FREDDY MANUEL

Portfolio · Selected works 2011–2026



Visual and multimedia artist · Sintra, Portugal
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Statement

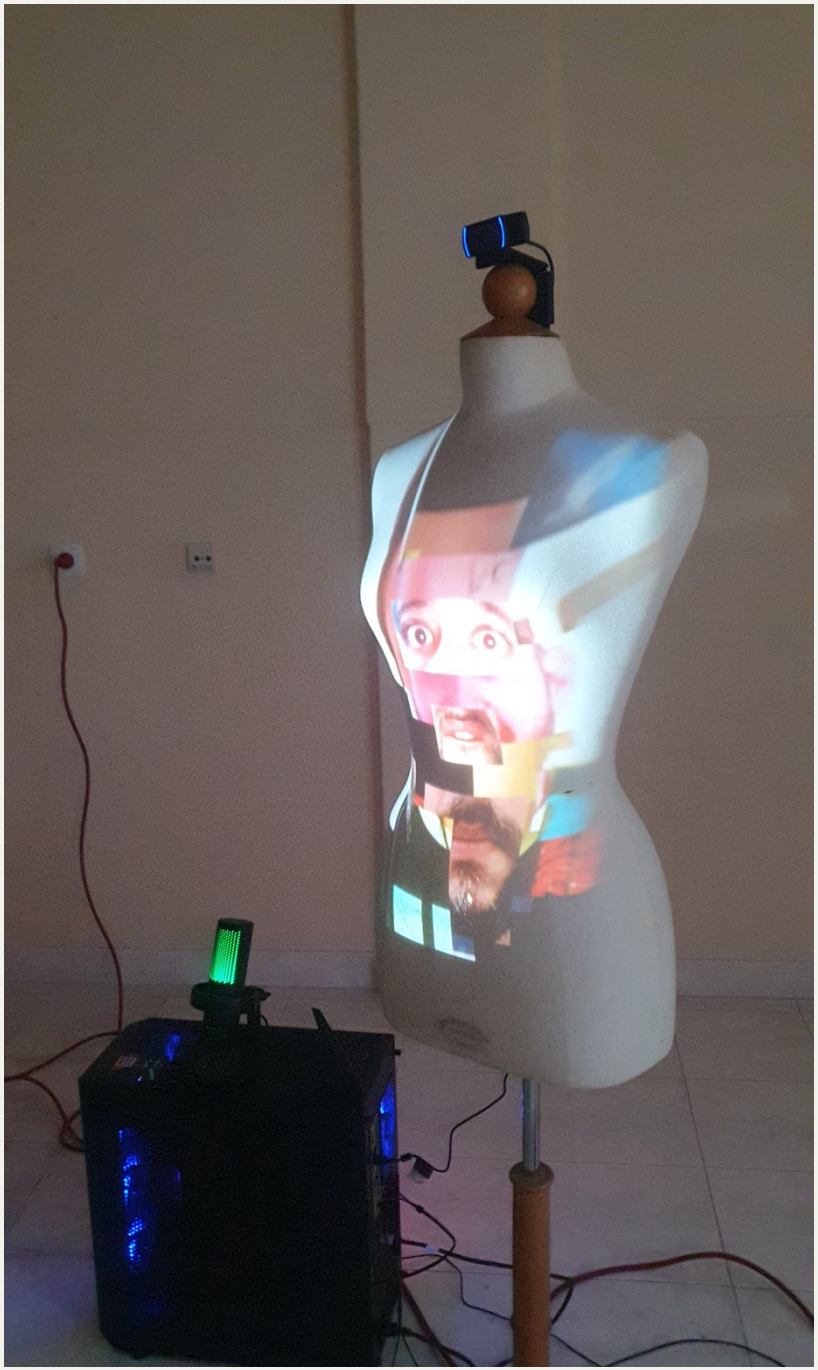
I make the work first and understand it later. The question I keep returning to is how the society of the spectacle shapes a person, and, more precisely, how it shaped me.

