

Michael Carychao

Senior Product Designer · Creative Tools & AI

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Product designer who prototypes in code, with a decade of designing and shipping creative tools, games, and AI experiences for web, mobile, and VR, including nearly four years with Will Wright's team and a generative-AI project with Netflix. Invents new interaction models and iterates with real users until each one clicks.

EXPERIENCE

Viridian Reveries | Founder, Product Designer & Creative Technologist

Mar 2017 – Present

Studio doing product design, app development, and strategy for clients, alongside original work.

- **DreamLounge:** Designed and built a web experience for exploring imaginary worlds. A scrollable feed pairs Midjourney animation with music.
- **Malt:** Invented a turn-taking model for human-AI writing and built it into an open-source, cross-platform writing tool. Author and model alternate one paragraph at a time, so the writer stays in the lead.
- **Two Seater:** Design and build games for shared play across phones, no internet needed; refine them through TestFlight playtests and make short films that show how the cross-screen play works.
- Created the nature-world animation for Karen X. Cheng's *Alternate Worlds* (1M+ views). Since 2022, published hundreds of AI image and animation experiments for 37K followers on Instagram, TikTok, and X.
- VFX credits include Marvel's *Secret Invasion*. Collaborated with Method Studios and Shepherd Studios, refining shots through rounds of director feedback.
- Prototype in code with Claude Code and Codex, and build local ComfyUI, LLM, and GPU pipelines.
- **Smart Swords:** Co-created and shipped 100 app-connected swords to Kickstarter backers, plus a companion fantasy game; designed the electronics, PCB, and iOS experience.

Greater Studios | Co-Founder, Game Designer & Developer

Jan 2017 – Aug 2023

- **Kitty Nigiri:** Co-created a science-fiction VR puzzle game with Jacob Dominicus and took it from concept to Steam Early Access release.
- Designed gameplay and programmed VR interactions in Unity, connecting physical player actions to laser puzzles, flying sushi, and a story world of space cats.

Gallium Studios (Will Wright) | UX Prototype Designer & Unity Developer

May 2018 – Mar 2022

- **Proxi:** Designed and built playable UX prototypes for iOS and Apple TV with Will Wright's team, reworking them through successive rounds of user feedback.
- **Memory Maker:** Prototyped Proxi's tool for composing personal memories as 3D scenes; built exploratory scenes and proposed features for more expressive scene creation.
- Worked with Netflix on a generative-AI story-game prototype, exploring playable AI storytelling.

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Tippett Studio | Feature-film rendering

NASA Ames | Data Visualization & UI Intern: lunar-lander data interface

photo-eye | Web Developer: e-commerce, auctions, and artist portfolios

SKILLS

Design: Product, interaction, and visual design; UI/UX; prototyping; game design; visual storytelling; playtesting

Code: Unity, C#, TypeScript, JavaScript, HTML/CSS, iOS development

AI: Midjourney, Claude Code, Codex, ComfyUI, Runway, local LLM and GPU workflows

Hardware: PCB design, 3D printing, laser cutting

EDUCATION

B.S., Computer Engineering, San Francisco State University, 2008. Additional study in Film and Comics at Hampshire College and Physics and Math at the University of Chicago.