

SIGGRAPH Asia 2009 – a kaleidoscope of digital media experiences

Yokohama, Japan, 19 December 2009 – The city of Yokohama became the focal point for the digital media, computer graphics and interactive techniques community in Asia and the world this week.

As the four-day SIGGRAPH Asia 2009 drew to a close, approximately 6,500 visitors from more than 50 countries all across Asia and globally made their way to Pacifico Yokohama to participate in the region's largest display of the latest in computer graphics, interactive techniques, and digital media and content. More than 500 artists, academics, and industry experts presented a vibrant array of thought-provoking works, breakthrough ideas and radical innovations at SIGGRAPH Asia 2009.

"We are thrilled with the success of SIGGRAPH Asia 2009. Since its debut in Singapore last year, SIGGRAPH Asia has become a highly anticipated digital media and content show for enthusiasts and digital media professionals throughout Asia. The increased enthusiasm we see this year is also an endorsement of the quality of works presented at SIGGRAPH Asia," said Masa Inakage, Conference Chair, SIGGRAPH Asia 2009.

Accelerating knowledge-sharing and transfer

Leading experts in the field of animation, computer graphics, digital media production, robotics and interactive techniques were also on hand at SIGGRAPH Asia. Through more than 200 talks, workshops and panels including three Featured Speaker sessions, SIGGRAPH Asia 2009 successfully connected enthusiasts and future talents in the digital media industry with established professionals and academics in the computer graphics and interactive techniques field. A total of 400 experts from universities such as Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Stanford University, Tsinghua University and The University of Tokyo as well as corporations including Pixar Animation Studios, Imagica and Sony Pictures Imageworks offered their insights, experiences and speculative ideas at SIGGRAPH Asia 2009.

Computer Animation Festival honors the finest works

Always a highpoint at SIGGRAPH and SIGGRAPH Asia, the winners of the Computer Animation Festival *Best of Show Award* and *Best Technical Award* received their prizes on 17 December 2009. The winning pieces were chosen by a panel of industry experts based on their commendable use of computer-generated imagery, animation and storytelling. A total of 79 animation pieces, from 16 countries were screened at the Festival.

The award winners are:

- **Best of Show Award: *Anchored*** by Lindsey Olivares, Ringling College of Art and Design

This production truly deserves the *Best of Show* title for its innovative and creative expressions of emotions. The skilful integration of sound, character design, art direction and typography creates a beautiful, heartfelt piece that captured the judges' attention and won their commendation.

- **Best Technical Award: *Assassin's Creed 2***, by Istvan Zorkoczy, Digi Pictures

This work was selected for its distinct mastery of the finer points in 3D computer graphics production. Incredibly detailed and realistic main characters, clear cinematography, amazing surfacing, and world-class rendering made this a standout piece.

Japanese works well-represented

Leveraging on its presence in Japan, the second largest computer gaming market in the world, SIGGRAPH Asia included many well-known names in the gaming industry such as Sega Corporation, Square Enix Co., and Namco Bandai Games Inc.

On the exhibition floor, the Advanced Robotics Lab pavilion showcased a dazzling display of robotics. A special program to market the Japan debut of SIGGRAPH Asia, the Advanced Robotics Lab invited visitors to glean from the cutting-edge technologies that Japan has to offer in the field of robotics, such as human-like robots with the appearance and performance similar to humans, home-assistant or domestic help robots, and guide robots for the visually impaired. In addition, household Japanese brands Sony, NEC and JVC also showcased 3D displays and high-end screens for both industry as well as future use by consumers.

Japanese works were also well-represented in the Emerging Technologies program, representing nearly half of the 27 installations. Among the notable displays from Japan are *Kaidan: Japanese horror experience in Interactive Mixed Reality* from Ritsumeikan University; *Another Shadow*, a collaboration between Takeo Igarashi of The University of Tokyo and Hisato Ogata of Leading Edge Design; and *SCHEMA*, a multi-party interaction-oriented humanoid robot by Waseda University.

"There is great variety and creativity demonstrated in this year's Emerging Technologies program – from display technologies and virtual reality, to gestural interface innovations and robotics. Pointing towards future applications that will be cheaper and simpler to use, you can see the momentum is building for the digital do-it-yourself revolution. For instance, there are displays showcasing instant broadcasting through live video mixing,

toolkits that make it easy to assemble your own electronic devices, and new forms of music jamming,” said Lars Erik Holmquist, Chair, Emerging Technologies program, SIGGRAPH Asia 2009.

Converging Diversity

A hot-pot of the best and latest in computer graphics and interactive techniques, SIGGRAPH Asia 2009 offered participants a mind-blowing array of the best ideas and possibilities in the digital media field.

The Art Gallery program drew both interest and curiosity with innovative installations such as *Artificial Nature*, a bio-inspired, immersive art installation; Swiss-Japanese collaboration *Happy Wear* that brought a tee-shirt or a bag to ‘life’ through animation; *A Head of View*, a new approach to player navigation and manipulation of game space through video tracking of body movements; and the sensual *Light and Shadows* display by WOW from Japan.

Said ACM SIGGRAPH President Scott Owen, *“Asia is fast becoming a focal point for the digital media industry. SIGGRAPH Asia 2009 expands opportunities for the computer graphics and interactive techniques community from within and out of Asia to network and experience the vibrancy of the industry in this region. Through these interactions, we hope to spark new ideas and breakthroughs that will further seal Asia’s spot as a hub for the world’s most creative talents.”*

The next edition of SIGGRAPH Asia will take place in Seoul, Korea, on 15-18 December 2010. SIGGRAPH Asia 2010 will be chaired by Ko Hyeong-Seok, Professor at the School of Electrical Engineering in Seoul National University, Korea. Professor Ko’s research focus is in the reproduction of clothes, hair, fluids, and deformable solids. His new fluid simulation method was presented at this year’s SIGGRAPH Asia Technical Papers program and as part of the Electronic Theater program.

For more information about SIGGRAPH Asia 2009, please visit <http://www.siggraph.org/asia2009>.

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About SIGGRAPH Asia

The 2nd ACM SIGGRAPH Conference and Exhibition on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques in Asia took place in Pacifico Yokohama, Japan. Featuring an international conference and exhibition from 16-19 December 2009, SIGGRAPH Asia 2009 offered works that provoked thoughts, explored ideas in innovative ways, addressed contemporary issues, interactively engaged viewers in discovery, and stimulated their intellect and creativity through art, computer animation, courses, education, technology, papers, sketches and posters. For more information, please visit www.siggraph.org/asia2009.

About ACM

The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) SIGGRAPH sponsors SIGGRAPH Asia. 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.