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# Interactive Storytelling

10th International Conference  
on Interactive Digital Storytelling, ICIDS 2017  
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Proceedings

*Editors*

Nuno Nunes   
Instituto Superior Técnico  
Lisbon  
Portugal

Valentina Nisi   
University of Madeira  
Funchal  
Portugal

Ian Oakley   
Ulsan National Institute of Science  
and Technology  
Ulsan  
Korea (Republic of)

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## Preface

This volume contains the proceedings of ICIDS 2017: the 9th International Conference on Interactive Digital Storytelling. ICIDS 2017 took place at the Madeira Interactive Technologies Institute (Madeira-ITI), Funchal, Madeira Island, Portugal. This year the conference included several categories and tracks such as workshops, demos, posters, a doctoral consortium, and an international art exhibition.

ICIDS is the premier annual venue that gathers researchers, developers, practitioners, and theorists to present and share the latest innovations, insights, and techniques in the expanding field of interactive storytelling and the technologies that support it. The field regroups a highly dynamic and interdisciplinary community, in which narrative studies, computer science, interactive and immersive technologies, the arts, and creativity converge to develop new expressive forms in a myriad domains that include artistic projects, interactive documentaries, cinematic games, serious games, assistive technologies, edutainment, museum science, and advertising, to mention a few.

The ICIDS conference has a long-standing tradition of bringing together academia, industry, designers, developers, and artists into an interdisciplinary dialogue through a mix of keynote lectures, panels, long and short article presentations, posters, workshops, lively demo sessions, and the art exhibition. Additionally, since 2010, ICIDS has been hosting an international art exhibition open to the general public. This year we inaugurated a new entry, the doctoral consortia, enabling PhD students to receive feedback on their ongoing research.

The review process was extremely selective and many good papers could not be accepted for the final program. Altogether, we received 88 submissions in all the categories. Out of the 65 submitted full and short papers, the Program Committee selected only 16 long papers and four short paper submissions for presentation and publication, which corresponds to an acceptance rate of 31%. In addition, we accepted 13 submissions as posters, and five submissions as demonstrations, including some long and short papers that were offered the opportunity to participate in another category. The ICIDS 2017 program featured contributions from 47 different institutions in 18 different countries worldwide.

The conference program also hosted three invited speakers:

Jay Bushman an award-winning producer and writer of transmedia and platform-independent entertainment. He was the Transmedia producer and a writer for “The Lizzie Bennet Diaries” and a groundbreaking video and social media modernization of “Pride and Prejudice” – the show won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Original Interactive Program and had over 70 million views on YouTube. He was the cocreator and co-showrunner of the sequel interactive series “Welcome to Sanditon.” As a writer and producer at Fourth Wall Studios, Jay helped to create the Emmy-winning series “Dirty Work,” and wrote and created the show “Airship Dracula.” Jay has worked on interactive campaigns for properties including “Game of Thrones,” “Silicon Valley,” “Terminator: Genisys,” and “Arrival.” He has also worked as a writer and consultant

for major studios and networks, including Google, HBO, Disney, Paramount, Bad Robot, and Lucasfilm. An innovator and leader in the transmedia community, he pushes the boundaries of next-generation entertainment. Jay was one of the original founders of the professional organization Transmedia Los Angeles (now StoryforwardLA), and one publication even named him “The Epic Poet of Twitter.” Jay’s keynote was on “Transmedia Storytelling: No, Really, What Is It?” The joke goes like this: “Put two transmedia creators in a room together, and pretty quickly you’ll have three definitions of transmedia.” Everybody who uses the terms means something a little different. With stories from the trenches of making transmedia projects over the last ten years, this talk delved into what people mean when they say “transmedia” and why nobody can agree.

The second keynote speaker was Pia Tikka, Adjunct Professor of New Narrative Media and a professional filmmaker. She is the principal investigator of the NeuroCine research project and has held a position as a director at Crucible Studio, Department of Media, Aalto University. In the field of naturalistic neurosciences, she has acted as a core member of the directory group of the neuroscience research project aivoAALTO at Aalto University. Her research in neurocinematics focuses on studying the neural basis of storytelling and creative imagination. She has contributed to neuroeconomics as a member of the advisory board of the NeuroService research project at the Laurea University of Applied Sciences, funded by Tekes, the Finnish Funding Agency for Innovation. She is a Fellow of Life in the Society for Cognitive Studies of the Moving Image. Currently, her research team NeuroCine applies neuroimaging methods to study the neural basis of narrative cognition. Pia’s keynote was on “Systemic Second Order Authorship for Creating Complex Narratives – A Neurophenomenological Approach.” In the beginning of the twenty-first century, the theoreticians of interactive narrative celebrated the birth of the creative audience at the corpse of the author, echoing Roland Barthes’s words in *La mort de l’auteur* (1967). But this may have been premature. The notion of second-order authorship allows for the reformulation of creative authorship in a manner inspired by the neurophenomenology and systemic enactive mind theory by Francisco Varela and colleagues (1991). This was exemplified by describing the authorship of enactive co-presence between a virtual screen character and the viewer.