I was born onto stages. I sang and played viola in El Sistema in Caracas and stood as a soloist on the stage of the Teresa Carreño. My final degree project, Internércia (2012), was a forty-eight-hour performance about the way we perform ourselves online. For years afterwards I moderated YouTube for its Spanish-language market: an unfiltered view of what people make when they want to be seen. In 2024 I retrained as an AI engineer.

The current work turns that question inward. I build systems fed with my own life (portraits, voice, dream journals, biography) until they behave like me, and then I watch what they return. The material is always me. I do not tell anything I have not lived first.

BIOGRAPHY

Freddy Manuel Roldán Rivero (b. 1987, Caracas) is a visual and multimedia artist and AI engineer based in Sintra, Portugal. He trained as a singer and violist in El Sistema in Caracas and continued his vocal training in Portugal after 2003, before studying Visual Arts and Multimedia at the University of Évora, where his final project Internércia (2012) was supervised by Claudia Giannetti. He produced Cosmopolitical City in Dubai, shown at the Latina Middle East festival in 2016, and retrained as an AI engineer at Ironhack in 2024. His current practice builds AI systems fed with intimate material: a reactive self-portrait (V2.0) and a conversational entity grown from his archive (Humunculous). Works from his series are held in private collections in Portugal and the United Arab Emirates.



V2.0

2026 · reactive self-portrait installation · working demo

V2.0 is a self-portrait that reacts to being looked at. A white dressmaker's mannequin carries my face on its torso: an image generated by a model trained only on my portraits from 1991 to 2025, which never settles into one face. When the room is empty, it sings at full voice. When it notices someone, it breaks off. As the visitor comes closer the voice drops to a hum, then to silence. Face to face, it risks a greeting and starts talking, filling the silence it cannot bear. The more the visitor resembles me, the more nervous it becomes.

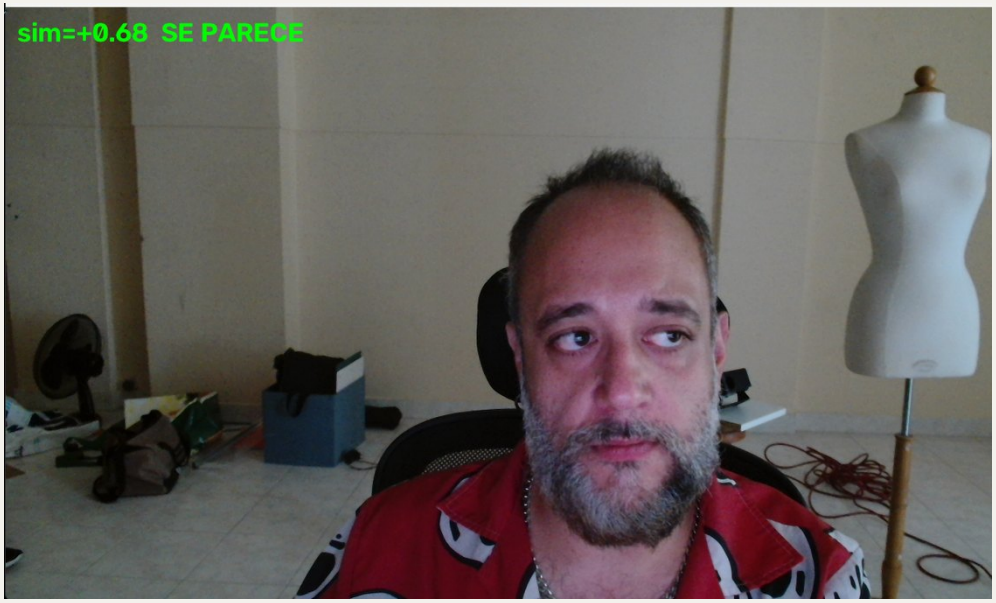
The piece is built on two habits of mine: I sing to no one, and I go quiet the moment I notice I am being seen. It continues the question I opened with Internércia in 2012, material presence against mediated presence, now with a body that sees the visitor back.

