



Press Release

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## **SIGGRAPH Asia 2011 – Turning imagination into reality**

*The most creative artists and eminent computer graphics and interactive techniques pioneers gathered in Hong Kong for the fourth edition of Asia's biggest gathering of digital innovations.*

**Hong Kong, 15 December 2011** - The Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center was bustling with activity this week as it played host to Asia's premier graphics, animation, art, and technology event. Held over the last four days, the 4<sup>th</sup> ACM SIGGRAPH Asia Conference and Exhibition brought together over 7,500 computer graphics professionals, researchers and enthusiasts, hailing from 53 countries across the globe.

SIGGRAPH Asia 2011 once again proved itself to be one of the leading platforms for computer graphics and interactive techniques, featuring renowned pioneers including Bill Buxton, Principal Researcher at **Microsoft Research**; Don Greenberg, Director, **Cornell University Program of Computer Graphics**; Ken Perlin, Director of the **New York University Center for Advanced Technology**; Paul Debevec, Associate Director, **Graphics Research, University of Southern California**; and Robert Neuman, Stereoscopic Supervisor at **Walt Disney Animation Studios**.

In all, over 300 presentations as well as panel discussions and talks were held across the programs, generating robust discussions and deep insights on current and future developments in the field of computer graphics and interactive techniques.

### **Endless Opportunities in an Increasingly Mobile World**

Echoing analysts' predictions on the robust growth of mobile applications, mobility and mobile devices were a key theme in many conversations at SIGGRAPH Asia this year.

Making its debut in Hong Kong is the newly conceived Symposium on Apps program, featuring panels, presentations, talks and displays on leading-edge works relating to mobile application development, as well as the computer graphics software and hardware to support today's mobile devices.

Zeyneb Ahmet of **Stockholm University**, one of the panelists at the *Mobile 2.0 The Future of Mobile Apps: Mashing It Up and Getting It Out There* session at the Symposium on Apps commented, "It is truly an exciting time to be working with applications and services for the consumer markets. Our session was well-attended, and we continued to receive feedback and questions from enthusiastic participants way after the session was over. I hope the Symposium on Apps will be a regular program in SIGGRAPH Asia, as a platform that showcases an important application of computer graphics advancements".

Notably, several sessions at the Symposium on Apps program were focused on mobile augmented reality applications, in tandem with increasing interest in how mobile devices are opening up new opportunities for merging real and virtual worlds. Augmented reality was also a pervasive topic across the conference, featuring in the Art Gallery, Emerging Technologies and Technical Sketches and Posters programs.

Another prevalent topic was stereoscopy and the rising sophistication in *three-dimensional (3D)* visual effects. The Technical Papers program featured a dedicated track on 3D Capture and Reconstruction, presenting research works from the **Israel Institute of Technology, National Research Council of Italy, New York University, Technische Universität Darmstadt, The Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich** and **The University of Insubria**. The program also featured the latest research on stereoscopy including:

- *C1x6: A Stereoscopic Six-User Display for Co-located Collaboration in Shared Virtual Environments*: This research from **Bauhaus-Universität Weimar** unveils the first large screen stereoscopic multi-viewer display system featuring novel application-controlled shutter glasses and augmented group navigation techniques.

- *Multi-perspective Stereoscopy from Light Fields*: Authored by experts from **Disney Research Zurich, Massachusetts Institute of Technology** and the **Swiss Federal Institute of Technology**, this paper proposes a framework for flexible stereoscopic disparity manipulation and content post-production.

### **The Future of Computer Graphics Seen Through Education**

Educators from around the region were also gathered in Hong Kong to discuss the future of animation education as well as the similarities and differences among the teaching of animation around the globe. The Education Panel, invited for the first time at SIGGRAPH Asia 2011, brought together a panel of six experts from the **Animation School of Communication University of China, DreamWorks Animation, Jinan University Arts College, Media Design School, Scandinavian College of Arts and Design Hong Kong** and **The One Academy**. Moderated by Ahmad Al-Mahir from the **Singapore Polytechnic**, the session delved into various facets of computer animation education, including how today's curriculum is preparing students for their role in the industry, as well as the future developments and challenges for computer animation education.

Shelley Page, Head of International Outreach at **DreamWorks Animation**, found the Education Panel at SIGGRAPH Asia 2011 said, "The SIGGRAPH Asia Education Panel was an excellent opportunity for both educators and students to engage with the important topics currently facing both experienced teachers and young people interested in developing future careers in the animation, digital art and visual effects sectors. In recent years many leading education institutions around the globe have developed best practice solutions based on the changing demands of industry. This session is an opportunity to look more closely at some of the interesting initiatives that have resulted in the quality of student work showcased in the Electronic Theatre and Computer Animation Festival selections this year."

The different environments and challenges that come with the diverse backgrounds of 3D animation education in the US and Japan were also discussed at a Technical Sketches program, as part of a session entitled *Art, Design & Computer Graphics Education*.

### **Emerging Trends From Around the Globe**

The SIGGRAPH Asia 2011 Exhibition floor was brimming with activity, as 122 exhibitors and sponsors showcased the latest hardware, software, and services from across the globe. Established players such as **Chaos Group**, **Electronics and Telecommunications Research Institute (ETRI)**, **Side Effects Software** and **The Khronos Group** displayed their cutting edge products and services alongside local forerunners such as **Jadason Technology**, **Original Force** and **Shanghai Graphics Design Information**.

