

ACM SIGGRAPH Singapore Chapter Trip to Bangkok

by [Valerie Tuffy](#) — last modified 25 February 2007 11:09 AM

The Singapore ACM SIGGRAPH Chapter organized a trip to visit the Bangkok Chapter from 26-29 September. It was a get-to-know-you trip and, also, we from Singapore looked to find out about the computer graphics activities in Thailand.

by Caleb Cheong

The Bangkok Chapter had arranged for us to visit academic institutions, animation studios and government facilities.

The “activities” started a week before the day of departure, when a bloodless coup in Thailand toppled the then Prime Minister Thaksin Sinawatra. It triggered an avalanche of urgent phone calls and e-mails; the trip hanged in the balance until a couple of days before the departure, when we were satisfied by the firm

reassurances from our Thai host and travel agency that life was as per normal in Bangkok. Still, some who had signed on to go dropped out.

In the end, a diverse group of 24 people made the trip from Singapore, comprising academics, government officials, digital artists, business people and students. There were also four people who joined us in Bangkok from India.



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Day of arrival, 26 September

The main group of people took an afternoon Thai Airways flight into Bangkok, and was picked up and

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delivered to the Ambassador Hotel, where most people were staying. A few arrived in Bangkok separately.

At 6 p.m., everyone gathered at the hotel lounge and our Thai hosts, Dr. Kamon and Kun Santi, the chairman of ACM SIGGRAPH Bangkok Chapter, met and welcomed us. They also gave us the itinerary for the next two days.

Many of the people in our party did not know each other, and this was the time we got introduced. The rest of the evening was free and easy but a torrential downpour prevented us from experiencing the nightlife in Bangkok.

Day 2, 27 September

In our contingent was Ms. Pam Hu, the Director of Cultural and International Affairs of the Media Development of Authority (MDA) of Singapore. MDA is a government agency for promoting digital media development in Singapore. AT breakfast, Pam briefed us about MDA's effort to establish collaboration between MDA and Thailand's Software Industry Promotion Agency (SiPA), and she hoped this trip would help to foster close working relationships between the two sides, and encouraged us to tie up with our Thai counterparts to pursue joint projects.

In the morning we visited Kantana Animation Company, one of the biggest digital studios in Thailand. We were taken on a tour of the production facility for digital films. We saw the whole works, from storyboarding, character modelling through to background scene composition, and it was eye opening. The company has recently released an animation movie, [Khan Kluay](#), about a young elephant growing up, went looking for his missing father, a war elephant, and ended up following his father and became a war hero itself. The movie was a blockbuster in Thailand and has spawned a TV series. There is merchandise produced from the characters of the movie also. The company employed well over a hundred people, engaged in the different aspects of the production process. There are artists, animators and programmers too, who write script to deal with needs that are not already in the package they use, Maya.

In the afternoon we visited SiPA. The Director, Mr. Avudh Ploysongsang, briefed us on the background and direction of the agency. They are pushing to increase the skill level, employment and the internal and international market for Thai productions. Mr. Lak Taechawanchai, the Chair of the Thailand Animation and Computer Graphics Association spoke about the objectives of his organization, which is to serve the companies involved in digital animation in Thailand. From what we saw, there are a growing number of such companies.

Day 3, 28 September

In the morning we visited TCDC, Thailand Creative and Design Centre Design Centre. We were shown a corporate video of the centre and given a tour of the place, which houses an extensive library containing all forms of literature relevant to design. It also houses a Materials Resource Library, where information on just about any form of material used in products can be found. In many cases, there are also physical specimens. It is a very rich and useful resource for creative design and would certainly help designers in their pursuits. I am very impressed by what it offers.

In the afternoon, we visited an animation company Imagimax. They mainly do contract animation, such as for advertisements and also do out-sourcing work for foreign clients, serving as a production house for digital sequences in movies. Our host told us how difficult the business is, particularly when having to wait on their clients, who cut their margins very thin. In particular, foreign clients obtain large grants from the Thai government to produce movies in Thailand. Say the grant is worth US\$5m, but the contracts for local producers are often worth a lot less than that. So the foreign companies pocket a large profit simply from the grant alone.

