Team Development
Business Strategy & Execution Product Strategy, Analyze Market Trends, Innovation Management, Financial Literacy & Budgeting, KPI Definition & Performance Tracking, Vendor & Partner Management, Customer Experience Strategy

EXPERIENCE

CO- FOUNDER, PRODUCT, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, *Storyverse* – New York, NY | Hybrid   June 2022 – Present
Storyverse is a transmedia studio integrating film, live performance with digital products for holistic immersive experience storytelling. Led a team of 5 direct reports and 25 indirect focused on AI product design, product development, immersive design and storytelling.

- **Designed, engineered, and tested with 37 non-AI users, a locally-hosted embodied AI character** with novel multimodal interface including speech and vision models to build trust with AI while preserving user privacy.
- Designed a cross-platform experience for hospitality group (gospelnyc.com) spanning real and digital worlds (fairylandshow.com), including immersive ticketing system converting 20% of viewers to users and **66% of users into purchasers** at 100% customer satisfaction with seamless Stripe payment integration and POS ticket scan validation.
- Augmented reality, video, and generative AI content designer and content strategy for multiple media, digital, and hardware platforms resulting in **millions of impressions**.

INTERIM HEAD OF PRODUCT DESIGN, *PaoDao Inc.* – New York, NY | Hybrid   January 2011 – Present
- Strategic vision and implementation for 50+ B2B and B2C companies focused on AI, UX/UI design, software adoption, and digital transformation. Examples: **e-commerce turnaround to $12M+ exit**; due diligence on $200M investment.

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PRODUCT DESIGN PRINCIPAL | AI, GENERATIVE MEDIA & UX

DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT DESIGN, *BSR* – New York, NY | Remote   June 2021 – February 2025
ESG consulting group creating impact through insight, advice, and collaboration with the Fortune 500. Led a team of 10 focused on product strategy, design, and engineering to aggregate knowledge for easy knowledge search and new business insights.

- Created Materiality web app **guiding Fortune 500 firms' ESG decisions** amid monthly regulatory updates, **reducing consulting hours** by turning decentralized spreadsheet approach into a unified business intelligence.
- Led research strategies development, UX research workshops, internal executive communications, worker change management, and global development teams to deliver human-centered web app with API integrations.

CO-FOUNDER, PRODUCT, *Chalknotes Inc.* – New York, NY | Hybrid   Jan 2019 – July 2021

- Created location-based AR storytelling app with community discovery built in - leading to new revenue streams for entrepreneurs. Including: Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, Columbia University, and Chelsea Music Festival.
- Developed mixed-reality consumer experiences achieving **over 1 hour of sustained engagement per user.**

ENTERPRISE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, *The Ford Foundation.* – New York, NY | In-Office   August 2016 – January 2019

- Designed discovery interfaces for grant-makers working on a $600M portfolio; **improved adoption 10X** with UX redesign, ontology, **restructured enterprise search**, early NLP for discovery, and cross-department advisory council.

SENIOR PRODUCT DESIGNER, *TAU Investment Management* – New York, NY | In-Office   January 2014 – August 2016

- Lead global application strategy and development for private equity to bring supply-chain transparency to major apparel brands; tailored for low-connectivity international environments;
- Conducted **ethnographic research across four continents** to ensure accessibility and scalability of emerging technologies (blockchain traceability) and adapted UI for users in emerging markets that never touched a tablet computer.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Portfolio: phillipolarte.com
Github: github.com/founderphil

AI & Data Science: Tactile OpenAI APIs, RLHF, data cleanup, ML models, multimodal AI, local inference, BI Analytics
Code & Frameworks: Python (data science and model training), TypeScript, Next.js, R, Unity, Three.js, React, React Native, p5.js, Pixi.js. Comfortable prototyping in React/Python.
Design Tools: Figma (component libraries), Adobe After Effects, Framer, journey mapping, A/B testing, Jira, usability testing, mockups, Adobe Creative Suite: (After Effects, Photoshop), Blender, Typography, web animations, MAX
Emerging Tech: Generative audio pipelines: (speech-to-text (STT), text-to-speech (TTS)), deep learning, geospatial audio, computer vision, Augmented reality, mixed reality
Traditional Tech: CMS, CRM, intranet, AWS, GCP, web development, GitHub, iOS, Android, web, CI/CD, PowerPoint (PPT), Enterprise Search, SQL, NoSQL, Excel, Keynotes, Qualtrics, APIs, microservices, IVR customer experience
Music: Synthesizers, Ableton DAW, Adobe Audition, GenAI audio, Piano, Voice, Uke

EDUCATION

Master of Science (AI/ML & HCI Design) – Tandon School of Engineering, New York University
Bachelor of Music (Piano & Voice) – Benjamin T Rome School of Music, Catholic University of America
Certification: **User Experience Masters [UXMC]** – (Nielsen Norman Group) focus: UX research, interaction design, management

PUBLIC SPEAKING & PUBLICATIONS

Interactive AI Manifesto – 8 lines in the sand, THE MAIA EXPERIENCE	2025
Best Practices for Mixed Reality Experience Design in an Open World	2024
Talk: Narrative-Driven Mixed Reality, NY MEDIA LAB, NYC.	2023
EMILY WAS HERE: A Unique Experience Where The Brooklyn Bridge Is The Stage, VENTS MAGAZINE	2022
Talk: Product Design and Mentorship on Startup Life, Romania Developer Community.	2021
Touring & performing storyteller for Kennedy Center, HBO and Disney	2005 – 2011