

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 6 June 2023

From carpenter to VR experience designer: A journey of adversity and skill

Carlos Melo is a Venezuelan migrant, who forged a new path in Australia, transitioning from carpentry to becoming a virtual reality (VR) experience designer. Graduating from SAE Creative Institute with a Bachelor of Game Development, Carlos has utilised his skills to create hyper-realistic VR environments for clients that prepare their staff for the real-world. Carlos' story exemplifies the transformative power of education and determination in the face of adversity.

Originally hailing from Venezuela, Carlos made the life-changing decision to immigrate to Australia due to the rampant corruption and challenges plaguing his home country. It was during this time that he discovered his interest in carpentry.

"I built strong connections with builders in Australia, and got to experience many different aspects of the construction industry, which has really helped me now in my current career as a VR Experience Designer," Carlos shared.

Carlos' exposure to diverse aspects of the construction industry proved instrumental in shaping his subsequent career as a VR experience designer. Fuelled by a lifelong passion for video games, he enrolled in the Bachelor of Game Development course at SAE Brisbane in 2015.

The transition from gaming enthusiast to a student studying game development posed initial challenges, including language barriers and unfamiliar technical terms. However, as his English skills improved, Carlos began to extract greater value from his studies and found the experience at SAE to be captivating and highly relevant to his career aspirations.

"Initially I didn't know what to expect, because having a passion for gaming is different from studying game development," Carlos admitted. "As my English wasn't that strong, at that point, there were some technical terms I didn't understand."

"I always enjoyed the course, and as my English got stronger, I got more out of it and found the overall experience at SAE to be really fascinating and relevant to what I wanted as a career."

Collaborating with fellow students allowed Carlos to gain practical insights into industry dynamics and effective communication among team members. "Being able to work on projects with students who were 3D modellers and audio engineers, reflected what it's like to work in the industry and communicate with one another, which was really beneficial."

Upon completing his degree, Carlos secured a position as a VR developer at XRJV Training, ultimately transitioning to Next World, a globally recognised leader in VR training services.



ANIMATION



AUDIO

CREATIVE
INDUSTRIESCREATIVE
TECHNOLOGIES

DESIGN



FILM



GAMES



MUSIC

“My role is to collaborate with subject matter experts and create immersive VR environments that deliver on an organisation’s needs to upskill and develop their staff with training that is highly engaging,” Carlos explained.

Drawing on his background in construction, Carlos brings a unique perspective to the creation of realistic VR simulations. “Having that career history has certainly been valuable,” Carlos said. “In addition, having an understanding of using machinery like driving a forklift has meant we’re able to make those simulations hyper-realistic.

“One of the projects I previously worked on was giving professionals safety inductions on managing large machinery in tunnels, which often is such an alien concept to some people,” he added. “If you can train people in safe environments within VR that will prepare them for the real world.”

Carlos has observed the rapid growth of the VR industry in Australia since his entry into the field in 2017. With companies increasingly embracing VR as a training tool across various sectors, the industry's value has surged exponentially, and has a global value of \$41.8 billion, and is expected to grow by 13 percent over the next seven years, according to [Grand View Research](#).

Applications of VR technology now extend beyond gaming to encompass diverse fields such as farming and warehouse packaging, presenting boundless opportunities for future professionals looking to enter the industry.

“For anyone who wants to explore a career in VR, studying at somewhere like SAE will give you the core skills and knowledge to start out,” Carlos advised. “Even thinking about how you’d take a different approach to a single feature of a game you like playing, will get you thinking differently, and will help you in any future career in game development you aspire to have.”

SAE Creative Media Institute provides students with the experience, skills, equipment and connections to succeed in the industry. Find out more at sae.edu.au.

-ENDS-

About SAE

SAE Creative Media Institute is the place for creatives and innovators. Since 1976 we’ve been the leaders in creative media education across animation, audio, creative industries, creative technologies, design, film, games, and music. Every year, we support students globally to develop the skills and experience needed to carve successful careers. Students enjoy access to the latest technology and are taught by industry-experienced faculty, while putting their skills to the test in small class environments. Our graduates become part of a highly-respected global community of creatives that’s been around for over 40 years. We pride ourselves on being technically explorative, transformative and brave through our range of creative media programs, from short courses and professional training through to bachelor and postgraduate degrees. In Australia, our programs are delivered at campuses in Sydney, Brisbane, Byron Bay, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide. SAE is a part of Navitas Pty Ltd. More information about SAE is available at sae.edu.au.

For more information:

Barry de Silva, National Communications Manager

Phone: 0498 004 023

Email: barry.desilva@sae.edu.au