But still, such projects provide great opportunities for Thai animators to hone their skills, and in some ways perform the function of technology and skill transfer. In due course, there would be a good crop of very skilled Thai animators who will form the back rock of a vibrant Thai animation industry.

In the evening we gathered at Sripatum University for a dinner, during which the Bangkok chapter arranged for four short industry talks, by production houses and web design companies we had not had the time to visit individually. These speakers gave us an extensive exposure to the kind of works produced in

Thailand. In terms of the underlying technology used, the talks are somewhat repetitive, but they give us a good view of the range of things happening in Thailand. We were pleasantly surprised that a Toyota advert then screening in Singapore was produced in Thailand.

In return, from the Singapore side, Graham Perkins from Republic Polytechnic, Mark Chavez from Nanyang Technological University, and Mr. Zhang of Crystal Graphics, an animation studio, gave talks about their work and their companies.

The evening culminated in a thank you speech by Caleb Cheong, our organizer to everyone involved, especially our Thai hosts, in making the trip such a success.

Day 4, 29 September

In the morning, our tour company gave us some of us a tour of some of the famous sights in Bangkok. In the afternoon, we headed to the new Sarvanabhumi Airport to board our flight home.

Overall Impression

This was a very useful and enjoyable tour. Everybody had a very good time and we were all enriched by the experience. Especially the students, they learned a lot, which will stand them in good stead for their future.

One of the objectives of the trip was networking, and we certainly achieved that, among ourselves and also with the Thais. Useful working relationship will develop from there. We can be optimistic about the project tie-up under the MDA-SiPA initiative.

The Thailand computer graphics and animation industry is growing, and their government is helping them improve and reach out to the world. While they may be facing growing pains, they will come out very well in the long run. CG and animation, until recently very much the province of the technologically advanced countries in Europe and North America, is readily filtering into the less advanced countries. The playing field is leveling out, and eventually countries like Thailand, India and hopefully Singapore, will come to take a lion's share of the market, just as the conventional manufacturing industries have done. After all, CG and animation production is just another form of manufacturing, albeit in the virtual world.

Cover

by [Valerie Tuffy](#) — last modified 27 February 2007 06:44 AM

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Welcome 2007!



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Call for Student Volunteers: Deadline March 2, 2007

by [Valerie Tuffy](#) — last modified 25 February 2007
09:45 AM

Hello again from the SIGGRAPH 2007 Student
Volunteers Committee!

by Mikki Rose

With our application deadline fast approaching we wanted to take a moment to remind you and your students of the great opportunity SIGGRAPH offers students. If you would, please pass this information on to your students and fellow faculty to help us spread the word. There are many exciting things on the horizon for this year's Student Volunteers, and we invite your students to apply to join our team at sv.siggraph.org!

A special interest group under the Association for Computing Machinery focused on computer graphics and interactive techniques, the SIGGRAPH team is preparing for the 34th annual conference in San Diego, CA August 5-9, 2007. Student Volunteers are an integral part of the conference, providing needed assistance to conference attendees and participants in exchange for entrance to the conference and, in some cases, hotel accommodations and travel grants.

Some of the benefits Student Volunteers may receive:

- Full conference access
- Travel and housing assistance possibilities
- Special sessions featuring industry professionals
- Career mentoring opportunities
- Resume and demo reel review opportunities
- Behind-the-scenes knowledge of conference happenings
- Networking opportunities with current and future industry leaders
- Advice from Student Volunteer Alumni

Student Volunteers work either 30 or 18 hours throughout the conference week, engaging in a variety of tasks such as door and session monitoring, attendee registration, and exhibit demonstration in venues such as Emerging Technologies and the Guerrilla Studio.

We welcome you to visit our website at sv.siggraph.org.

The [FAQs](#) and [Qualifications](#) pages offer additional information.

You may also contact us at sv2007@siggraph.org if you or your students have any additional questions that are not found in the FAQs.

The [online application](#) will be open until the deadline at 11:59 pm PT, March 2, 2007.

