MARIA
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Twitter/Blog/Portfolio

EDUCATION

PhD Candidate | Cyprus University of Technology – Department of Multimedia and Graphic Arts

SEPTEMBER 2016 – TODAY

Thesis subject: Virtual Reality for inducing empathy and changing attitudes toward stigmatized groups

Supervisor: Dr. Despina Michael-Grigoriou

(http://getlab.org/projects/phd-projects/virtual-reality-empathy/)

MSc Design and Development of Computer Games and Interactive Technologies | Cyprus University of Technology – Department of Multimedia and Graphic Arts & University of Cyprus – Department of Computer Science

2014 – 2015

Master's Thesis Subject: Virtual Reality and Claustrophobia

Supervisor: Dr. Despina Michael-Grigoriou

Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science | University of Cyprus – Department of Computer Science

2010 – 2014

Thesis Subject: Walls of Nicosia (An application made in Unity for PC and Android in which the user can see the Walls of Nicosia through the centuries)

Supervisor: Dr. Yiorgos Chrysanthou

EXPERIENCE

Research Associate | GET Lab (Microsoft Computer Games and Emerging Technologies Research Lab) – getlab.org

JANUARY 2016 – TODAY

- Research in Virtual Reality for Well-being, cultural heritage, psychology, empathy, embodiment
- Design and development of Virtual Reality applications

Research Associate | Research Centre on Interactive Media, Smart systems and Emerging Technologies (RISE) – (H2020-TEAMING) – rise.org.cy

APRIL 2019 – TODAY

- Research Associate at the Multidisciplinary Group: Virtual Reality for Well-Being (https://www.rise.org.cy/en-gb/research/research-groups/virtual-reality-for-well-being/)
- Project management for Cyprus University of Technology for the RISE European project

MARCH 2016 – MAY 2016, JANUARY 2019
- Involvement in the proposal writing of Phase 1 and 2 of the RISE European project
- Project management for Cyprus University of Technology for the RISE European project

Research Associate | Network for Social Computing Research (NOTRE) – (H2020-TWINN-2015) – notre.socialcomputing.eu
FEBRUARY 2016 – DECEMBER 2018
- Projects' website construction (https://notre.socialcomputing.eu/)
- Work package research topic: "Entertainment, Games, Virtual Reality and Educational Technologies"
- Internship at MIRALab in Geneva, Switzerland (2017) and at the Institute of Computer Science (ICS) of the Foundation for Research and Technology - Hellas (FORTH) in Crete, Greece (2018).

SKILLS

- Virtual Reality
  - Design and development of VR apps using the Unity software
  - Experience with the Oculus DK2 and Oculus CV1
  - Experimental Research
  - Design and conduction of VR experiments
- Game development
  - Excellent knowledge of the Unity software
  - Games creation involvement
    - Notice me Detective - https://gamejolt.com/games/Notice-Me-Detective/89207
    - Run4All (http://getlab.org/projects/run4all-game/)
    - Full list of projects: https://mchris.weebly.com/projects.html
- Interactive technologies
  - Microsoft Kinect v1 and v2
  - Leap Motion
  - Xsens Awinda wireless motion capture system
  - Manus VR finger tracking gloves
- Programming
  - Java, C, C#, JavaScript
- 3D modeling
  - Autodesk Maya, Autodesk Character Generator
- Languages
  - Greek – Fluent (speaking, reading, writing) - (Native)
  - English – Very Good (speaking, reading, writing) - (IGCSE Diploma - Grade A)
  - Polish – Basic communication skills (reading, understanding, talking) - (Native)
- Statistical Analysis
  - IBM SPSS Statistics
- Web design
  - WordPress, HTML
- Proposal writing

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Cyprus University of Technology – Department of Multimedia and Graphic Arts

- Special Scientist
  - Spring 2018 – MGA 518: Computer Games Development

- Teaching Assistant
  - Fall 2016 – MGA 110: Introduction to Multimedia
  - Spring 2017 – MGA 316: Design and Development of Computer Games
  - Spring 2017 – MGA 518: Computer Games Development
  - Fall 2017 – MGA 497
  - Spring 2018 – MGA 140: Computer Science
  - Fall 2018 – MGA 212: Photography II
  - Spring 2019 – MGA 112: Photography I
  - Spring 2020 – MGA 316: 3D Computer Games
  - Fall 2020 – MGA 241: Design and Computers

