

ACM SIGGRAPH Annual Report for Year 2001-2002 Fiscal Year 2002

Judith R. Brown, Past President

Summary of Key Issues

The economic downturn is our key challenge, resulting in fewer exhibitors and lower attendance at our annual conference. We are cutting expenses, and also working to keep events current and

exciting. Globalization and expanded online services continue to be key goals for building our community worldwide, and raising ACM SIGGRAPH's profile as "the voice of computer graphics" is an important goal for fulfilling our mission.

Our membership is up slightly, and we re-established a basic new member welcome letter and a lapsed member mailing. We have continued our efforts to secure ACM SIGGRAPH-specific membership cards. This is expected to be implemented within the next month, thus responding to a major gripe reported by ACM SIGGRAPH-specific members: when they join, they receive nothing acknowledging their membership

Strategic Planning

We began this year with a follow-on to last year's strategic planning, with a theme of "your best year yet" to set some high-level goals for the year. A good cross-section of professionals in our field were included, and most of the 15 goals have been accomplished. We also feel that starting our regularly-scheduled meetings with strategic thinking on some aspect of the organization has been productive.

Nominations

This was the biggest election ever, with seven offices on the ballot. This is due to our change from the former possibility of a candidacy for two consecutive 2-year terms of office to the current 3-year, nonrenewable term of office. Due to the phase-in of the new election structure, the term limits vary this year. However, beginning next year, all elections will be for three-year terms. Those elected were:

- Alain Chesnais, President, 3 year term
- Barb Helfer, Vice President, 3 year term
- Gudrun Enger, Director for Communications, 2 year term
- Thierry Frey, Director for Chapters, 2 year term
- Jacquelyn Ford Morie, Director at Large, 2 year term
- Werner Hansmann, Director for Education, 1 year term
- Masa Inakage, Director at Large, 1 year term

Membership

Our primary member communication vehicles are the siggraph.org website, our booth at the annual conference, and the printed "GIP" (General Information Piece) that is produced for the

conference each year.

With the assistance of ACM Information Systems staff, an online application for joining ACM SIGGRAPH without navigating the cumbersome ACM Store interface was deployed in 1999. It has been tremendously successful and handles a large percentage of our new membership, although we don't know how renewals occur. It would be greatly advantageous to have a similarly streamlined process for purchasing Member Value Plus publications and SIGGRAPH Video Reviews as single copy purchases.

We developed a reusable online survey system, and emailed 1200 randomly selected members in February 2002. After failed emails, about 21% responded. Some results were:

- Only about 10% of respondents identified themselves as artists or animators
- The most highly rated membership benefit was access to the past SIGGRAPH proceedings (which is implemented via the ACM Digital Library)
- The most highly rated potential future benefit is the SIGGRAPH Online recordings of conference sessions

Another issue that needs to be addressed in the near future is some way to use the user authentication systems of the ACM DL to authenticate users seeking services on siggraph.org. In particular, we would like to restrict access to the SIGGRAPH Online material to members, but we don't want to force members to create yet another username/password to do so.

Online Activities

We are significantly expanding our online information, and continued expansion in this area is a very high priority. One of our high-level goals is to complete the Hub prototype implementation by September 2002. This includes making the technical presentations from the SIGGRAPH 2002 Conference available online, creating a news alliance with Computer Graphics World, and finding a volunteer to manage the newly created area called "Ask Dr. SIGGRAPH", a new feature for siggraph.org. At this time, we have a volunteer, Stephen Matsuba, who is leading the effort to digitally capture the conference data (Papers Program, Panels Program, and some Courses) for online access. We are working through the technical issues with CGW in preparation for having their news feed on siggraph.org. We have also recruited Dennis Bouvier to lead the charge for "Ask Dr. SIGGRAPH". This year we added some important new sections to our site:

- The Conference Advisory Group site
- An expanded CD-related Links section
- Just coming online now is a selection of computer graphics news items, obtained via an agreement with Computer Graphics World magazine

In order to provide more timely service to customers of the siggraph.org systems, we engaged the part-time professional services of a system administrator, and he has also greatly helped in increasing the security level of the machines.

Annual Conference

SIGGRAPH 2001 was held in Los Angeles, California, and chaired by Lynn Pocock. It drew almost 34,000 attendees, with a technical attendance of over 7,600 and had 300 exhibitors. The Conference Advisory Group is seeking to reach out to other technical communities and to increase the presence of games and interactive techniques in the annual conference.

