Preedings

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Message from the General Co-Chairs

Welcome to the IEEE Virtual Reality 2000 Conference! This premier technical event is the seventh such meeting in the VRAIS/VR conference series. Sponsored by the IEEE Computer Society Technical Committee on Visualization and Graphics, it attracts the "crème de la crème" of VR researchers and developers from more than 20 countries.

The conference participants, from academia, industry and government, know that, by attending the IEEE VR Conference, they will hear high-quality, peer-reviewed papers and see the newest products in the field

VR 2000 is the first time the conference has been organized on the east coast of the United States, in an area that has not seen a VR conference in seven years. New Brunswick is located in the heart of what we call the "east coast Silicon Valley," close to such research organizations as Sarnoff, Siemens, Bell Labs, Johnson & Johnson, Princeton, and Rutgers. Recognizing that New Jersey is the most industrialized state of the US, the Steering Committee decided to allow (for the first time) one-day registrations. These are designed to help attract more industry participants, and thus broaden the conference's outreach.

Another change this year is a record number of Workshops designed to complement a strong Tutorials program. The number of exhibitor companies present shows the strength and breadth of the VR industry, as well as its fast pace of change. These companies will demonstrate the latest VR products spanning computing hardware, to interface devices, and simulation toolkits. Many of them are exhibiting at VR 2000 for the first time, a result of the efforts of Doug Bowman and Pat Hyde, our Exhibits Co-Chairs.

We have decided to continue the tradition of an Exhibits "kick-off" Sunday Reception started at VR '99 and have added a Dinner Cruise as our conference "grand finale."

The main focus of the conference and its core value remains high-quality peer-reviewed papers. Our Program co-Chairs, Steven Feiner and Daniel Thalmann, did an excellent job of recruiting a record-sized Program Committee and selecting the best papers from the many submissions. Their diligent work and reputation also helped attract Andries van Dam and Stephen Ellis as our superb Keynote and Invited Speakers, respectively.

The complete program for the conference, with all its details (hotel, food, AV, Rutgers tour, dinner cruise, etc.) could not have been realized without the hard work of our Local Arrangements Co-Chairs, David Zeltzer and Mourad Bouzit. Our thanks also go to the other members of the VR 2000 Conference Committee. These are Susumu Tachi and Rudolph Darken (Panels), Mike Bevan and Mike Capps (Publicity), Sharon Stansfield and George Popescu (Videos), Don Allison and Benjamin Watson (Student Volunteers), Drew Kessler and Larry Hodges (Tutorials), Mike Capps (Workshops), Michael Haas and Mel Slater (Research Demos), and Sandy Epstein (Finance). To these we add our thanks for the valuable guidance and encouragement we received from the Steering Committee (Steve Bryson, Tom Caudell, Larry Hodges, Bill Ribarsky, Larry Rosenblum, Sharon Stansfield, and Susumu Tachi). Last, but not least, we must recognize the efforts of Rares Boian, our web master, who designed a great conference web site, attracting a significant number of visits. This was complemented by our moderated SIG email server, which now has a record twelve hundred subscribers.

In closing, we wish to point out that next year the IEEE VR meeting will take place in Japan (co-chaired by Susumu Tachi). This represents the first time our conference will be organized outside of the United

States, in recognition of the international growth of the field. We hope you will enjoy participating in IEEE VR 2000, and trust that we will see you next year in Tokyo!

Grigore C. Burdea

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Acknowledgements

The conference wishes to gratefully acknowledge the following entities for their support:

- the VR '99 Conference Committee for sponsoring advertisements in IEEE magazines;
- VR News for sponsoring the Best Paper Award, providing conference advertising and donating newsletter issues to the attendees;
- the CAIP Center at Rutgers University for providing PC and office equipment and sponsoring the Monday Reception;
- Johnson & Johnson for conference financial support.

Message from the Program Co-Chairs

Welcome to *IEEE Virtual Reality 2000*, the first IEEE Virtual Reality conference of the new millennium—or, perhaps, the last of the old millennium. No matter how one counts, however, this is the latest in a series of conferences that grew out of *VRAIS '93* and the *1993 IEEE Symposium on Research Frontiers in Virtual Reality*.