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- [Call for Student Volunteers Flyer](#)

Call for Participation: Sandbox Symposium

by [Valerie Tuffy](#) — last modified 25 February 2007 09:43 AM

The second annual ACM SIGGRAPH Sandbox Symposium on videogames calls for papers, hot games and panel proposals.

by Drew Davidson



We are looking for work that describes or illustrates innovative research in videogame theory, practice and criticism. Video games are a singular technological medium, comparable in cultural impact to the telephone, television or the Internet. What are the creative, technological and commercial challenges facing this medium in the future? How do we relate great stories that leverage advances in technology? What is the continuing impact of this medium on individuals and society?

We seek original papers from the creative and technical communities that develop videogames and from academic researchers who study videogames and relevant technologies and disciplines. We also invite proposals for panel discussions. Selected papers will be those judged to have the greatest potential for impact on the practice of videogame development. All papers should meet the standards of their respective disciplines and will be peer-reviewed. For an indication of the conference's breadth, please visit www.sandboxsymposium.org for a look at last year's program.

Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- Real-time animation and computer graphics for video games
- Distributed simulation and communication in multi-player games
- Game console hardware and software
- Psychophysics and user interfaces
- Artificial intelligence in games
- Interactive physics
- Uses of GPU for non-graphical algorithms in games
- Multi-processor techniques for games
- Speech and vision processing as user input techniques
- Development tools and techniques
- Procedural art
- Sound Design and music in games
- Mathematical Game Theory applied to video games
- Cinematography in games
- Game design and game genres
- Story structure (setting, plot, character, theme) in games
- Games (Casual, Serious, Mobile, Networked, Alternative Reality, Ubiquitous, Pervasive, etc.)
- Legal, political, and societal impacts
- • Women and diversity in games
- Gamer culture and community; such as modding communities, LAN parties, creative gamer content and machinima
- Independent game developers
- Economics and business models in the game industry
- Game production and labor
- Tools and Middleware
- Interactive Fiction

New Education Subcommittee: Curricular & Instructional Resources

by [Valerie Tuffy](#) — last modified 25 February 2007 11:16 AM

The ACM SIGGRAPH Education Committee has recently formed the subcommittee Curricular & Instructional Resources (C&IR) to improve the dissemination of educational resources and curricular frameworks.

by Frank Hanisch, Peter Weishar, and Rick Barry

It is co-chaired by Peter Weishar (Savannah College of Art and Design, USA) and Frank Hanisch (University of Tübingen, Germany). They will manage the committee's growing curriculum-related efforts and further integrate the various educational projects into the broader curricular efforts: CGEMS, cgSource, Curriculum Knowledge Base, and the Education Index.

CGEMS

Coordinators: Frank Hanisch and Joaquim Jorge

<http://education.siggraph.org/resources/cgems>



The Computer Graphics Materials Source (CGEMS) is a peer-reviewed online journal providing computer graphics curricula, course modules and syllabi, lab notes, problem sets, teaching gems, and student work. CGEMS materials are documented with educational goals, methodology, assessment, and undergo critique by at least three experts in the field. As a Eurographics/SIGGRAPH joint project, CGEMS offers peer recognition worldwide.

cgSource

Coordinators: Frederico Figueiredo, Bridget Gaynor, and Josephine Leong

<http://education.siggraph.org/resources/cgsource>

CGEMS provides an established but rigid procedure of traditional peer-review. While this is a well-established method for ensuring quality materials, it also limits development. The committee therefore introduces the cgSource, a community-based collection. It is meant to quickly spawn content, while preserving the option to upgrade materials for CGEMS publication.

cgSource is an online resource for the computer graphics and digital arts education community. It complements the CGEMS resource with a simple, barrier-free collection – without formal submission requirements or formal peer review requirements. Instead, cgSource materials are subject to basic acceptability criteria, public review, and online comment. A newly-drafted cgSource white paper is available for viewing online.

Curriculum Knowledge Base

Coordinators: Tony Alley and Cary Laxer

<http://education.siggraph.org/resources/knowledge-base>

cgSource will consider any materials with educational use in CG-related fields. Materials will be structured with the CG taxonomy defined by the committee's Curriculum Knowledge Base. This working framework provides classification and context, which CG educators can use to see how topics relate and fit together, and to find materials via browsing or search. As an evolving index, topics will continue to be added.

It is important to note that the knowledge base represents only one approach for organizing CG concepts into a coherent whole. Other possible structures are offered via CGEMS, which explicitly collects CG curricula and will allow for an overlap a connection between CGEMS and cgSource materials.

