

Virtual Worlds Redefined: Avid Learning Presents an Innovative Panel on the Intersection of Artificial Intelligence and Gaming

In its relatively short history, the gaming industry has been a pioneer in developing cutting-edge technology and expanding our understanding of artistic creativity. From the relative simplicity of arcade games to sophisticated storylines, character design, and world-building to the endless possibilities of Virtual Reality (VR), video games constantly innovate to provide increasingly immersive experiences. An industry that is estimated to reach \$8.9 billion by 2028 in India alone, gaming has firmly placed itself firmly in our zeitgeist. Much like video games playing a culturally important role in our times, **Artificial Intelligence** (AI) has emerged as its equal and newest contender. When two digital technologies and mediums interact, what is the result? The answer lies in infinite worlds beyond our physical space and tangible consequences in lived reality.

Avid Learning and **IFBE** present **Pixels and Play: Reimagining Gaming with Artificial Intelligence**. The panel consisting of *Video Games Industry Consultant* **Sameer Desai**, *Artist, UI/UX Designer, and Game Developer* **Frank Harmon**, and *Co-Founder & CEO, Duality AI* **Apurva Shah** will discuss the latest discourse surrounding AI in gaming, including its potential in open-world gaming and character development, while looking at the changing role of game developers. The discussion will move towards a nuanced understanding of virtual spaces while setting the tone for the next phase of gaming. The conversation will be moderated by *Head of Gaming, APAC, Google Cloud* **Sameer Pitalwalla (Moderator)**.

Since 2023, Avid Learning has explored the transformative intersection of AI and the arts, decoding its influence on visual arts, literature, design, and the written word. This installment is the latest chapter in the **tech-oriented innovative programming** of understanding the changing artistic expression through the lens of artificial intelligence. Through programs such as **Multipolis Mumbai: Gaming and the City**, **Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Tech –Art: What’s Next?**, **Brave New World of NFTs**, we have collaborated with foremost voices in the gaming industry and its adjacent sectors.

Join us for a nuanced conversation unpacking the ‘real’ and virtual implications of AI in gaming.

When: Tuesday, 17th December 2024

6:00 pm - 6:30 pm Registration | 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm - Session

Where: IFBE, Ballard Estate, Mumbai

Register: www.avidlearning.in

Press: ayeshah.avid@gmail.com

About the speakers

Sameer Desai is a video games industry consultant who helps international gaming companies grow their businesses in India. He was previously country head for Austrian game publisher THQ Nordic, and head of business development for India at French esports organization Team Vitality. He founded India’s first annual gaming festival – IGX (2015), India’s first online gaming community – IndianVideoGamer (2006), and India’s first gaming podcast (2009). Sameer is an ex-journalist, having contributed to publications such as The Times of India, India Today, The Hindu, GQ, Forbes and IGN.

Apurva Shah is a maker entrepreneur. He is co-founder and CEO of [Duality AI](#), where the team's vision is to leverage virtual worlds for solving real problems. Duality's Falcon platform provides digital twin simulation for the design and development of safe, predictable, and resilient smart systems. Customers include robotics and AI teams such as DARPA, the US Army and several Fortune 100 companies. This endeavor draws on Apurva's prior roles as head of creative technology and design systems at Capital One, visual effects supervisor and member of the technical brain trust at Pixar, and SVP of global technology at Rhythm & Hues Studios. He is adjunct professor in the interaction design program at [CCA](#) and covers emerging technology topics such as Metaverse Design and Designing for Trust. He is a strategic advisor to Mumbai based real time technology studio, [Green Rain](#). His film credits include Ratatouille, Shrek, Finding Nemo, and Toy Story 3. He holds several innovative patents in simulation, rendering, and digital payments. He has served on the Siggraph committee and on the board of the Visual Effects Society. He currently serves as advisor for non-profit [Kids & Art Foundation](#).

Frank Harmon started his career as a classically trained Oil Painter. He started his game developer career in 2008. He led an expanded role of game artist as an Art Director, UI/UX designer, technical art director, and lead concept artist. Designing pipelines for large 3d teams and programming shaders, Frank has touched every aspect of artistic game development. He has worked at many studios in San Francisco, such as Zynga, Kongregate, Serious Business, JuiceBox Games, and MachineZone. Currently, Frank works remotely in between the US and India.

Sameer Pitalwalla is a digital media and technology entrepreneur, he is currently the Head of Gaming, APAC for Google Cloud, and was previously the Territory Head, Epic Games for ASEAN, and South Asia. Prior to Epic, he was the co-founder and CEO of Culture Machine, one of India's largest digital media firms that reaches 300 MN Unique audiences per month and 1 billion monthly views. He is a National Award-winning film producer, Forbes 30 under 30 in 2017, and holds 3 US technology patents to his name.