

Julio Cesar Gonzalez

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Summary

I have spent my product design career building products at two very different stages. At American Express, I used research and behavioral data to modernize core product areas in a consumer mobile app used by 20 million people, helping increase adoption, engagement, and retention. At Amazon and Google, I worked on early-stage merchant and AI products, taking complicated and often ambiguous ideas and shaping them into simple, fully realized experiences.

I am also shaped by a decade at Robert Longo's fine-art studio, where I learned to sweat the details and create work with real visual impact. Most recently, I've been designing and building a native iOS music discovery app end-to-end, spanning the interface, implementation, data pipelines, and recommendation logic. Building it myself has led me to rethink design as a continuous process of defining the product, shaping the interaction, and testing decisions in working software rather than treating product strategy, design, and engineering as separate phases.

Experience

Cthru Music Player

Founder & Builder | Jan 2026 - Present | San Francisco

- Founded, designed, and built a native iOS music discovery app now in TestFlight beta, with Apple Music playback, authentication, social sharing, and Supabase-backed recommendations.
- Created a social discovery model that lets listeners explore music through another person's taste, supported by personalized stations, privacy controls, and a dynamic visual system tied to album artwork.
- Used working software as the design medium, moving continuously between product definition, interaction design, implementation, and testing while building source-of-truth and verification workflows to keep AI coding agents aligned with product intent.

Google, AI for Cloud Business Intelligence

Senior Product Designer | Jan 2024 - Dec 2025 | San Francisco

- Initiated and led a system-wide remodel of BigQuery Data Canvas that made complex analyses easier to navigate, revisit, and share. The user base grew 36% in the three months following the final release.
- Turned an engineering prototype into Canvas Assistant, preserving editable SQL and analysis steps instead of hiding the work in chat. Queries run increased 30% after launch.
- Designed the author-and-test loop for BigQuery data agents across three engineering and two product teams. Structured context improved agent accuracy by 10% to 20% in early evaluations.
- Created human-review, draft, and publishing patterns for AI-generated context, partnering with the Cloud Design System team to make inline suggestion review reusable beyond BigQuery.

Amazon, Buy with Prime

User Experience Designer | Sep 2022 - Nov 2023 | San Francisco

- Designed growth, pricing, and account-management experiences for Buy with Prime, an early-stage merchant product operating like a startup inside Amazon.
- Redesigned the Klaviyo connection for automated checkout emails, replacing a manual technical setup with a deeplink that generated the API key and increasing journey completion from 25% to 100% in testing.
- Reframed Buy with Prime's pricing calculator around faster cost comparison, using competitor research and sales interviews to introduce prefilled product examples while preserving detailed manual inputs.

American Express, Enterprise Mobile

Lead Product Designer | Jan 2019 - Aug 2022 | New York

- Led Search, Chat, Benefits, and Loyalty for the Amex consumer mobile app, serving 20M monthly active users across 20 markets on iOS and Android.
- Expanded a one-tap enrollment request into a broader Offers browsing strategy. Mobile offer enrollments increased 533% year over year following the first release.

- Kept a major Membership redesign moving through product and design turnover, using behavioral data and customer research to refocus the experience around benefits. Tab retention increased 23% in the first three months.
- Led app-wide Search from early vision through beta and production experiments, increasing servicing journey completion 5% and reducing app-first calls 6%.
- Contributed to a mobile design system used by 20 designers and about 60 engineers, creating patterns for data visualization, input fields, maps, motion, and semantic color.
- Helped launch dark mode, reaching 40% adoption in the first month, and established design QA and monthly usability testing with high-fidelity prototypes.

American Express, Data & Analytics

UX/UI Designer | Mar 2018 - Dec 2018 | New York

- Designed internal data analysis tools for a big data platform, including data library search, extract-transform-load workflows, and CRM surfaces.

Robert Longo Studio

Studio Assistant | Feb 2006 - Nov 2017 | New York

- Led teams of artists producing large-scale charcoal drawings for major galleries and museums, building a foundation in visual craft, precision, and creative collaboration.

Education

General Assembly

UX Design Immersive Certificate | 2017 | New York

Rhode Island School of Design

BFA, Film, Animation, and Video | 2005 | Providence

Skills & Tools

Product Design: UX Design, Interaction Design, Visual Design, Information Architecture, Design Systems, Mobile Design, AI Product Design, Growth Design

Research & Strategy: Product Discovery, Usability Testing, Journey Mapping, Product Strategy, Cross-functional Collaboration, Experimentation

Prototyping & Build: AI-assisted Prototyping, Rapid Prototyping, Design-to-Code Workflows, Interaction Specification, Design QA

Tools: Figma, OpenAI Codex, Claude Code, Cursor, ProtoPie, Adobe Creative Cloud