Education Index

Coordinator: Tereza Flaxman

The Education Database collects information about CG-related academic programs, including contact information. General information from this database will be published as the Education Index. The Education Index is a natural fit for cgSource and will be closely linked with it.

What's in it for you?

cgSource and CGEMS present related topics that supplement or enhance CG concepts, especially in professional and arts contexts. Materials are protected by Creative Commons licensing (<http://creativecommons.org>) or academic fair use – they are free, and ready to use. Both provide you useful tools for planning your course or curriculum, and allow you to evaluate what you are covering in your course. The Education Committee further supports a dialog between educators and prospective employers, in CG-related fields, to

determine the essential background training needed to support specific career skills.

On the other hand, if you have developed valuable content in the field, here are two tools you can use to share it with the community – peer recognition is ensured. Submitting to cgSource is simple and barrier-free. CGEMS, on the other hand, is peer-reviewed by respected educators and experts in the field. The Education Committee invites you to submit useful education materials for cgSource or CGEMS consideration.

Download or submit CGEMS content at <http://cgems.inesc.pt>
Submit cgSource materials at <http://education.siggraph.org/resources/cgsource>

New Student Services Initiative

by [Valerie Tuffy](#) — last modified 25 February 2007 09:48 AM

ACM SIGGRAPH is pleased to announce the creation of a new ACM SIGGRAPH Student Services initiative, focused on providing year-round opportunities and information to students in Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques.

by Jim Kilmer

This new effort will begin operations at SIGGRAPH 2007 in San Diego, with year-round services beginning in time for the 2007-2008 academic year. The core organizing group will consist initially of 8 committee members focused on various areas of interest to students, such as mentoring programs, internship and industry opportunities, academic and specialized study programs, and career counseling. Organizers are currently searching for dedicated volunteers, with experience working with students, to become a part of the core group. An official Call for Participation to the community will be released within the next month.

Beginning prior to the SIGGRAPH 2007 conference, the Student Services group will offer a demo reel, portfolio and resume review service to Student Volunteers program applicants, as well as work closely with the Student Volunteers

committee to design on-site lectures and programs of interest to our student community. Other programs such as the on-site Career Symposium will help to form the foundation for the ongoing services that the new group will provide throughout the year.

"We're very excited about the ability to extend our acclaimed conference programs into ongoing programs available to students during the peak of the academic year." says Josh Grow, SIGGRAPH 2008 Student Volunteers Chair. "Not every student is able to travel to the conference, so we hope that many more students will be able to get involved in SIGGRAPH programs through this new effort."

Conference programs such as industry-professional mentoring offered by the Student Volunteers committee, competitions, peer networking programs, and others, will be operated by this new group to educate and engage students throughout the school year. Organizers also hope to engage a series of accomplished professionals to provide interactive online talks in specific fields, available to student members on a regular basis.

The new group will work closely with existing ACM SIGGRAPH committees, including the Education Committee and Chapters Committee, specifically for promoting existing programs to a wider audience and offering local on-site programs in places where students have already organized.

Jim Kilmer, ACM SIGGRAPH Director-at-Large, hopes that the year-round presence of this group will encourage more students to get involved in the organization. Kilmer explains, "Each year, we interact primarily with only about 500 students through the process of planning the annual Conference." Compounding the issue is that, historically, only about 20% of those students maintain contact after the conference ends to return in future years. "Today's students are the future of this organization, and we hope to do everything we

can to keep them involved in the community and maintain an active relationship throughout their careers."

The Student Services group will be working to build a network of academic and industry experts to channel information into the organization, where it can be distributed through an array of forums, social networking tools, mailing lists, and by other means.

Persons interested in participating should contact Jim Kilmer at: jim_kilmer@siggraph.org.

"This is an investment in our future," Kilmer says, "and I encourage everyone in SIGGRAPH-related industries to consider how they might help the next generation of professionals to succeed and grow the field."

Organizers are hoping to have sufficient volunteers and experts available to begin full-scale operation by the end of this year.

Breaking News! Pioneers Program

by [Valerie Tuffy](#) — last modified
24 February 2007 04:37 PM

ACM SIGGRAPH is delighted to roll the Pioneers Program, a mentorship and philanthropic arm of the organization, into our formal structure.

