

HAIG PAPAZIAN

CREATIVE SYSTEMS ARCHITECT · EXPERIENTIAL CREATIVE DIRECTOR ·
AI × CULTURE

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New York, NY
Languages: Arabic, Armenian, English,
French

I direct the intersection of physical architecture, custom software, and large-scale audience experience. Before focusing entirely on creative technology and spatial design, I spent 14 years co-founding and creatively directing a globally touring music collective. Managing complex international logistics, geopolitical censorship, and 40,000-person crowds taught me how to build resilient systems under extreme pressure.

Today, I use that same systems-level thinking to direct large-scale experiential projects. I prototype in Python, React, and Three.js to audit generative AI for cultural bias, and I use CAD/BIM to direct the architectural adaptive-reuse of physical sanctuaries. I specialize in taking a complex data problem, building a functional software prototype, and scaling it into a permanent physical environment.
Available for full-time executive leadership and director-level roles.

TECHNICAL & CREATIVE CAPABILITIES

AI & RESEARCH:	Generative AI red-teaming · Algorithmic bias analysis · Cultural localization · Prompt architecture · Model evaluation protocols (HAH-WAS)
CODE & TECHNICAL:	Python (asyncio, librosa, scipy, NumPy) · React · React Three Fiber · Svelte · Three.js · Web Audio API (Tone.js) · Max/MSP · FastAPI · Neo4j · Rapier
CREATIVE & SYSTEMS:	Experiential Creative Direction · Systems Architecture · Spatial Staging · Sensory Choreography · CAD / BIM (Revit, Rhino) · Adaptive Reuse Staging
LEADERSHIP & SCALE:	Cross-functional team management · Complex international touring logistics · Crisis communications · Technical project management · Public speaking

EXPERIENCE

Founder & Experiential Creative Director

2023 – PRESENT

- WALAW STUDIO / FICTIVE ENVIRONMENTS
- New York, NY
- **The Localization Gap Audit:** Engineered automated Python API pipelines leveraging librosa and scipy to red-team generative music models (Suno, Udio, MusicLM) for phonetic and microtonal erasure. Compiled and annotated a dataset of 427 tracks proving systematic Western 12-TET flattening of Arabic Maqam structures.
 - **MEKENA NYC:** Converted a historic 1920s brick residential facility in Dutch Kills, Queens, into an active live-work artist sanctuary and residency for displaced SWANA creators, achieving a 30% reduction in spatial energy footprint via custom IoT ambient/environmental sensor grids.
 - **STORYLINES:** Designed and deployed a responsive browser-based 3D force-directed knowledge graph application using React, TypeScript, Three.js, and the Rapier Physics Engine, mapping semantic literary relationships into navigable spatial constellations.
 - **Somatic Performance Systems:** Premiered interdisciplinary AI/audio installations at SXSW and the Broad Museum, Los Angeles, and composed original score and visual identity for *People Like Us*, a podcast by New York Times best-selling author Kim Ghattas.
 - **B2B Immersive Spatial Auditing:** Developed high-margin experiential consultation frameworks packaging creative software (Zero-Hardware webcam hand-tracking via MediaPipe Tasks Vision) and acoustic staging plans for museums and tech companies.

Co-Founder, Creative Director & Violinist

2008 – 2022

- MASHROU' LEILA (Geopolitical Performance Collective)
- Beirut, Lebanon + Global
- **Counter-Public Infrastructure:** Engineered, scaled, and managed a highly volatile independent cultural collective from an underground student band into a globally touring entity with 500M+ streams and a documentary at Tribeca Film Festival.
 - **Logistics & Production at Scale:** Deployed and tour-managed live shows across 50+ countries with zero major label backing, co-designing complex visual identity systems, stage scenography, and acoustic architectures for venues of 40,000 capacity (Baalbeck Roman Ruins).
 - **Crisis and Operational Resilience:** Safely navigated severe state-level censorship, travel bans, and geopolitical crises across 7 countries; established decentralized fan-supported funding networks, raising \$60K+ in direct-to-fan crowdfunding to support operational runs.
 - **Prestigious Institutional Commissions:** Directed performances and artistic collaborations at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Oliver Beer's Vessel Orchestra), NPR's Tiny Desk, and the London Barbican, representing minoritized Arab-queer identity on international media platforms.

