Pierre Mikhiel

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EDUCATION

New York University Abu Dhabi   **Abu Dhabi, UAE**
B.A. in Interactive Media   *Graduation Date: May 2026*

- Minors: Computer Science, Film and New Media
- Relevant Coursework: VR Research and Applications, Designing Virtual Worlds, UX Design, Sound Technology, Data Structures, Algorithms, Virtual Body Performance

WORK EXPERIENCE

Mental.ae   **Abu Dhabi, UAE**
Internship   *Nov - Jan 2025*
- Executed comprehensive QA testing on interactive food safety training modules, identifying and documenting critical UX flaws to enhance course usability and streamline the user learning path.
- Utilized Cinemachine within the Unity 3D engine to develop dynamic camera systems and cinematic sequences, significantly increasing user engagement and immersion in the training simulations.
- Collaborated with a cross-functional team of developers and course designers to assist in the development and refinement of the food safety certification program, ensuring project milestones were met.

NYU Athletics Center   **Shanghai**
Fitness Assistant coach   *Jan- May 2024*

- Guided patrons on the safe and effective use of fitness equipment to maximize workout results and prevent injury.
- Developed and led wellness activities and group fitness sessions to promote a campus-wide culture of health and well-being

NYU Housing   **Abu Dhabi**
Residential Assistant   *Aug - Nov 2023*
- Executed diverse social and educational events to foster an inclusive and engaged residential community.
- Advised students on academic and personal concerns, connecting them with key university resources to support their overall well-being.

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RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Aim Lab NYUAD   **Abu Dhabi**
Research Assistant – VR Emotion Induction Toolkit   *May - Present*

- Contributed to the development of a modular VR toolbox designed to systematically induce and study the six universal emotions and stress.
- Spearheaded the design of the "Anger" module, engineering interactive scenarios that leverage social unfairness and time pressure to trigger a targeted emotional response.
- Implemented biometric and behavioral data analysis protocols to empirically validate the emotional states elicited by the VR toolkit

Co-Author – vER: Virtual Human Companionship for Preoperative Care

- Designed virtual agents that leverage social presence to mitigate patient anxiety in simulated pre-operative hospital settings.
- Validated the agents' efficacy by conducting a pilot study that integrated biometric tracking with qualitative post-study surveys.
- Presented research findings at prestigious international venues, including the IMX ACM Conference 2025 and EMRN Barcelona 2025.

SKILLS & INTERESTS

- **Coding Languages:** C#, Python, JavaScript, C++, Arduino, P5Js
- **Languages:** Arabic, English
- **Tools:** Unity3D, Blender, DaVinci Resolve, Adobe Suite, ML5.js, Ableton Live, QLC+ (DMX lighting), OBS
- **Frameworks:** XR Interaction Toolkit, FaceMesh, p5.js, Arduino IDE
- **Other:** Biometric integration (Motion capturing), Performance design, Creative coding

Interests: Passionate about creating emotionally resonant experiences by weaving together disparate technologies like VR, kinetic hardware, and interactive software. I thrive on mastering new skills and platforms to continuously push the boundaries of what's possible in interactive storytelling and create more immersive, unified worlds.

PRESENTATIONS & CONFERENCES

- **IMX ACM (2025)** – "Virtual Companions in Preoperative VR"
- **EMRN Conference, Barcelona (2025**) – "Affective Presence in Immersive Tech"
- **Abu Dhabi University (2025)** – Guest Presentation on VR for Healthcare
- **Louvre Abu Dhabi (2024)** – VR immersive experience
- **ArtsIT2024** - Assisted in organizing the event, and covered the digital documentation including photography and media management.

PROJECTS & INSTALLATIONS

- **Mondrian's Mirage** – VR installation exhibited at Louvre Abu Dhabi.
- **Whispers from the Depth** – XR performance at NYUAD Black Box Theater.
- **Beat-Hoven** – Arduino-based musical game (IM Showcase).
- **The MindPortal** – Interactive p5.js-based generative portal.
- **Fever-Dream** – Interactive short film with branching storylines.
- **Meta Rave** – Live VR music performance in New York, featuring a virtual world projected behind the performer, combining immersive audio-visual composition with audience interaction.
- **Are You There?** – Hybrid live and digital performance at La MaMa Studio (NYC), exploring embodiment and virtual identity through live interaction, projection, and live DJ.
- **The Spiral** – Large-scale kinetic installation exhibited at NYU New York, integrating physical suspended structures with virtual counterparts in a synchronized interactive system.