

Preface

Interactive digital storytelling has evolved as a prospering research topic banding together formerly disjointed disciplines stemming from the arts and humanities as well as computer science. It's tied up with the notion of storytelling as an effective means for the communication of knowledge and social values since the existence of humankind. It also builds a bridge between current academic trends investigating and formalizing computer games, and developments towards the experience-based design of human-media interaction in general.

In Darmstadt, a first national workshop on Digital Storytelling was organized by ZGDV e.V. in 2000, which at that time gave an impression about the breadth of this new research field for computer graphics (DISTEL 2000). An international follow-up was planned: the 1st International Conference on Technologies for Interactive Digital Storytelling and Entertainment (TIDSE 2003). Taking place in March 2003, it showed a more focussed range of research specifically on concepts and first prototypes for automated storytelling and autonomous characters, including modelling of emotions and the user experience.

At TIDSE 2004, an established and still-growing community of researchers gathered together to exchange results and visions. This confirms the construction of a series of European conferences on the topic – together with the International Conference on Virtual Storytelling, ICVS (conducted in 2001 and 2003 in France) – which will be further cultivated.

The TIDSE 2004 conference program provided traditional scientific talks, but also demonstrations and interactive exhibitions of computer arts. Further on, there were special tracks on virtual human design (kick-off of an international network on virtual human design) and knowledge media design (KMD). These tracks were arranged in cooperation with the project consortium of the national R&D project “Virtual Human” (www.virtual-human.org) and the KMD Forum centered at ZGDV Darmstadt (www.kmd-forum.de) and emphasized by invited talks by Norman I. Badler, a specialist in the field of computer graphics and information science, and Ronald M. Baecker, one of the pioneers in the field of knowledge media design.

Scientific Contributions

The wide range of questions, ideas, concepts and applications discussed in the contributions of this volume reflect the vitality and engagement of the storytelling community and its neighboring disciplines. The current research situation into interactive digital storytelling demands interdisciplinary cooperation and mutual stimulation, since, in this emerging field, both technologies on the one hand, and new storytelling concepts and ideas for applications on the other hand, are evolving simultaneously. This accounts for the fact that some contributions address purely technological questions, whereas others present fundamental philosophical concepts. However, most authors search for a middle way that comprises both new technological and conceptual ideas.

Demos and Exhibitions

Designing and producing engaging and attractive interactive digital storytelling applications requires more than the technology-driven approach. Moreover, a broad bandwidth of disciplines is involved. Artists and designers are entering the field of interactive storytelling with an experimental and art-driven view. The exhibition was planned to encourage the interdisciplinary dialogue and open a space for approaching the fusion of art and technology in interactive storytelling. On a more applied level, product and project demonstrations presented an overview on state-of-the-art Interactive storytelling applications

Darmstadt, June 2004

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Technologies for Interactive Digital Storytelling and
Entertainment
Second International Conference, TIDSE 2004,
Darmstadt, Germany, June 24-26, 2004, Proceedings
Göbel, S.; Spierling, U.; Hoffmann, A.; Iurgel, I.;
Schneider, O.; Dechau, J.; Feix, A. (Eds.)
2004, XVI, 308 p., Softcover
ISBN: 978-3-540-22283-5