Artist-in-Residence (Various Commissions)

THE PUBLIC THEATER · JOE'S PUB · THE BROAD MUSEUM

2019 – 2022

New York + Los Angeles

- **Space Time Tuning Machine (STTM):** Commissioned by the Public Theater's New York Voices program. Designed, built, and performed with a diegetic somatic instrument constructed from scrap electronics, using live bow movement and Max/MSP to control real-time AI responses around sound and memory.
- **Somatic & Sensory Prototyping:** Pioneered biological-to-digital sensor systems utilizing wearable HRV biofeedback tracks (Kardia) and custom-built multi-channel spatial audio, establishing a model where performer biology directly composes the room.
- **Residency Cohorts:** Vetted and selected for prestigious safe-haven residencies including SHIM:NYC, Westbeth Safe Haven Residency, and CUNY Brooklyn College.

Artist-in-Residence & Instructor

NYU KEVORKIAN CENTER FOR NEAR EASTERN STUDIES

SEP – DEC 2017

New York, NY

- **Graduate Pedagogy:** Co-designed and taught an advanced graduate seminar on music, politics, and social change in the Middle East. Mentored 20+ graduate research students across musicology, media, and architectural history.
- **Exhibition Curation:** Curated 'The Great Gig in the Sky' multimedia exhibition at NYU, which structurally refactored live concert footage and protest ephemera as active political infrastructure.

Architect & Design Strategist

BERNARD KHOURY / DW5

2009 – 2013

Beirut, Lebanon

- **Cultural Space Engineering:** Led the architectural design of high-end, highly-contested spatial typologies, nightclub structures (B018 interior), and high-rise developments (Plot #1063 Residential Tower) in post-war Beirut.
- **Spatial Identity Studies:** Formulated comprehensive contextual strategy and mapping models evaluating how municipal memory, post-conflict ruins, and urban zoning codes collide in contested cities.

Lead Architect & Adaptive Reuse Consultant

MARRA.TEIN

2011 – 2015

Beirut, Lebanon

- **Adaptive Reuse Execution:** Supervised the physical restoration and programmatic spatial plan of a historic 1940s apartment, transforming it into an active research residency hub and studio center for international artist exchanges.

Architectural Intern

ATELIERS JEAN NOUVEL

MAY – OCT 2008

Paris, France

- **The Louvre Abu Dhabi Canopy:** Drafted concept layouts and algorithmic light-penetration canopy models for the Louvre Abu Dhabi, sequencing the porous Arabesque metal layers to choreograph the environmental 'rain of light'.

EDUCATION, FELLOWSHIPS & SCHOLARSHIPS

Master of Architecture (MArch) with Distinction

The Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London (UCL) · London, UK

2013 – 2015

Said Foundation Scholar · British Council Scholar

Bachelor of Architecture (BArch)

American University of Beirut (AUB) · Beirut, Lebanon

2004 – 2009

Fawzi Azar Prize · Penrose Award · Distinguished Graduate Award

Sundance Institute Art of Practice Fellow · Interdisciplinary Artist Grantee

NYU Tisch ITP Camp Participant (2024) · Creative coding, computer vision (MediaPipe), WebGL (Three.js), spatial AudioKit

Ashkal Alwan Interdisciplinary Arts Fellow (2011–2012) · Post-disciplinary residency in Beirut

SELECT LECTURES & PUBLICATIONS

Op-Eds:	<i>The New York Times</i> — "The Cost of Being Queer and Arab" (Op-Ed on institutional pinkwashing and visibility risk) · <i>The Guardian</i> — "My band was silenced in the Middle East. But a global queer community gives me strength."
Lectures:	Columbia University · Dartmouth College · NYU Kevorkian Institute · Sciences Po Paris · Concordia University · Nobel Peace Center Oslo · American University of Beirut
Media:	France Culture Broadcast — "Beyrouth et Beyrouth, travail en cours" · L'Amour Fait Loi