Visitors were also kept updated on new releases to the computer graphics and interactive techniques landscape. The highlights of innovative products launched at SIGGRAPH Asia 2011 exhibition included:

- **Side Effects Software**, a leading player in 3D animation and visual effects, showcased Houdini, an award-winning procedural node based 3D and visual effects tool. Houdini was used extensively in the latest **DreamWorks** blockbuster, *Puss in Boots*, and was received with much acclaim at SIGGRAPH Asia 2011.
- **PipelineFX** unveiled QUBE!, an intelligent, mature and highly scalable render management solution that can integrate easily and quickly into any production workflow. A truly cross-platform solution, QUBE! works out of the box with all leading content creation applications.

### **A New Play at Work**

Across the exhibition area, attendees were also filled in on exciting possibilities in the field of computer graphics and interactive techniques. The Emerging Technologies and Art Gallery programs introduced visitors to intriguing installations aimed at showcasing the lighter side of technology applications and human-computer interaction.

The installation *Joyman: an Immersive and Entertaining Interactive for Virtual Locomotion* developed by the **National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control (INRIA)** from France proved a favorite among attendees. The Joyman functions like a “human-scale joystick”, where attendees can get on a mini trampoline and use their body movement to navigate through a virtual world. Another popular installation was *Influenzia*, developed by **London**

**College of Communication**, United Kingdom. In this project, attendees were invited to interact with several robots in an enclosed area. The installation served to encourage participants to explore the social implications of human-computer interaction in a playful manner.

With 25 installations, including rings that animate soft toys, an augmented reality coloring book and a ball-shaped panoramic camera, the Emerging Technologies program truly lived up to its theme of “Play”.

Similarly, the Art Gallery program brought to life its “FANTAsia” theme, with new media installations that invited attendees into a whimsical world of augmented reality. From a mirror that replaces the human face with that of an animal, to a throne that allowed anyone who sat on it to interact with a painting, the Art Gallery showcased an array of intriguing and highly imaginative installations.

### **Stereoscopy and 3D Discussed**

Hollywood continued to draw the crowds at SIGGRAPH Asia 2011 with presentations and sessions by acclaimed graphic and visual effects artists from across the globe.

Robert Neuman, Stereoscopic Supervisor at **Walt Disney Animation Studios** captivated audiences with a discussion on the subject of stereoscopic 3D animation production and the resurgence of 3D cinema. With more and more filmmakers using this technology to tell their stories in a more immediate, detailed, and realistic way than ever before, budding filmmakers gained a first-hand look at Disney’s stereoscopic projects and the 3D conversion process of Neuman’s latest work, *The Lion King*.

Presenting to an overflowing theater of participants, **Industrial Light & Magic** gave an inside look into the visual effects pipeline for movies such as *Transformers: Dark of the Moon* and *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*. Fans of animation showed up in force at the session by **Lucasfilm Animation** discussing the rigging of characters for the world’s most famous intragalactic battles - *The Clone Wars*.



The Computer Animation Festival also organized a 3D Symposium for the first time at SIGGRAPH Asia. Andy Dong of **Beijing Century Colourful Butterfly Design Animation Ltd.** and Elliot Tong of **Tianjin North Film Group** presented a talk on the production of China's first and most widely distributed 3D stereoscopic animated feature, *Legend of a Rabbit 3D*. The session also discussed the challenges in marketing independently-made 3D films to the international market. To round up the 3D sessions, the Symposium hosted a panel discussion on the *Globalization of 3D Stereoscopic Techniques in Film and Game Making*, featuring experts from **Beijing Century Colorful Butterfly Design Animation Ltd.**, **Crytek**, **Digital Magic**, **ILM Singapore**, **Pixar Animation Studios** and **Tianjin North Film Group**.

### **Looking Towards the Future**

“SIGGRAPH Asia has come a long way since its introduction in 2008 in Singapore. Over the years, we have seen significant growth in the number of attendees as well as submissions and participations across all the programs, from both the region and internationally. Our efforts to continuously refine our program and bring in content that showcase Asia, while still upholding the highest standards unique to SIGGRAPH, has proven to be a winning combination. As we move into our fifth year and return to Singapore next year, I am confident that the event will continue to see more of Asia's best as it strengthens its identity as a unique, credible and important event in the calendars of computer graphics and interactive techniques professionals and enthusiasts,” said Professor Lee Yong Tsui, SIGGRAPH Asia Conference Advisory Group Chair.

The next edition of SIGGRAPH Asia will take place in Singapore from 28 November to 1 December 2012. SIGGRAPH Asia 2012 will be chaired by Professor Susanto Rahardja from the **Institute for Infocomm Research, Singapore**. An IEEE Fellow, Professor Rahardja is the Deputy Executive Director (Research) of the **Institute for Infocomm Research**. He was previously Chair of several international conferences and has served on various boards, advisory, and technical committees in ACM, IEEE, and SPIE-related professional activities in the areas of interactive digital media.

For information about SIGGRAPH Asia 2011, please visit:



<http://www.siggraph.org/asia2011/>.

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**About SIGGRAPH Asia**

The 4th ACM SIGGRAPH Conference and Exhibition on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques in Asia took place in Hong Kong at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre from 12 – 15 December 2011. This year, the line-up of conference programs included the return of the Art Gallery and Emerging Technologies, the inaugural Symposium on Apps, the Computer Animation Festival, Courses, Technical Papers, and Technical Sketches & Posters. There was also a trade exhibition from 13 – 15 December 2011, offering participants from hardware and software vendors to studios and educational institutions a platform to market their products and services to computer graphics and interactive techniques professionals and enthusiasts from Asia and beyond.

**About ACM**

The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) SIGGRAPH sponsors SIGGRAPH Asia 2011. ACM is an educational and scientific society uniting the world's computing educators, researchers, and professionals to inspire dialogue, share resources and address the field's challenges. ACM strengthens the profession's collective voice through strong leadership, promotion of the highest standards, and recognition of technical excellence. ACM supports the professional growth of its members by providing opportunities for life-long learning, career development and professional networking.