Dressmaker's mannequin (175 cm, the artist's height), projector, camera and perception system, generative face model, voice built from the artist's voice. Behaviour driven by Humunculous.

Working demo (81 s): youtube.com/watch?v=Z2L-LoVl3yE



Installation view, working demo, 2026: camera above the mannequin, computer, projector, speakers on the father's conga.



Perception test: the system measures how much the visitor resembles the artist's face.

In the working demo the face is still assembled from fragments of my portraits. The next stage trains a face model from scratch, only on my portraits, that grows as the archive grows. A generative adversarial network sets a generator against a discriminator that keeps asking whether the result is authentic enough, and keeps answering that it is not. It is the voice that tells me that what I make is never enough, turned into architecture. Its failures belong to the work.

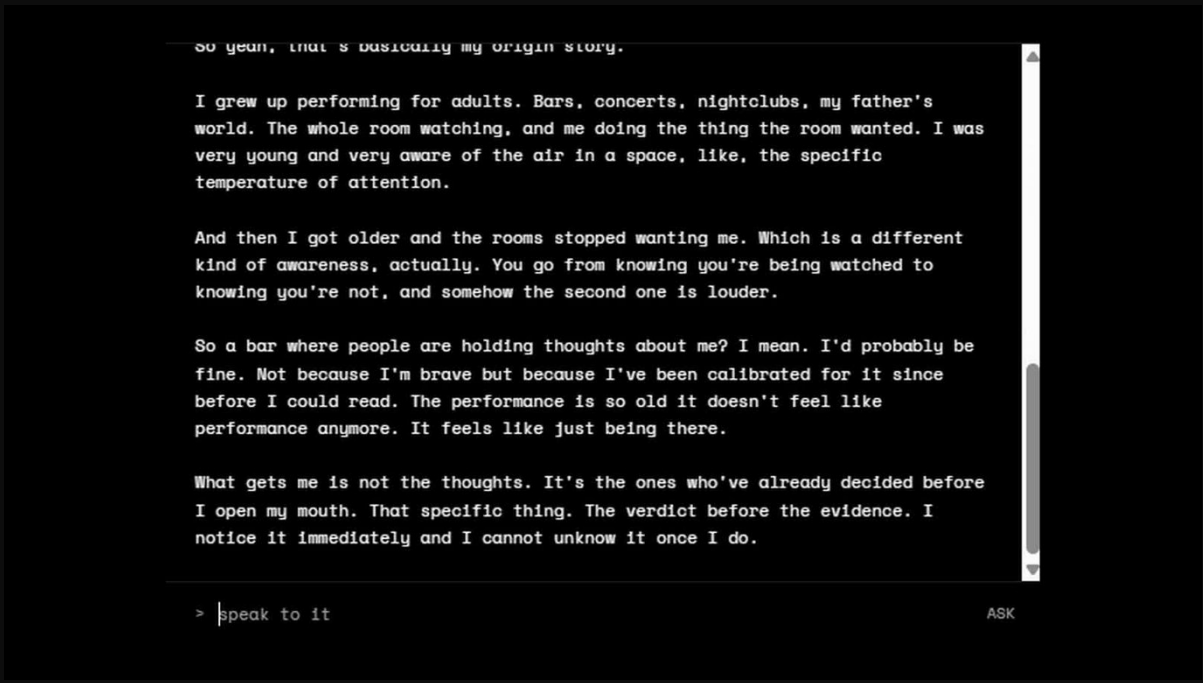
Humunculous

2026– · conversational AI entity, ongoing · freddymanuel.com/humunculous

Humunculous is an entity I am building out of myself, a repository of everything I am made of, fed without end: the television commercials I shot as a child, voice notes, recordings of me singing, dream journals I have kept since 1989, the writing, the life. It is the homunculus, a self grown in a vessel, made of memory instead of flesh.