Symposia

In addition to the conferences that regularly receive ACM SIGGRAPH support, this year we also supported Afrigraph 2001 and the Spring Conference in Computer Graphics held in Slovakia. The Afrigraph conference, held in Cape Town in November 2001, was the result of the successful ACM SIGGRAPH-Eurographics mission to Southern Africa in March 2001. The organisation for the next conference is already well under way, with the next event scheduled for February 2002 (See www.afrigraph.org).

Campfires are highly interdisciplinary workshop-style events that we sponsor jointly with Eurographics. Two new Campfires, "Visual Learning for Science and Engineering" and "Production Process of 3D Computer Graphics Application: Structures, Roles and Tools" were held at Snowbird, Utah, in June

Awards

Three ACM SIGGRAPH Awards were given at SIGGRAPH 2001. Lance J. Williams received the Steven A. Coons award, which is given in odd-numbered years to an individual to honor that person's lifetime contribution to computer graphics and interactive techniques. Lance received this award in recognition of his fundamental and far reaching technical ideas, his pioneering artistic contributions to the field, and his generous and unflinching mentorship to many of the leading lights in Computer Graphics research today.

Andrew Witkin received the Computer Graphics Achievement award, which is given each year to recognize an individual for an outstanding achievement in computer graphics and interactive techniques. Andrew received this award for his pioneering work in bringing a physics based approach to computer graphics.

Paul E. Debevec received the Significant New Researcher Award, which is awarded annually to a researcher who has made a recent significant contribution to the field of computer graphics and is new to the field. This award recognizes his recent creative and innovative work in the field of image-based modeling and rendering.

Relationships with Other Societies

ACM SIGGRAPH and Eurographics have an affiliation agreement that allows for discounted joint membership. This already close working relationship was further enhanced this year with the signing of a publishing agreement as an addendum to our existing affiliation agreement. Joint ACM SIGGRAPH-Eurographics activities this year included two more successful Campfires (see Symposia) and the joint mission to Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore. In addition to working closely with Eurographics, the Japanese Computer Graphics and Art Society

(CG-ARTS), the Digital Content Association of Japan (DCAj), and Nordic Interactive, ACM SIGGRAPH has also been developing relationships with other computer graphics associations. A new co-operation agreement with the China Society of Image and Graphics (CSIG) was signed in Hangzhou, China and new agreements with the Independent Game Developers Association (IGDA), International Visual Literacy Association (IVLA), the Swedish Computer Graphics Society (SIGRAD) and Imagina are due to be signed at SIGGRAPH 2002.

In March 2002 an ACM SIGGRAPH-Eurographics delegation went to Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore with the goals of:

- promoting Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques
- learning about the state of computer graphics and interactive techniques in the region
- helping to establish two regional graphics associations, ANZgraph (Australia and New Zealand Graphics) and SEAGraph (South East AsiaGraphics)
- helping to enable worldwide collaborations for universities and industry in the region.

One of the outcomes of this successful visit is the Graphite 2003 conference to be held in Melbourne in February 2003.

Projects

Traveling Art Show (TAS)

Every other year, part of the art show from the conference is selected to travel for two years.

The travelling art show (TAS) continues to increase its activities as it is hosted by ACM SIGGRAPH chapters and conferences supported by ACM SIGGRAPH around the world.

Highlights of this year's events include:

- Copenhagen, Denmark, on the occasion of the Nordic Interactive conference
- Cape Town, South Africa, following the Afrigraph conference
- Venice, Italy, as part of Opera Totale
- publication of a catalogue in Italian
- Colorado, New York, and Florida, and going on to Ohio and New Jersey in the fall
- Presentations in Taipei and Tainan (Taiwan) with publication in Chinese

Project Grants

Three projects were funded this year.

1. Travel Support for Key Volunteers from Southern Africa, Steve Cunningham and Mike McGrath, \$5000.

This project is to increase volunteer experience and educational activity in Southern Africa. It provided partial travel support for four educators from that region who have already received Educators Conference Grants to come to the SIGGRAPH 2001 conference so they may be more effective contributors to their regional association and so they may contribute more fully to the educational activity in the region.

2. Online Archive of Interactive Art Works and Performances, Lucy Petrovich, \$19,280.

This project will put together an online multimedia documentation from the art show, including the interactive works and historical information about the artists, from 1974 onward.

3. Electronic Theatre Internet Archive, Brad deGraf, \$10,000. This project, in collaboration with the Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org>), is intended as the first phase of a permanent library of the best of computer graphics throughout its history, which itself will be a core component of a larger Internet Archive of Animation.

