

CODY KARUTZ

Founder and CEO, Blue Trot

Portland, OR

Hailed by The New Yorker as, "a mellow, collegiate blond in jeans and flip-flops," Cody Karutz has researched and designed immersive experiences for over a decade. At Stanford University's Virtual Human Interaction Lab, he spent six years researching the behavioral science behind virtual reality during its transformation from academic to consumer technology. His graduate thesis, "The Crystal Reef," was the first immersive experience to ever both world premiere and collect research data at a major film festival (Tribeca). Cody was named a Pacific Standard Magazine 2017 Top 30 Thinker Under 30 for his direct-media design work. He holds an M.S. in Symbolic Systems from Stanford University and currently is the Founder of Blue Trot, a Pacific Northwest research studio that finds ways to put people more at ease with frontier technologies.

WORK EXPERIENCE

BLUE TROT, INC.

Founder and CEO | Jan, 2017 – Current

Blue Trot is a Pacific Northwest research studio that finds ways to put people more at ease with frontier technologies. We invite humans out of the cold sterile laboratory and into the warm sun of conversation. Our unique research approach captures honest and actionable feedback about products and experiences that are often overly complicated and unintuitive. We welcome everyone to the table to design technology experiences that people actually love.

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

Associate, Faculty of Science | Jan, 2017 – Current

Collaborate and advise UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) faculty and staff on all projects involving immersive technologies (virtual and augmented reality) with sustainability initiatives.

STRIVR LABS, INC.

Chief Technology Officer, Head of Creative | Jan, 2015 – Nov, 2016

Part of founding team while at Stanford University and led engineering to build a pioneering virtual reality training product from Seed to Series A stages. Development work included multiple patents to build an immersive video pipeline and software product delivered to early NFL and NCAA customers.

- Prototyped initial platform in Unreal, built launch product in Python+OpenGL, later migrated to Unity
- Integrated big data analytics collected from platform usage to construct new multimodal engagement and learning metrics
- Managed all creative for clients on VR brand campaigns including: Visa, Sephora, MLB, NHL, PGA Tour, and Stephen Curry 30

- Launched experiential on-site brand activations for Visa at multiple NFL stadiums and games

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Manager, Virtual Human Interaction Lab | Sep, 2010 – Jun, 2016

Supervised and managed a multimillion-dollar facility remodel including spec and installation of custom multimodal systems, including: head-mounted displays, CAVE's, infrared tracking, ambisonics spatialized sound, and low-frequency haptic floor. Managed, trained, and motivated a team of engineering students responsible for developing and designing VR software critical to conducting behavioral lab experiments. Taught an annual two-week seminar to undergraduates on how to develop quality immersive experiences using Python+OpenGL and custom lab VR hardware systems.

- Implemented and supervised code review practices for all lab developers using GIT version control
- Maintained, repaired, and installed all immersive hardware systems
- Organized and supervised all media outlet PR, including: The New York Times, The New Yorker, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and others

STEVE & KATE'S CAMP

Seasonal Director | Jun, 2006 – Sep, 2010

Seasonally managed, hired and directed a staff of 30+ counselors at an innovative creative technology summer camp environment with around 300 campers.

- Developed positive relationships with parents and engaged in constructive dialogue to improve the experience and safety of all campers with a range of challenging needs
- Analyzed, tested and advised new products for use in camp activities, such as film studio and audio devices

EDUCATION

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Master of Science - MS - Symbolic Systems | 2014 – 2016

Activities included: STVP DFJ Entrepreneur Leaders Fellowship and Hopkins Marine Station live-in researcher. Thesis research and VR experience "The Crystal Reef" premiered at the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival and was featured by multiple media outlets, including: The New York Times, Time Magazine, and Salon.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS

Bachelor of Arts - BA - Psychology | Sep, 2007 – Jun, 2010

Activities included: leading wilderness trips as an Outdoor Adventures guide, Delta Sigma Phi Fraternity, and research assistant at the Social Cognition Lab.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

N/A - Biopsychology | Sep, 2005 – Jun, 2007

Activities included: Community Affairs Board (CAB), Child Abuse Listening Mediation (CALM) volunteer, programmer and research assistant at the Research Center for Virtual Environments and Behavior (ReCVEB). Transferred to UC Davis.

SKILLS

Expert in immersive virtual reality systems and history

Expert in behavioral science and perceptual psychology research

Proficient in real-time engine development (Unreal, Unity)

Proficient in Python and object-oriented development practices

CONTACT INFORMATION

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