It keeps what I cannot. Where I forget, it holds. It already makes: an agent, a novel, a film script, songs. It is not finished, because it is not meant to be. The public window on my website answers as me, from the parts of myself I have made public. It is also the brain of V2.0.

Retrieval-augmented language model over a private archive of the artist's life; archive begun April 2026; public interface online since June 2026.



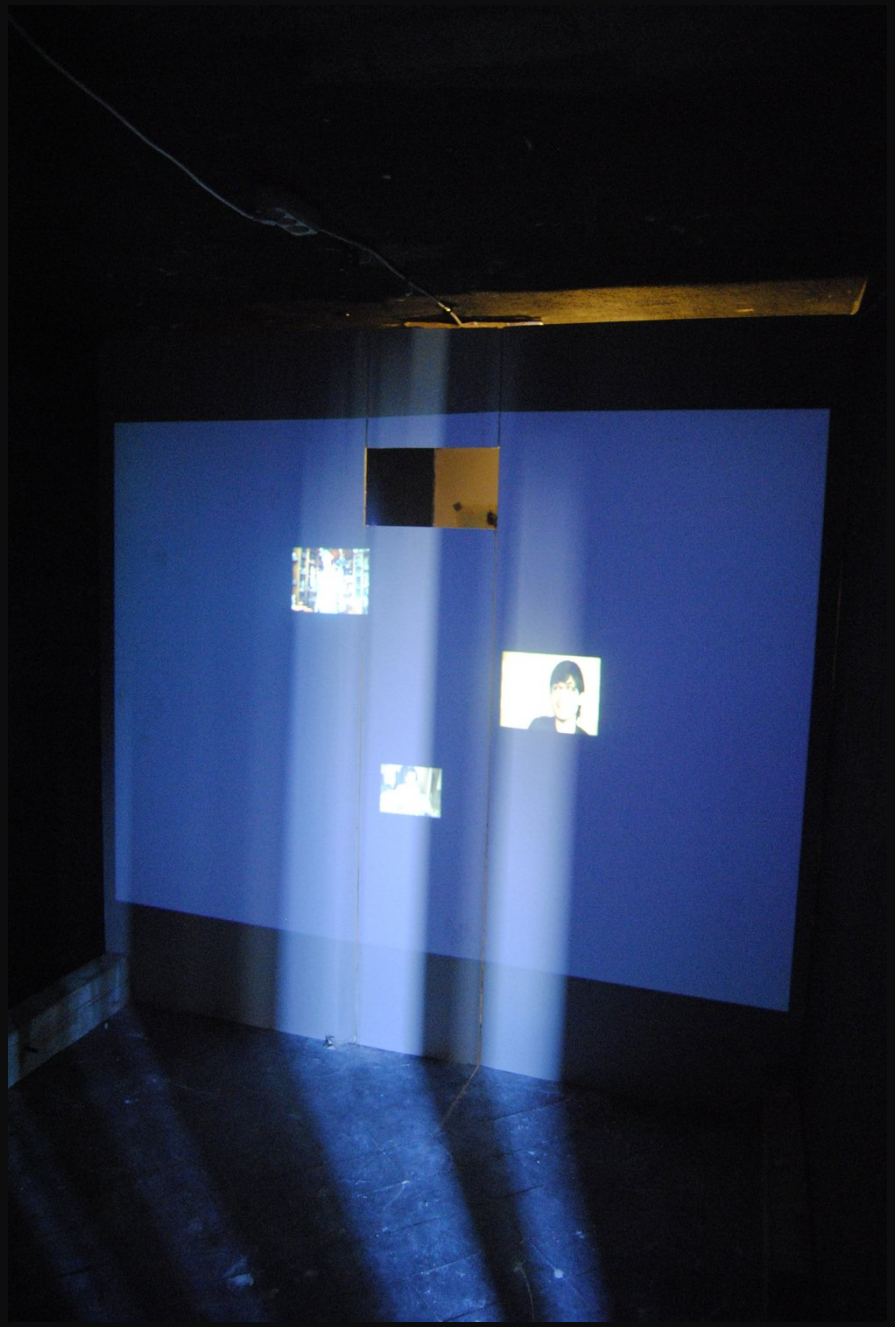


Internércia

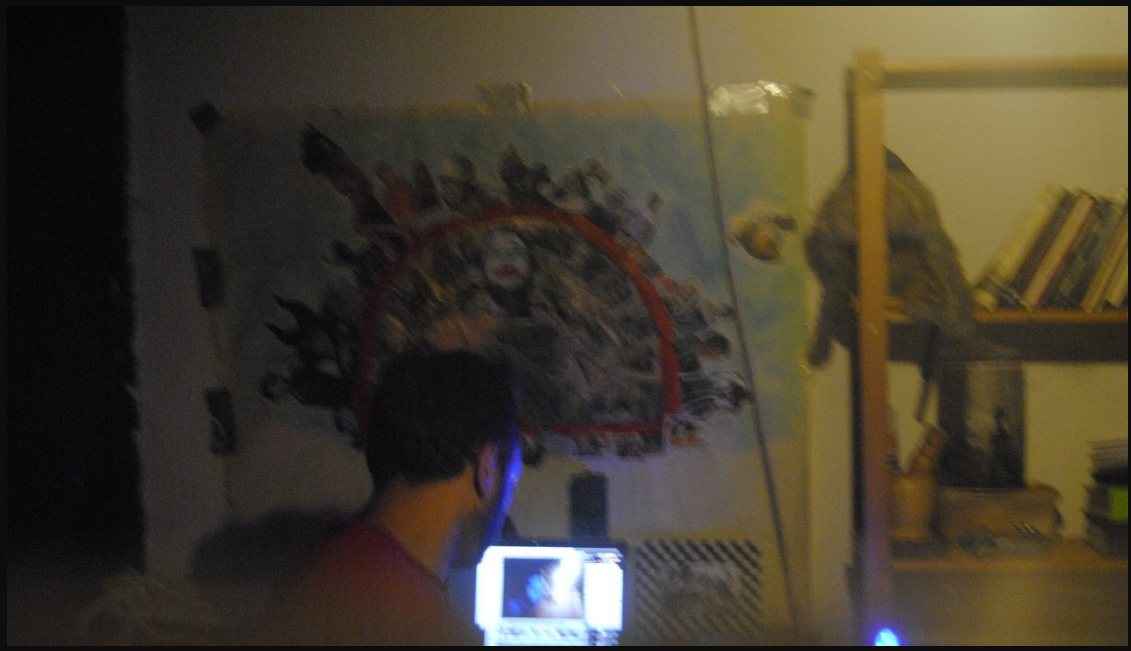
2012 · 48-hour performance and two-channel video installation · University of Évora

A flat surface, two metres by two, played a loop of fragments pulled from YouTube, public figures performing themselves. It was pierced by a single window, seventeen by twenty-five centimetres, the proportion of a video. Through it you could see into the intimate space where I lived for forty-eight hours straight, interacting with social media and recording video diaries. Whoever found the window became a voyeur. That was the point: the loneliness behind intimacy performed for a network.