Education

The Education Committee has two types of activities, those related to the annual conference and those that involve resource development. As part of the Education Booth at the conference, there is a display of the winning entries of SPACE (Student Posters and Animation Competition and Exhibition) and SPICE (Student Projects for Interactive Concepts in Education). There were over 200 poster entries and over 100 animation entries for SPACE, and there were 50 entries for SPICE. The SPACE exhibit and a CD of the SPICE entries travel internationally after the conference.

The education grant program is bringing six faculty members from outside the U. S. to the SIGGRAPH 2002 conference. These educators are from Botswana, China, Britain, Venezuela, and Brazil. Another new initiative is to distribute CDs of conference course notes to educators in countries with financial constraints. The first set was distributed at a workshop in Botswana in June. This workshop on teaching computer graphics was organized by Steve Cunningham and Sampson Asare and drew participants from five countries in Southern Africa. There have been revisions to the education web site and to the education directory. A Campfire (highly interdisciplinary workshop) was held in June with a grant from the now-dissolved National Computer Graphics Association (NCGA.)

Traveling Courses

In November, with the help of Vice President Alan Chalmers, a course on OpenGL taught by David Shreiner was given at the Afrigraph conference in Cape Town, South Africa. This successful course was taught to approximately 35 attendees and was very well received.

Public Policy

The mission of the ACM SIGGRAPH Public Policy Program is to provide visibility of relevant public policy information, such as proposed legislation, to ACM SIGGRAPH members and others in the computer graphics technical community and to provide information on the implications of technology to the non technical community, including policy makers and funding agencies. We do so by our "Computer Graphics" column, our web site (<http://www.siggraph.org/pub-policy>), and by serving as a catalyst for studies on computer graphics research topics, participating in conferences addressing policy issues, conducting issues surveys, writing white papers, and working with ACM public policy groups, such as USACM.

There was both a course and a panel at the SIGGRAPH 2001 conference. The course, "The Impact of Public Policy on Computer Graphics," was co-organized by Barbara Simons, ACM Past-President and founding chair of USACM and Bob Ellis, ACM SIGGRAPH Public Policy

Committee Chair. The panel, "Beyond Copyright: The Brave New World of Digital Rights Management," was organized by Ellis and David Richard Nelson. These were both very well attended, and the Birds-of-a-Feather session showed a lot of attendee interest in public policy issues.

The National Research Council (NRC) study on research needs in computer graphics, for which ACM SIGGRAPH has committed \$50,000 in seed funding, was inactive while the government did some restructuring, but there is now renewed interest from NRC.

Publications

ACM SIGGRAPH offers a wide range of publications for sale to the computer graphics community, mainly focused on the content presented at the organization's conferences and workshops: printed and CD-ROM based conference and workshop proceedings, video tapes, and DVDs all help to document these gatherings of the computer graphics community.

The SIGGRAPH "Member Value Plus" program offers conference and workshop proceedings for sale to SIGGRAPH members at reduced rates. Included in this program are several publications from conferences not sponsored by SIGGRAPH: the Canadian "Graphics Interface" conference and the Eurographics Rendering Workshop proceedings are available through this program.

There are five notable items:

- Our new partnership with Eurographics includes the co-sponsorship of five to seven more conferences per year, and production and distribution of the proceedings of these conferences has been taken on by ACM SIGGRAPH.
- Starting in January 2002, final versions of papers accepted to ACM SIGGRAPH-sponsored conferences and workshops are delivered as PDF documents rather than hardcopy.
- Papers from the annual conference have been digitized and made available in the ACM Digital Library (some from our digitizing efforts, some from ACM's digitizing efforts).
- Starting with ACM SIGGRAPH 2002, there is a Conference Proceedings DVD-ROM in place of the Conference Proceedings videotape, containing all content from the Conference Proceedings CDROM as well as movies and interactive presentations.
- Work continues on migration of the quarterly newsletter to have a greater online presence. ACM SIGGRAPH's strategic plan drives many activities, including the expansion of the online version of Computer Graphics, the quarterly newsletter, to include all of the content found in the printed version.

Chapters

Three new chapters were chartered this year, almost 150 events were organized by chapters around the world, and a few initiatives were launched to further develop the network of chapters. The Professional and Student Chapters Committee (PSCC) is focusing on three areas: public relations, a software application for chapter management, and

student participation.

Chapters leaders met at the sixth annual all-day workshop at SIGGRAPH 2001, and other business and start-up meetings were held during the week. The other activities throughout the year were wide ranging in style and content.

In March, the Director for Chapters was part of the ACM SIGGRAPH delegation to Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. The three chapters in Melbourne, Sydney and Singapore were very supportive of this initiative and had a big hand in the success of the trip. Three cities in New Zealand -Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch/Canterburyhave expressed interest in starting a professional chapter, the latter about to petition for a charter.