PROPOSAL WRITING EXPERIENCE

- Involvement in a proposal writing for RESTART 2016-2020
- Involvement in a proposal writing for Horizon 2020 (RISE project – Phase 1 and 2)

REVIEWING SCIENTIFIC PAPERS

- 26th International Conference on Information Systems Development (ISD2017 Cyprus)
- Computers in Human Behavior (2018)

PUBLICATIONS

Christofi, M., Michael-Grigoriou, D., & Kyrlitsias, C. (2020). A Virtual Reality Simulation of Drug Users' Everyday Life: the Effect of Supported Sensorimotor Contingencies on Empathy. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11*, 1242.

Kyrlitsias, C., Christofi, M., Michael-Grigoriou, D., Banakou, D., & Ioannou, A. (2020). A Virtual Tour of a Hardly Accessible Archaeological Site: the Effect of Immersive Virtual Reality in User Experience, Learning and Attitude Change. *Frontiers in Computer Science*, *2*, 23.

Kyrlitsias, C., Michael-Grigoriou, D., Banakou, D., & Christofi, M. (2020). Social Conformity in Immersive Virtual Environments: The Impact of Agents' Gaze Behavior. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11,* 2254.

Kosmas, P., Galanakis, G., Constantinou, V., Drossis, G., Christofi, M., Klironomos, I., ... & Stephanidis, C. (2019). Enhancing accessibility in cultural heritage environments: considerations for social computing. Universal Access in the Information Society, 1-12.

Stavroulia, K. E., **Christofi, M.,** Zarraonandia, T., Michael-Grigoriou, D., & Lanitis, A. (2019). Virtual Reality Environments (VREs) for Training and Learning. In *Learning in a Digital World* (pp. 195-211). Springer, Singapore.

Stavroulia, K. E., **Christofi, M.,** Baka, E., Michael-Grigoriou, D., Magnenat-Thalmann, N., & Lanitis, A. (2019). Assessing the emotional impact of virtual reality-based teacher training. The International Journal of Information and Learning Technology, 36(3), 192-217.

Christofi, M., Baka, E., Stavroulia, K. E., Michael-Grigoriou, D., Lanitis, A., & Magnenat-Thalmann, N. (2018). Studying Levels of Presence in a Virtual Environment Simulating Drug Use in Schools: Effect on Different Character Perspectives. In ICAT-EGVE (pp. 163-170).

Stavroulia, K.E., Baka, E., **Christofi, M.,** Michael-Grigoriou, D., Magnenat-Thalmann, N. & Lanitis, A. (2018). A virtual reality environment simulating drug use in schools: effect on emotions and mood states. Accepted at International Conference on Information, Communication Technologies in Education, ICICTE 2018, Chania, Greece, 5 and 7 July, 2018.

Christofi, M., Kyrlitsias, C., Michael-Grigoriou, D., Anastasiadou, Z., Michaelidou, M., Papamichael, I., & Pieri, K. (2018). A tour in the archaeological site of choirokoitia using virtual reality: a learning performance and interest generation assessment. In Advances in Digital Cultural Heritage (pp. 208-217). Springer, Cham.

Pappa, G., Ioannou, N., **Christofi, M.,** & Lanitis, A. (2018). Preparing Student Mobility Through a VR Application for Cultural Education. In Advances in Digital Cultural Heritage (pp. 218-227). Springer, Cham.

Christofi, M., & Michael-Grigoriou, D. (2017, October). Virtual reality for inducing empathy and reducing prejudice towards stigmatized groups: A survey. In Virtual System & Multimedia (VSMM), 2017 23rd International Conference on (pp. 1-8). IEEE.

Michael-Grigoriou, D., Yiannakou, P., & **Christofi, M.** (2017, October). Intuitive interaction for exploring human anatomy in a VR setup. In Virtual System & Multimedia (VSMM), 2017 23rd International Conference on (pp. 1-4). IEEE.

Christofi, M. & Michael-Grigoriou, D. (2016). The effect of the appearance of our self-representation in a virtual world on our behavior. We-Me 2016: Womenpower Symposium. Limassol, Cyprus.

Christofi, M., & Michael-Grigoriou, D. (2016, October). Virtual environments design assessment for the treatment of claustrophobia. In Virtual System & Multimedia (VSMM), 2016 22nd International Conference on (pp. 1-8). IEEE.

