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Virtual Storytelling

Using Virtual Reality Technologies for Storytelling
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Preface

In September 2001, we organized the 1st International Conference on Virtual Storytelling in Avignon, France. This was the first international scientific event entirely devoted to the new discipline that links the ancient human art of storytelling to the latest high technologies of the Virtual Reality era.

Since this date, technology has not slowed its course. We all know that personal computers are even more powerful, but there have been huge advances in graphics boards. These are now programmable and can render in real time huge quantities of data as well as special effects that until recently required a dedicated graphics superworkstation. Applications that were in the research lab have now come to market. 3D Virtual Humans, the heroes of today's video games, are taking their first steps on e-business Web sites. These will be the stars of tomorrow. New topics are being intensively researched, especially, mixed and enhanced realities – the art of combining synthesized with real worlds.

This evolution raises many technical, applicational, artistic and even ethical questions. The occasion of the 2nd International Conference on Virtual Storytelling provided an excellent opportunity to once again gather researchers from the scientific, artistic and industrial communities to demonstrate new methods and techniques. This was the venue to show the latest results, and exchange concepts and ideas about the use of Virtual Reality technologies for creating, populating, rendering and interacting with stories, whatever their form, be it theatre, movie, cartoon, advertisement, puppet show, multimedia work, video games, etc.

We believe that participants in Virtual Storytelling 2003 found exciting guidelines for future scientific and artistic research as well as ideas for new applications and developments. Because Virtual Storytelling is a rapidly expanding discipline, new conferences are expected to be organized very soon to update the state of the art!

Toulouse, November 2003

Olivier Balet
Jean-Pierre Jessel
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Patrice Torguet

Acknowledgement

Organizing a conference on Virtual Storytelling was a joint initiative of the Virtual Reality Department of the Communications et Systèmes Group and the French Working Group on Virtual Reality (GT-RV).

However, Virtual Storytelling 2003 only came about thanks to the financial support of the IST Programme of the European Commission, of Grand Toulouse, the Paul Sabatier University of Toulouse, and the University of Glasgow. We really want to thank them all for offering the opportunity to organize a conference on so innovative a topic.

We would also like to thank the Eurographics Organization for supporting the conference as well as the members of the Scientific and Application Board who helped the organizers to define the conference topics, and proposed names of experts for the Program Committee. The members of the Program Committee deserve special acknowledgments for their amazing reviews of the large number of papers that were submitted (three times what we had initially expected!).

Last, but not least, we had the pleasure to welcome two companies, Immersion SA and NVIDIA Corporation, that offered prizes for Best Paper and Best Demonstration.

Finally, our thanks to the organization people from Sophie et Associés for their help during the conference preparation.

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Table of Contents

Real-Time Technologies

Seizing Power: Shaders and Storytellers	3
<i>Kevin Björke</i>	
Real-Time Lighting Design for Interactive Narrative	12
<i>Magy Seif El-Nasr and Ian Horswill</i>	
Interactive Out-of-Core Visualisation of Very Large Landscapes on Commodity Graphics Platform	21
<i>Paolo Cignoni, Fabio Ganovelli, Enrico Gobbetti, Fabio Marton, Federico Ponchio, and Roberto Scopigno</i>	
A Cinematography System for Virtual Storytelling	30
<i>Nicolas Courty, Fabrice Lamarche, Stéphane Donikian, and Éric Marchand</i>	

Narrativity and Authoring

Authoring Highly Generative Interactive Drama	37
<i>Nicolas Szilas, Olivier Marty, and Jean-Hugues Réty</i>	
Character-Focused Narrative Generation for Execution in Virtual Worlds	47
<i>Mark O. Riedl and R. Michael Young</i>	
Managing Authorship in Plot Conduction	57
<i>Daniel Sobral, Isabel Machado, and Ana Paiva</i>	
Authoring Edutainment Stories for Online Players (AESOP): Introducing Gameplay into Interactive Dramas	65
<i>Barry G. Silverman, Michael Johns, Ransom Weaver, and Joshua Mosley</i>	
From the Necessity of Film Closure to Inherent VR Wideness	74
<i>Nelson Zagalo, Vasco Branco, and Anthony Barker</i>	
Virtual StoryTelling: A Methodology for Developing Believable Communication Skills in Virtual Actors	78
<i>Sandrine Darcy, Julie Dudgale, Mehdi El Jed, Nico Pallamin, and Bernard Pavard</i>	

Mediation and Interface

Stories in Space: The Concept of the Story Map	85
<i>Michael Nitsche and Maureen Thomas</i>	

Mediating Action and Background Music	94
<i>Pietro Casella and Ana Paiva</i>	
The Effects of Mediation in a Storytelling Virtual Environment	102
<i>Sarah Brown, Ilda Ladeira, Cara Winterbottom, and Edwin Blake</i>	
Context Design and Cinematic Mediation in <i>Cuthbert Hall</i> Virtual Environment . .	112
<i>Stanislav Roudavski and François Penz</i>	
Group Interaction and VR Storytelling in Museums	116
<i>Raúl Cid</i>	
Beyond Human, Avatar as Multimedia Expression	120
<i>Ron Broglio and Stephen Guynup</i>	
Virtual Characters	
Building Virtual Actors Who Can Really Act	127
<i>Ken Perlin</i>	
The V-Man Project: Toward Autonomous Virtual Characters	135
<i>Eric Menou, Laurent Philippon, Stéphane Sanchez, Jérôme Duchon, and Olivier Balet</i>	
Tell Me That Bit Again... Bringing Interactivity to a Virtual Storyteller	146
<i>André Silva, Guilherme Raimundo, and Ana Paiva</i>	
A New Automated Workflow for 3D Character Creation Based on 3D Scanned Data	155
<i>Alexander Sibiryakov, Xiangyang Ju, and Jean-Christophe Nebel</i>	
Using Motivation-Driven Continuous Planning to Control the Behaviour of Virtual Agents	159
<i>Nikos Avradinis, Ruth Aylett, and Themis Panayiotopoulos</i>	
Mixed Reality	
The Art of Mixing Realities	165
<i>Sally Jane Norman</i>	
“Just Talking about Art” – Creating Virtual Storytelling Experiences in Mixed Reality	179
<i>Ulrike Spierling and Ido Iurgel</i>	
Users Acting in Mixed Reality Interactive Storytelling	189
<i>Marc Cavazza, Olivier Martin, Fred Charles, Steven J. Mead, and Xavier Marichal</i>	
Is Seeing Touching? Mixed Reality Interaction and Involvement Modalities	198
<i>Alok Nandi and Xavier Marichal</i>	

Applications

Using Virtual Reality for “New Clowns”	211
<i>Martin Hachet and Pascal Guitton</i>	
Storytelling for Recreating Our Selves: ZENetic Computer	220
<i>Naoko Tosa, Koji Miyazaki, Hideki Murasato, and Seigo Matsuoka</i>	
A Distributed Virtual Storytelling System for Firefighters Training	227
<i>Eric Perdigau, Patrice Torguet, Cédric Sanza, and Jean-Pierre Jessel</i>	
CITYCLUSTER – “From the Renaissance to the Megabyte Networking Age” – A Virtual Reality & High Speed Networking Project	231
<i>Franz Fischnaller</i>	
A Storytelling Concept for Digital Heritage Exchange in Virtual Environments . . .	235
<i>Stefan Conrad, Ernst Krujiff, Martin Suttrop, Frank Hasenbrink, and Alex Lechner</i>	
Author Index	239