

Shay Ghassemian

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I am a hybrid experience designer, researcher, budding musician and art lover floating in all shades of expression to make a more pleasant and just world. At my core, I find joy in tackling challenges and exploring complex questions. My passions are in organizing systems, and leaving patterns, colors, melodies, handprints, and words behind. As an introvert-extrovert, I hold curiosity, whimsy, equity, authenticity, and community dear to my heart. I thrive the most when collaborating with others, bringing these elements together for shared experiences.

Career Passions

Hone in on my craft
Practice data-informed design
Expand my design leadership skills
Explore the impact and ethics of the emerging tech
Experiment

Design Fascinations

Brain & Cognition
Design Quality
Education
Equity
Environmental Design
Strategy & System Design

Art Explorations

Music: Singing & Cello
Drawing
Making Lino Prints

Design Experience

STAFF PRODUCT DESIGNER

Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Education

Jan 2019 - Present

- Improved the user experience, adoption, and engagement in the *Summit Learning platform*, an LMS for students, teachers and school leaders, by developing features on multiple surface areas;
- Led the Redesign of the Learning platform for better usability and information architecture, resulting in business strategy shifts for the org;
- Led a Zero-to-One pilot focused on *Self-Directed Learning* to increase student engagement and decrease teacher burnout in the classroom, resulting in definition of CZI-shaped problems;
- [WIP] Leading an org-wide project on the opportunities for *AI in education & philanthropy tech*,
- Elevated DesignOps for our team through the creation of comprehensive Figma templates as a key component of a broader Design team effort, resulting in more consistency and efficiency;
- Ignited a vibrant org culture by launching "Saffron," an Employee Resource Group for CZIers affiliated with MENA/SWANA, promoting inclusivity and support.

Skills I gained in this role:

- Zero-to-One design process and leadership
- design for US education system: with/for kids + personalization + hard guardrails
- stakeholder management in education: opinionated and experiential mindset
- mentoring

PRODUCT DESIGN CONSULT

Gozar.org

Jan- Apr 2023 | Pro Bono

Designed a social platform for democratic discourse on transition to a secular democracy for Iran, in collaboration with a group of Iranian academics around the world. This work entailed tackling a lot of pitfalls of the existing social media apps such as trolling, cyber attacks, security, anonymity, and more *[still a work in progress]*.

DESIGN MENTOR

Rethink

2020 - 2022 | Pro Bono

ON-AIR JUDGE

Adobe Creative Jam

May 2020

There's also an interview with me on Rethink blog about my collaboration style





Went Back To School

PRODUCT DESIGNER & ILLUSTRATOR

Hidden Faces AR app

Aug-Oct 2019

With the mission to raise awareness about the political prisoners in Iran, I illustrated their faces and worked with a developer to make an AR app that would project them as murals on walls.

Hidden Faces was selected as an honorable mention in the Social Justice category of Fast Company 2020 World Changing Ideas Award.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

IASDR [International Association of Societies of Design Research]

Nov 2017

Shared our team's experience with project *Patient360*, a project to understand the cancer patients experience from the time they're diagnosed to the time they are out of SCCA. In this talk we shared our methods both in design research and overcoming challenges of two uncommon companies collaborating with each other to understand the healthcare system.

PRODUCT DESIGNER & RESEARCHER

Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, Healthcare

Jun 2016 - Jan 2019

At SCCA I was the founding designer of the *Caresi app*, a patient care manager web app:

- Designed the *Caresi web app* through close collaboration with XFN partners and patients. I was a one-person designer for this team, doing both research and UX design, which resulted in increased adoption and retention.
- Developed a blueprint for SCCA cancer patients, Nurses, & Physicians through a collaborative project which resulted in multiple service design projects to be provided by the clinic

Skills I gained in this role:

- UX Research methods
- UX design for mobile
- Scoping
- Collaboration and workshoping
- stakeholder management in healthcare: opinionated and scientific mindset

INTERACTION DESIGNER

Value-Sensitive Design Lab at UW, Digital Democracy

Jan 2014 - Apr 2016

Worked on the Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal project. This project focused on democratizing digital storytelling and content curation for the Rwandan community all around the world, to deliver the history of 1994 genocide over generations.

Skills I gained in this role:

- VSD Research methods centering human values in *multi-lifespan design problems*
- UX design for web
- Co-designing with the audience

MASTER OF DESIGN: INTERACTION DESIGN

University of Washington, School of Art, Art History, & Design

Sep 2013 - Jun 2015

Thesis

- "I Wish for An Animal: a multiplayer mixed-reality game about wildlife conservation"
- Won "AIGA (re)design awards 2015"
- Article "I Wish for an Animal" published in #33.3 of *Arcade magazine*, Winter 2016.

Don Norman gave the two of us in-person kudos after our keynote, saying "don't tell anyone, but this was the most informative session... I took notes to show your ways to my team."

Most fun I've ever had working
with children and artists



DESIGNER & FACILITATOR

The Flying Classroom

Dec 2012 - Oct 2013 | *Pro Bono*

As the designer of the Flying Classroom, I travelled along with a team of artists and educators to schools in deprived parts of Iran with the goal of empowering children to learn how to make their environment pleasant using local supplies. We held workshops and co-design activities with teachers and students, and used the students' final products in the new design of the school.

My article titled "**Reflecting on the Flying Classroom**" was published in issue **32.2 of Arcade magazine, Fall 2014**.

INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER

Axon Innovation, Physical Product Design

Sep 2009 - Oct 2013

Fortunate to work at one of the well-known design studios in Tehran, I worked on multiple projects as a product designer with different clients. Projects varied from furniture and appliances to package design.

Skills I gained from this role:

- Design craft: 3D modeling, & rendering
- Knowledge of manufacturing
- Pitching and presentation skills
- Client management

last updated in 2013...
barely useful now ;)

Beginning From Industrial Design

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE: INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

Iran University of Science & Technology (IUST), School of
Architecture & Design

Feb 2006 - Feb 2011

Thesis

- "MuseWheel: a musical instrument to
improve social skills in children of labor"