

Yeji Kwon

Artist Bio

Yeji Kwon is a student majoring in Interactive Media at NYU Abu Dhabi. She was born in Seoul, South Korea but has spent the majority of her life abroad, in Vietnam and Abu Dhabi. With an aspiration to become a UI/UX designer, her passion lies in enhancing the user experience, and ultimately the lives of her users, through design and acquiring the necessary technical skills to bring her ideas to life in the digital world.

Having attended international schools for the majority of her educational years, in Ho Chi Minh and Abu Dhabi, when deciding for university, she was naturally drawn to the multicultural aspect of NYU Abu Dhabi. It was here where she gained a much deeper knowledge and appreciation for people - and the importance of encompassing the ever-growing diversity within people's culture, personality, outlook, challenges etc in contemporary society. This experience was an integral component of which developed the mindset she approaches in her design process. She aims to focus on people, empathy, and designing to optimize the lives of those who use her designed products in the digital world to tackle the various growing ethical issues in the digital space of the 21st century.

Her main projects center around storytelling. She has experience creating games using python, being the designer of the NYU Abu Dhabi iGEM team, animation, game design in unity, web development, and web design.

She is currently spending her semester in New York, where she is taking classes related to design and front end development.

Artist Statement

I'm not much of a speaker. I don't like talking about myself. I am slowly working on improving this because I learnt that people genuinely want to listen to my story like I want to listen to theirs. It's a skill that I am trying to learn but to do so, I have to look internally and pay attention to myself.

I learnt that I am a passive expresser. Hence, I like creating things, because it does the talking for me. I want to create things - things fun to look at, things that provide an enjoyable experience. It is through these creations, that I want to invite people into my mind space. I want the creation to speak for itself. I want it to be the main mode of communication for my deeper thoughts, ideas, and ultimately myself.

I learnt that I find design really really cool - to a point where I consider it a goal worth pursuing for a life-time (at least until I find something else I am interested in). I also realized that I have a natural care about it (wasn't aware of it and took time for me to recognize this).

This is why I get frustrated by poorly designed systems - systems that don't take humans as the center of consideration and purpose. Systems that value numbers, wealth, greed, productivity, while sacrificing the sanity and well-being of many. I am in search for things truly worth pursuing. I want to design with these things in mind.

Design should have a caring purpose. The final intent should be to construct an enjoyable and pleasant experience in whatever form.

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Design is problem solving. There will always be a limitation of some sort - budget, customer, objective - but the possibilities of solutions that arise from such limitations are endless. This is where the brain comes in. I think this is worth using my brain for. Enough to incentivize the reboot of it after a long period of stagnation due to the absence of purpose.

Whether it is interior, game, VR design, architecture, urban planning - I want to design space where a person can exist mentally or physically. As a highly sentient person - influenced by the senses prompted by the surroundings (also, someone who enjoys observing such surroundings) - I want to design space, beautiful space, as a present to those I care about - the people.

The construction of such space requires a life-time worth of contemplating what is good and what is unpleasant. I want my brain to always, actively, be thinking how to better one's environment, and experience, and through doing so, improve one's or multiple lives.

But, then again, the best and coolest point of it all is that it is a passive form of expression. Which works for me because a lot of my thoughts are internalized. And I can only express after much contemplation.

There seems nothing better than gifting a person a beautiful space to interact in - one in which all five senses are at a state of peace and contentment. Designing such space communicates a lot, indirectly, about the creator, their life, and their sensational capacity or spectrum. When the 'user/experiencer' reciprocates being in such a space with a positive emotion, and goes on to build off something positive from that space, I think that is truly one of the most beautiful interchange of energies that one cannot simply verbalize or quantify - but can certainly feel.