The third keynote speaker was Suzanne Scott, an assistant professor of Media Studies in the Department of Radio-Television-Film at the University of Texas at Austin. Her work has appeared in *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, *Transformative Works and Cultures*, *Cinema Journal*, and *New Media & Society*, as well as numerous anthologies, including *How to Watch Television* and *The Participatory Cultures Handbook*. Together with Melissa Click, she has co-edited *The Routledge Companion to Media Fandom* (2018), and her current book project considers the gendered tensions underpinning the media industry’s embrace of fans within convergence culture. Suzanne’s keynote was “Choose Your Own Adventure: Fandom and the Future of Interactive Storytelling.” Fan culture has, from its inception, treated media objects as inherently interactive, playing in the textual gaps and margins and, in some cases, radically reimagining a storyworld’s fictive limits. Tracing both the history of transformative fan texts (e.g., fanfiction, fan vids) from analog to digital participatory

cultures, as well as the politics of these industrially unauthorized interactions, this keynote suggested that the barriers to embracing a more expansive conception of “interactive digital storytelling” lie in lingering anxieties surrounding authorial and commercial control. Just as scholarly work on interactive storytelling must acknowledge programmatic or structural limitations on user agency, even as we celebrate the participatory and collaborative capacity of the form, this talk explored how media industries, creators, and technologies alternately curtail and foster fan culture’s interactive impulses.

In addition to paper and poster presentations, ICIDS 2017 featured a preconference workshop day with five workshops:

WS1: History of Expressive Systems, organized by Mark J. Nelson and James Ryan

WS2: Transmedia Journalism and Interactive Documentary in Dialogue, by Renira Rampazzo Gambarato and Alessandro Nani

WS3: Authoring for Interactive Storytelling, organized by Charlie Hargood, Alex Mitchell, David Millard, and Uli Spierling

WS4: Bringing Together Interactive Digital Storytelling with Tangible Interaction: Challenges and Opportunities, organized by Alejandro Catala, Mariët Theune, Cristina Sylla, and Pedro Ribeiro

WS5: Film-Live: An Innovative Immersive and Interactive Cinema Experience, organized by Mattia Costa, Chiara Ligi and Francesca Piredda

In conjunction with the academic conference, the Art Exhibition of the 9th International Conference on Interactive Digital Storytelling was held at the conference venue, Vidamar Resorts, during November 14–15, 2017. The 2017 ICIDS Art Exhibition featured a variety of art pieces of interactive storytelling in various media including Web-documentaries, VR film, narrative games, augmented reality mobile applications, and Transmedia projects produced by over 30 artists of national and international origin. The exhibition’s theme of “Time & Tempo” encouraged artists to explore the intrinsic qualities of interactive narrative as a time-based medium, user rhythms, and storytelling themes that incorporate history, time-travel, or other playful engagements.

Each submission was reviewed independently by three members of the selection jury, after which each submission received a meta-review analysis from the curators. Submissions were scored on a graded scale, which was averaged across all reviewers for the meta-review and final decision. The exhibition artwork is featured in the ICIDS 2017 ISBN numbered catalogue published by ETC Press.

We would like to express our gratitude and sincere appreciation to all the authors included in this volume for their effort in preparing their submissions and for their participation in the conference. Equally we want to heartily thank all the members of the Organizing Committee and the Program Committee. Thanks as well to our art exhibition jurors for their accuracy and diligence in the review process, our invited speakers for their insightful and inspirational talks, and the workshop organizers for the

dynamism and creativity that they brought to the conference. A special thank goes to the ICIDS Steering Committee for granting us the opportunity to host ICIDS 2017 at Madeira-ITI in Funchal, Portugal. Thanks to you all!

November 2017

Valentina Nisi  
Nuno Nunes  
Ian Oakley



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