Salil Parekh

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Multi-disciplinary design researcher, creative technologist and strategic designer with experience in different sectors, industries and cultures, along with an independent art practice which focusses on design and technology. Jack of all trades, and mastery in some, key strength lies in the ability to handle various tasks simultaneously, work collaboratively, pay obsessive attention to detail and think laterally.

Experience

Research Assistant | 08/2021 — 05/2022
The New School | New York City, U.S.

- Co-designed and developed a virtual reality archive to document and disseminate technologies of protest from the past movements to speculative ones in the future.
- Co-designed and developed an accessible (a11y) friendly website template for media art educators in higher education.

Design Researcher | 01/2018 — 08/2020
Quicksand Design Studio | New Delhi, India

- Worked on 15+ projects with clients such as UNCDF, UNICEF, Médecins Sans Frontières, Population Council, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and other multi-national brands across disciplines such as cultural heritage, new media, gaming, sexual and reproductive health, product design, market research, fintech, human centred design.
- Conducted research for a major U.S. based home improvement company to investigate the future of smart and interconnected homes, in order to help them define future product development strategy.
- Designed and led a speculative design workshop to help Médecins Sans Frontières understand how they need to prepare and strategise for public health emergencies in the future. A speculative design toolkit was created which documented the speculative design process and guide MSF through the design thinking activities.
- Conducted research with ASRH (Adolescent Sexual & Reproductive Health) organisations, and technology companies through desk research, interviews, co-creative workshops and group discussions to create a framework to help ASRH organisations increase the impact of their digital first programs and interventions.
- Co-designed and facilitated a design thinking bootcamp for startups participating in the UNCDF Malaysia Financial Innovation Lab. An easily accessible design thinking toolkit was developed alongside for the UNCDF team to facilitate the workshop going forward.
- Co-designed and facilitated a design thinking workshop for UNICEF Tajikistan to enable adolescents in the UPSHIFT programme build skills and provide resources to identify problems in their community and design solutions for them. An accompanying toolkit was developed to help the trainers of the programme to replicate the workshop across the country.
- Led the Goa Heritage Project, funded by the British Council and Prince Claus Fund to document and disseminate the culture and heritage of Goa through Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Mobile Games, and Interactive Experiences. The project involved researching, and documenting the cultural heritage of Goa and creating Transmedia storytelling experiences.
- Conductive extensive research using surveys, interviews, market research and usability testing to gain insights on air quality and air pollution for a global home furniture and appliance company in order to provide actionable strategic suggestions on future product design and user experience. Developed

innovative methods of remote research methods using web-based digital tools to conduct qualitative research in a remote research context.

- Co-designed research strategy and led interviews for a research project for a financial technology startup to understand behaviours around investing. Designed mobile app wireframes from the resulting insights of the research to create safe, secure and engaging experiences around financial investment.
- Assisted in the production of the UnBox Media Arts Festival (2018) and EyeMyth Media Arts Festival (2019).
- Designed and produced an entire day of programming on Speculative Design at the EyeMyth Media Arts Festival (2019) for 100+ ticketing paying attendees.
- Produced game-ready 3D digital assets and assisted in the production for the indie cultural heritage game 'Antariksha Sanchar', and the associated Bharatnatyam dance opera audio visual live performance.
- Designed and developed web-based internal prototyping and ideation tools for the studio to use across projects and workshops.

Intern | 02/2017 — 09/2017
Quicksand Design Studio & The Busride | Goa, India

- Researched and developed collaborative spaces in Extended Reality (Virtual Reality + Augmented Reality) using game engines and open source tools.
- Created a design thinking toolkit to facilitate meaningful personal and professional collaboration between people from different backgrounds.
- Developed a workflow to translate real 3D objects to game-ready digital 3D assets using easily accessible cameras via Photogrammetry.
- Assisted in the production of EyeMyth New Media Arts Festival, and hosted a workshop on Photogrammetry
- Created successful grant proposals to win funding for internal studio projects and personal collaborations to document cultural heritage using New Media (Extended Reality, Games, Interactive Experiences)

Intern | 04/2016 — 08/2016
MTV@FLYP Cafe | New Delhi, India

- Supported event production, day-to-day marketing, environmental graphics, design material, and performed a host of other miscellaneous roles.
- Designed environmental graphics and promotional material in collaboration with brands, promoters and sponsors.
- Created marketing campaigns and assisted in creating events to boost foot traffic to bar and restaurant.

CSR Intern | 04/2015 — 08/2015
Coca Cola India | New Delhi, India

- Worked on a slew of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) projects, primarily on PET bottle recycling systems.
- Researched and documented the informal and formal waste management systems in New Delhi to understand ideal points of intervention for mass PET bottle recycling.
- Designed RVMs (Reverse Vending Machines) to enable mass collection and recycling of waste PET bottles.
- Created internal campaigns to help the organisation understand the importance of PET bottle recycling.
- Assisted in marketing campaigns and label designs for various product lines.

Education

Master of Fine Arts, Design and Technology | 2020–2022
Parsons School of Design at The New School | New York City, U.S.