Our world has changed a lot in the past seven years. Home PCs offer far faster 3D graphics hardware than what most researchers used in 1993; pocket MP3 players have more memory than high-end workstations of 1993; and head-worn displays with enough pixels to render legible imagery are now made by consumer electronics companies that were already household names ten years earlier still in 1983. Whether we call it virtual reality, virtual environments, or virtual worlds, this field, and our conference, encompass an astonishing range of multidisciplinary research. This has enabled a convergence of hardware and software, and of science, engineering, and art, all in the service of real-time, immersive, 3D interaction.

This year's technical program begins on Monday morning with a keynote address by Professor Andries van Dam of Brown University, who will tell us about the promise of virtual reality for scientific visualization, drawing on his perspective of decades of leading-edge research in 3D computer graphics. On Tuesday evening, Dr. Stephen Ellis of NASA Ames Research Center will give an invited talk on the role of human factors in the design of virtual environments.

Our program includes two panels, both looking toward the future of our field: one on shared virtual environments, and the other on haptic interfaces. The majority of the program is, as always, devoted to papers, and thanks to the careful reviews of 119 program committee members and 19 additional reviewers, 31 out of 93 submissions were selected for presentation as full papers. These span a wide range of topics in virtual environments, including workbench and other projection systems, haptics, human perception, distributed virtual environments, animation, navigation, mixed reality, tracking, and applications in many domains. The paper presentations are complemented by 13 poster presentations, providing overviews of a wealth of additional research.

Dealing with hundreds of submission contact authors and program committee members was a daunting task. Happily, it was made tractable through the able assistance of Drexel Hallaway, who developed spreadsheets to manage the paper assignment and review process, and oversaw the handling of the papers, aided by Tobias Höllerer, Elias Gagas, Sinem Güven, Tachio Terauchi, and Blaine Bell. Finally, Anne Rawlinson, of the IEEE Computer Society, put it all together (quite literally) to create the document that you are now reading. We hope that these presentations, and the proceedings that document them, will inspire fruitful discussions, both at the conference and afterwards—leading, of course, to your submissions to IEEE Virtual Reality 2001, next year in Japan!

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Keynote Address

Immersive Virtual Reality for Scientific Visualization: A Progress Report

Andries van Dam
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Abstract

Immersive Virtual Reality (IVR) is still in an early stage of development, due to significant deficiencies on many fronts, including input and output hardware performance and ergonomics, interaction techniques, application software, development environments, cost, and reliability. There are areas, such as vehicle simulation and walkthroughs of buildings and processing plants, in which IVR has clearly demonstrated its utility, and even its cost-effectiveness. However, the promise of IVR for scientific visualization has scarcely been realized, although there is anecdotal evidence thus far that immersion can help in scientific (or information) visualization. Can we show conclusively that there are visualization tasks for which being immersed in one's data/model provides extra or faster insight? I remain optimistic that in this area, too, we will be able to show that IVR has significant, measurable advantages over non-immersive environments. To illustrate, I will present some scientific visualization interaction research in our four-wall IVR system.

Andries van Dam (Andy) received the B.S. degree with Honors in Engineering Sciences from Swarthmore College in 1960 and the M.S. and Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1963 and 1966, respectively. Professor van Dam joined Brown University in 1965, where he co-founded and was the first chair of the Department of Computer Science, and is Thomas J. Watson Jr. University Professor of Technology and Education and Professor of Computer Science. He is a PI and former director of the NSF Science and Technology Center for Graphics and Visualization. Dr. van Dam co-authored the well-known books Fundamentals of Interactive Computer Graphics, Computer Graphics: Principles and Practice, Introduction to Computer Graphics, and others. Among his many awards are the IEEE Centennial Medal (1984), the ACM SIGGRAPH Steven A. Coons Award (1991), the ACM Karl V. Karlstrom Outstanding Educator Award (1994), and the IEEE James H. Mulligan, Jr. Education Medal (1999).