life through people

If you're looking for a current CV please email me marientina /at/ yahoo |dot| com or visit cmbhc.usc.edu. What you will find below is not meant to be used in professional publications or speaker bios, but it provides a little more gossip for the masses and their curiosity. If I just died and you are here looking for pieces for my obituary, I would prefer that you read Paul Éluard's *Liberté*, C.P. Cavafy's Ithaka, or play Bob Dylan's Series of Dreams.

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Informal Biography
Marientina Gotsis was born in Chicago, IL and raised in Athens, Greece. Her *ego* speaks English, her *super-ego* dreams in French, but her *id* is still Greek. She enjoys formulating questions and collaborating with people who may have the answers so they can exchange problems. A lot of people have helped her in her life. She can't fit them all here, but it is a good start.

The Early Years…
She attended Athens College and is grateful for receiving a formidable educational experience. During her high school years, she was mostly known for being the creative geek who turned in papers with art and/or stylesheets, fixed people's computers, loved painting and drawing and wrote crazy essays. She is especially thankful to Liz Tenny, Don Nielsen, Laurie Poseidon and the late Vassilis Haros for training her talents, for encouraging her to write and for maintaining her sanity. She is still spiteful toward her gym teachers who never bothered to listen and/or help. Lifesaving advice by the late Nikos Kessanlis and an essay about the invention of the CAVE(tm) in Time magazine in the early 90's motivated her to leave Greece and move to Chicago, IL.

Education

Gotsis attended the [School of the Art Institute of Chicago](#) (SAIC) and the [University of Illinois at Chicago](#) (UIC) to pursue a BFA in Studio Arts and a BFA in Photography/Film/Electronic Media. She majored in Painting and Drawing at SAIC and Electronic Media at UIC. Her declared minor was French and undeclared minor was Art History. After three semesters, too much frustration and too many student loans, she took an indefinite leave of absence from SAIC and remained at UIC until graduation. She programmed her first virtual reality (VR) environment using OpenGL and C in 1997 and discovered that she hated computer programming but loved the CAVE(tm).

Gotsis remained at UIC and was admitted to the [Electronic Visualization Laboratory](#) (EVL) for an MFA in Electronic Visualization. She was mentored by [Dan Sandin](#), [Tom DeFanti](#), [Maxine Brown](#), [Drew Browning](#), [Alan Verlo](#), [Joe Reitzer](#), [Virginia Miller](#) and Marta Huszar. As an EVL research assistant for four years she participated in several enriching endeavors that involved art, VR and high-speed networking. Among the funnest were the 2001 Ars Electronic [EVL: Alive on the Grid](#) networked telepresence events, [Siggraph 2001](#) and various SuperComputing conferences. Her thesis work culminated in the public art show [INSIDE_OUT](#) (2003) that consisted of a mixed reality performance of members of the Anatomical Dance Theatre alternating with public playtime. Her VR application enabled performers and members of the audience to use their bodies to create music and animation by navigating physical space.

Work Experience

During her undergraduate studies, she helped manage the family business, a boutique internet service provider (ISP) named Techno Works, Inc. that provided IT and design services for 3000 customers in Chicago. Gotsis split her working time between IT and design jobs doing things like freelance production design for local newspapers, administration of the

[UIC](#) [School of Art and Design](#) school's website and managing of UIC's Newspace computer lab. She later worked as a production assistant, designer and IT manager for [Quicksilver Associates](#), a communications production company servicing large corporations such as [Accenture](#) and [Blue Cross/Blue Shield.](#) As a grad student, Gotsis resigned from Quicksilver Associates to pursue teaching and freelance work. She maintained several clients such as [Florian Architects](#), [Common Knowledge Communications](#) and the [National Museum of Mexican Art](#). Upon moving to California is 2003, she worked as a consultant for [Simmonet Marketing](#) and [Bowhaus, Inc](#) and taught at USC's Roski School of Fine Arts. In 2004, she assumed her position as Media Lab Manager thanks to Scott S. Fisher at the [Interactive Media Division](#) (IMD) of the [USC School of Cinematic Arts](#) where she remains faithfully and happily employed. Gotsis transitioned to a research faculty position in 2010 and co-founded the [Creative Media & Behavioral Health Center](#).

Teaching Experience

Gotsis never imagined that she would become a teacher. She thought that teaching was about filling people's brain with knowledge and this sounded too intimidating. While she was a graduate student at UIC, the late Judith Artoux hired her as a lecturer at the newly founded [Digital Multimedia Design program at Harold Washington College in Chicago](#) where she taught Multimedia I, II and III. Gotsis was surprised she could learn so much through teaching. She also learned that you can get lecturer or adjunct faculty status if you teach anywhere BUT where you are seeking your MFA. Andrea Polli hired her at the formerly known as Academic Computing department at [Columbia College Chicago](#) to teach computer art, beginning web programming and advanced web programming for undergraduates.

Gotsis learned that no sane graduate student should teach three courses per semester to pay rent. Moving on to fewer classes and better pay, she was hired by Mark McKernin at

[Northeastern Illinois University's (NEIU) Art Department](#) to teach 2D design and 3D computer graphics and animation for undergraduates. Upon graduation from UIC, Gotsis parted from NEIU with sadness. Students from the midwest are hardworking, earnest and come from all walks of life. Gotsis learned a lot from them. Ann Page at [USC's Roski School of Fine Arts](#) gave her the benefit of the doubt and invited her to teach two 499 level courses in 3D design and 3D animation. A friday morning course with flip-flop wearing students and a traumatic attempt to switch from PC Maya to Mac Maya finally broke her spirit.

Gotsis did not teach formal courses again for five years while working for IMD but remained dedicated to her mentoring duties otherwise by focusing on graduate MFA students and doing guest lectures and workshops. In Spring 2009, after her hiatus, some soul searching, and a new research track, she began teaching again starting with an experimental design course for Games for Health (CTIN 492) with fellow collaborator [Maryalice Jordan-Marsh](#) from the USC School of Social Work. [In the second variation of the course in Spring 2010](#), she finally felt comfortable in her skin again, but teaches only one class per year. She hasn't worn flip flops to class yet, but she does own several pairs of nice-looking flat sandals she wears with her suits. Those *losangelino* students are influencing her style. In 2011, she was sighted wearing skinny jeans on campus with a pair of Birkenstock thong sandals. And so it all began again…

EDUCATION

1999 – 2003 **M.F.A.,** Electronic Visualization. Electronic Visualization Laboratory. Joint degree: School of Art & Design, College of Architecture & the Arts and College of Engineering. University of Illinois at Chicago.

Gotsis, M. (2003). *Inside_Out*. (Master's thesis, University of Illinois at Chicago). Retrieved from http://www.evl.uic.edu/gotsis/thesis.pdf.

Description: *EnergyComposer*, a mixed reality dance stage enabling full body interaction through optical tracking which culminated in a 2-day public performance event. The event *INSIDE_OUT* consisted of live improvisations by the Anatomical Dance Theater company and visitor interaction with the virtual environment through play.

1995 — 1999 **B.F.A.,** Photo/Film/Electronic Media. School of Art & Design, College of Architecture & the Arts. University of Illinois at Chicago.

1995 — 1996 Studio Arts Program. The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

1993 **1er Degré**. French Language Studies. Université Paris, Sorbonne.