- Graduated with Departmental Honours
- Attended with President's Scholarship

Bachelor of Design, Exhibition Design | 2013—2017
National Institute of Design | Ahmedabad, India

Exchange Semester | 2015
École Nationale Supérieure d'Art de Design | Dijon, France

Skills

Design Research, User Research, Design Thinking, Human Centred Design, Strategy, Speculative Design, Futuring, Trend Mapping, Facilitation, Exhibition Design, Storytelling, Visual Design, Web Development, Interaction Design, Immersive Experiences, Writing, Data Visualisation, Python, Unity, Game Development, Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Photogrammetry, Creative Coding, Rapid Prototyping, Physical Computing, 3D Modelling, Smart Textiles.

Achievements

Most Creative use of Quantum Computing in Visual Arts | 2021
IBM Quantum Jam | New York City, U.S.

- Won the Most Creative use of Quantum Technology in Visual Arts Award at the IBM Quantum Jam 2021 for our entry, Quantum Tetris.

Chat-Hi: Exploring Indian National Identity Through Machine-Generated Text | 2021
MIT Press Leonardo 67-68 | New Delhi, India

- Published a paper co-written with Jean-Thomas Martelli on using GPT-2 to generate texts written by Indian Prime Ministers, and further analysing the results.

Does the Blue Sky Lie?: Testimonies of Air's Toxicities | 2021—2022
Khoj and The Prince Claus Fund | New Delhi, India

- Won a grant to study the ecosystem air pollution in India in collaboration with Architecture for Design and created an immersive interactive exhibition to showcase how indoor spaces are affected by air pollution.

Context Clock | 2021
p5js Global Showcase | New York City, U.S.

- The Context Clock project, a radical and experimental time keeping medthod created with p5js was selected for the global p5js Showcase.

President's Scholarship | 2020—2022
The New School | New York City, U.S.

- Won a scholarship to attend the The New School for a MFA in Design and Technology

Contemporary Take, Beyond Cultural Heritage Grant | 2018
British Council and The Prince Claus Fund | Goa, India

- Won a grant to document and disseminate the heritage and culture of Goa through virtual reality, augmented reality, video games, and experimental media.

Contemporary Take, Beyond Cultural Heritage Grant | 2018
British Council and The Prince Claus Fund | Mumbai, India

- Won a grant to document and disseminate the heritage and culture of Mumbai through an interactive virtual reality experience to tell the story of various communities of the city.

Enhancing Situational Awareness for Communication & Surveillance – Runner's Up | 2017
Honeywell Aerospace Design Challenge | Bangalore, India

- Finished runners up in the competition with a proposal to augment ATC controller's vision in addition to using machine learning to make radio communication clearer.

Workshops & Talks

Moderator of a Panel Discussion on 'Future of GIFs' | 2022
FIG, a GIF Festival | EyeMyth Media Arts Festival

- Facilitated a panel discussion for FIG with Meeta Malhotra and Steve Lawler to discuss the future of GIFs and the spectrum of short form storytelling.

Conspiracy Creation | 2021
Mozilla Festival

- Hosted a workshop on Conspiracy Creation which helps participants understand the various processes used to create conspiracy theories and noise in news.

Calendar of Conflict | 2021
NYC Open Data Week | New York City, U.S.

- Presented 'Calendar of Conflict' a project which highlights unseen points of conflict in news data at the NYC Open Data Week's lightning breakfast talks.

Conspiracies, Memes, Machine Learning | 2018
UnBox Festival | Bangalore, India

- Hosted a workshop on creating conspiracies and memes using simple machine learning tools with Hugo Pilate and Natalia Sanchez.

Photogrammetry & Digital Heritage | 2017
EyeMyth Media Arts Festival | Mumbai, India

- Led a workshop on photogrammetry and its use in creating digital heritage using virtual reality and augmented reality.

Teaching

Virtual Narratives | 2018—2020
National Institute of Design | Ahmedabad, India

- Taught courses for 2nd and 3rd year university students with Hugo Pilate and Ayaz Basrai on crafting narratives within digital spaces using Game Engines, Virtual Reality, Photogrammetry and Minecraft.

Pune Futures | 2020
L'École de design Nantes Atlantique, India Studio | Pune, India

- Taught a course with Hugo Pilate, speculating on the future of Pune using the Fortnite Creative Mode platform with masters students of Transcultural Design.

Trends, Futuring and Speculative Design | 2020
MICA | Ahmedabad, India

- Facilitated a workshop on futuring, trend mapping, and speculative design with MBA students.

Festivals

Speculative Sunday | 2019
EyeMyth New Media Arts Festival | Mumbai, India

- Designed, and produced an entire day of programming of the 3-day new media arts festival in Mumbai–a large scale speculative design fête which included talks, workshops, food, and more for 100+ attendees.

FIG, a GIF Festival | 2019, 2022
EyeMyth Media Arts Festival | Mumbai, India

- Co-conceptualised and produced a GIF Festival to celebrate the art of making GIFs–which included an open call for submissions, online+offline exhibitions and a panel discussion.