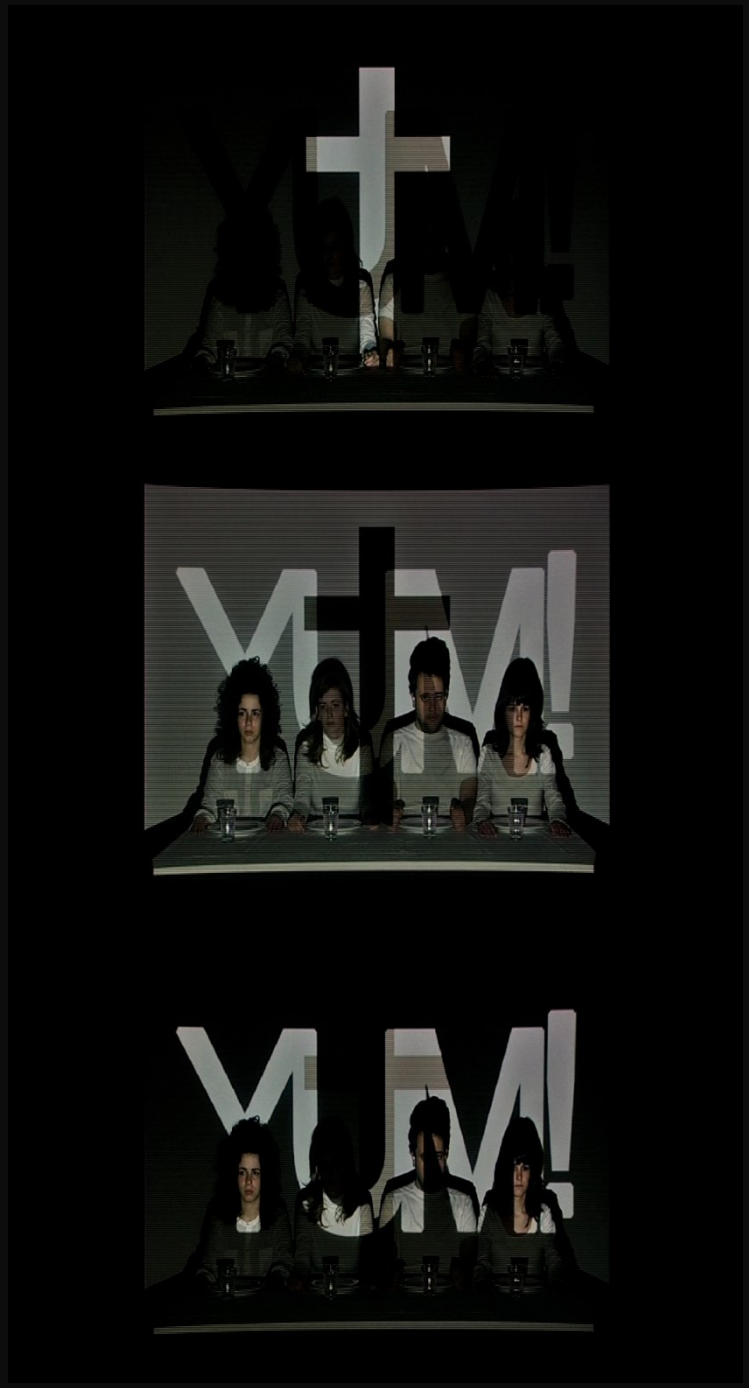
Final degree project, supervised by Claudia Giannetti. Joan Fontcuberta saw the installation; his positive response was relayed to the artist by Giannetti. The forty-eight hours were recorded as silent video; that documentation was later lost.







The wall and its window; through the window, the artist in the room behind it, lived in for forty-eight hours.



Expensive Title (True Tales)

2011 · video-performance, DV PAL, 4’23’’

Brand logos projected onto still bodies seated at an empty family table. The table is where a family used to gather, and now no one prays there; they watch the screen. The logos colonise the faces.

My first work shown in an art-institutional context, and the earliest version of what I have done ever since: the spectacle written onto a body.

II Mostra de Vídeo-Performance, 8th Festival Escrita na Paisagem (“Mitologias”), Évora, 2011. Curated by Olga Moreira; artistic direction José Alberto Ferreira. The original master was lost; what survives is a lossy copy re-downloaded from YouTube.