Christofi, M., Michael, D. (2016). Designing and evaluating virtual environments for the treatment of claustrophobia. 9th Cyprus Workshop on Signal Processing and Informatics (CWSPI). Nicosia, Cyprus.

ACTIVITIES

Participation at scientific events
- Participation at the 1st Mediterranean Science Festival with RISE (3rd December 2015)
- Participation at the Startup Europe Week Event in Nicosia with RISE (1st February 2016)
- Participation in the Cyprus' Researchers Night 2016 with the Social Computing Playground which was organized by the Social Computing Research Center (http://socialcomputing.eu/) of the Cyprus University of Technology under the NOTRE project (30/09/2016).
- Participation in the Cyprus' Researchers Night 2017 with the RISE project (29/09/2017 – Nicosia).
- Participation in the Cyprus' Researchers Night 2018 with the RISE project (28/09/2018 – Limassol).

Internships
- Internship at the research lab MIRALab (http://www.miralab.ch/) in Geneva, Switzerland under the NOTRE project (08-30/01/2017).
- Internship at the Institute of Computer Science (ICS) (https://www.ics.forth.gr/) of the Foundation for Research and Technology - Hellas (FORTH) in Crete, Greece under the NOTRE project (17/06/2018 – 08/07/2018).

Committee member
- Evaluation committee member at the Logipaignion 2015: computer games development competition (annual pancyprian contest)
- Competition Judge at the ACM Inter-Collegiate Programming Cyprus Competition 13th March 2017 – UCLan Cyprus, Larnaca

Workshop/seminar participation
- Participation at the "Workshop on Educational Robotics for Women" – WeEdR an ACM Celebration in Nicosia, Cyprus (24-25/02/2018)
- Participation at the 3-days seminar "End-User Development and Creativity Graphic Arts in the Design of Interactive Systems with Technology" lecture by Carmelo Ardito (Assistant Professor at the Computer Science Department of the University of Bari) - (11-14/05/2017)
- Attendance at the public lecture "Brain and Mind Sciences in Virtual Environments" by Eva Baka, MIRALab, University of Geneva (22/5/2018)
- Participation at a BCI workshop on in essential methods for evaluation and creation of human computer interaction systems and games by Rina R. Wehbe from the Waterloo University, Canada (31/05/2018) – Limassol, Cyprus
- Attendance at the BCI Training for the g.tec's g.Nautilus wireless biosignal acquisition system (31st March 2016)
- Attendance at the Tobii Pro eye trackers training session at the RISE Research Centre in Cyprus (22nd July 2019)

Summer Schools participation

- Participation in the NOTRE project Summer School with the theme "Social Computing in the Big Data Era"' (17-21st July 2017) in Limassol, Cyprus
- Participation at the Summer School "Social Computing for Smart Cities" under the NOTRE project (25/06/2018 – 29/06/2018), in Crete, Greece

Other activities

- Volunteer at the 28th International Conference on Artificial Reality and Telexistence and 23rd Eurographics Symposium on Virtual Environments (ICAT-EGVE) 2018 conference in Cyprus (07-09/11/2018)
- Participation at the "Author Workshop: Publishing Scientific Research (by Springer)" Tuesday, September 20th, 2016, Limassol, Cyprus
- Participation and demonstration of VR demos at the RISE Nicosia Workshop on April 11,2016
- World Usability Day (theme: ACM CELEBRATION OF WOMEN IN COMPUTING) Womenpower Symposium 2016 (WeMe2016) Wednesday, November 16th 2016, Limassol, Cyprus (Role: Poster presentation)
- 6th International Euro-Mediterranean Conference (EuroMed 2016) 31st of October – 5th of November 2016, Filoxenia Conference Centre, Nicosia (Role: Two papers presentation at the 1st International Workshop on Virtual Reality, Gamification and Cultural Heritage, 4th of November)
- Cyprus Game Day II - Conference and Game Jam 9-11 September 2017 - Limassol, Cyprus Speaker for CUT – Talk named "Games Education at CUT" Participation at the Game Jam
- Presentation in the Special session in Social Computing at the Computer Graphics International 2018 (CGI'18) under the NOTRE project (17/06/2018 – 08/07/2018).