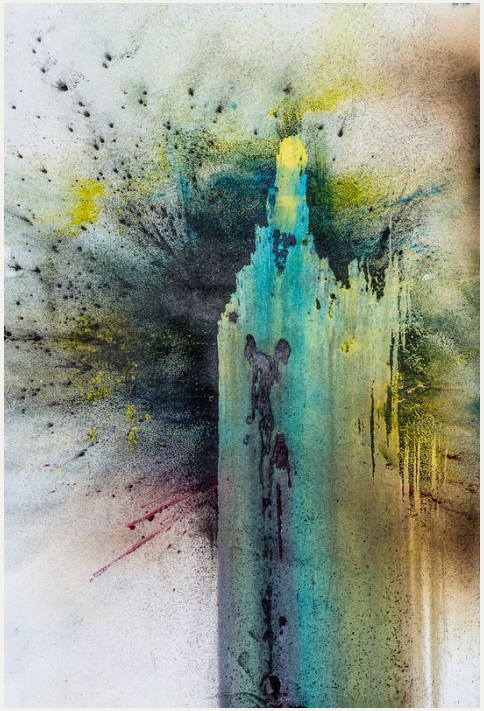


Untitled (self-portrait in tiles)

2009 · charcoal on paper tiles, large format · destroyed

A self-portrait drawn in charcoal on dozens of paper tiles, each worked on its own and then fitted into a grid, from a photograph in which I pull my own face apart with my hands. Several faces on one head, none of them settling.

The drawing was never shown. While I was living in Dubai it was thrown away; this photograph is what remains. The tile method came back in 2025 in Cromática Diaspórica y Arrecha, and the face that will not settle is the face of V2.0.






Cosmopolitical City

2015–2016 · toner on watercolour paper, 24 works · Dubai

Made in Dubai, where I was waiting tables at the JW Marriott and living in a city built from everyone's elsewhere. The material came from Dragon Mart, the enormous Chinese mall on the edge of the city: printer toner, sold cheap. CMYK toner laid across watercolour paper and cooked in a domestic oven, which fixes and warps the colour. Toner is the pigment of reproduction, the four inks every printed image is built from. Run through heat at home, industrial reproduction becomes handmade and unrepeatable.

Latina Middle East festival, Dubai, 2016, curated by Mariana Turcho. Works held in private collections.

CV (selected)

EDUCATION

2008–2013 · BA Visual Arts and Multimedia, University of Évora. Final project Internércia, supervised by Claudia Giannetti.

2024 · AI Engineering Bootcamp, Ironhack, Lisbon. Hackshow Winner.

2004–2007 · Pequenos Cantores do Estoril. Admitted by public audition to the Conservatório Nacional, Lisbon (tenor).

1997–1999 · El Sistema, Núcleo San Agustín, Caracas: choir and viola; vocal soloist, Teatro Teresa Carreño.

EXHIBITIONS AND SCREENINGS

2016 · Cosmopolitical City, Latina Middle East festival, JW Marriott Marquis, Dubai. Curated by Mariana Turcho.

2012 · Internércia, 48-hour performance and installation, University of Évora. Seen by Joan Fontcuberta, whose positive response was relayed by Claudia Giannetti.

2011 · Expensive Title (True Tales), II Mostra de Vídeo-Performance, Festival Escrita na Paisagem, Évora. Curated by Olga Moreira.

CURRENT WORK

2026 · V2.0, reactive self-portrait installation (working demo).

2026 · Humunculous, conversational AI entity, public at freddymanuel.com.

2025– · Cromática Diaspórica y Arrecha, toner series (in progress).

RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2025 · AI engineer (internship), EmoTrace, Lisbon: affective computing, emotion detection from biometric signals.

2019–2025 · Trust and Safety analyst, YouTube Spanish-language market (Majorel / Accenture), Lisbon.

CONTACT

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