Membership is earned by having twenty (20) years of experience in some aspect of computer graphics and/or interactive techniques. All members of the community are welcome, technical, creative, academic, sales, etc.

For details on inclusion of this highly respected demographic of our community, as well as the mentoring and other efforts that are ongoing, check our website, <http://www.siggraph.org/programs/pioneers>, for updates as they are formalized.

Sandbox Success

by [Valerie Tuffy](#) — last modified 25
February 2007 09:49 AM

Sandbox, an ACM SIGGRAPH Video Game Symposium, was successfully held last year for the first time in co-location with ACM SIGGRAPH in Boston.

by Drew Davidson

It was a healthy start that has led to another Sandbox being held on 2007 along with ACM SIGGRAPH in San Diego.

"We are excited about how well the conference went last year," says Drew Davidson, Sandbox conference chair, "and we're already looking forward to making this year even better." Attendees showed an interest in seeing this happen again and a willingness to get involved to help make it happen.

Preparation for this first Sandbox started in January 06 and the two-day conference ran the weekend before SIGGRAPH on Saturday, 29 July 06 and Sunday, 30 July 06.

There were over 200 attendees with a mix of developers, academics, artists and students, as well as people attending virtually via online Breeze streams. This diversity was also reflected in the presentations, papers, panels and posters. 20 papers were selected through peer review from around 90 submissions to form a solid track across the two days along with 5 panels, a dozen poster sessions and 2 keynotes by Greg Costikyan from Manifesto Games and Ian Shaw from Electronic Arts UK. Yotam Gingold's paper, "From Rock, Paper, Scissors to Street Fighter II: Proof by Construction," won the Best Paper Award.

Throughout the event, a carnival room hosted exhibits, poster sessions and video game tournaments. Industry support helped make this a great part of Sandbox. The highlight of the tournaments was Harmonix holding a Guitar Hero 2 tournament that was open to all attendees to play. Other tournaments that ran across the two days included: Dance Dance Revolution, Karaoke Revolution, Halo, and Retro Games. Sony Computer Entertainment donated PS2s for the tournaments and prizes were provided by X-Gaming. There was also a social card game, Pitch, that encouraged attendees to form teams and create fun game pitches.

Attendees also had the opportunity to participate in a public beta of the video game Skyrates. Skyrates (rhymes with pirates) is a game

design and development project experimenting with sporadic play across multiple platforms. It is an Entertainment Technology Center (ETC) student project created by four team members and the team attended Sandbox and projected a Skyrates map so attendees could keep track of the in-game world.

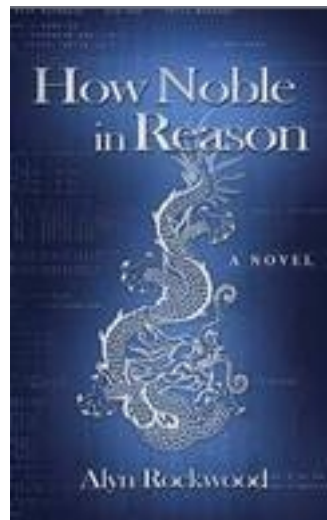
"AMC SIGGRAPH was proud to sponsor Sandbox," says Alyn Rockwood, Vice-President of ACM SIGGRAPH, "it has successfully broadened our horizons and we're looking forward to future cooperation in making it an annual event that can serve as a focus for video game design and development." Academic institutions also showed their support for Sandbox. The ETC at CMU, Game Design and Development at RIT, the Center on Public Diplomacy and the Annenberg School of Communications at USC, as well as Sage, publisher of the Games & Culture journal, all supported this year's Sandbox.

"Thank you to everyone who supported this event and made it such a successful one," adds Davidson, "and Sandbox wouldn't have happened without the great group of people who helped out. The strong executive committee, the reviewers, the volunteers, the presenters and the attendees all helped make it succeed and the interest and involvement already shown makes me excited for next year."

Member Update: Alyn Rockwood, Ph.D.

by [Valerie Tuffy](#) — last modified 25 February 2007 11:16 AM

Alyn Rockwood's New Novel: How Noble in Reason



ACM SIGGRAPH Vice President, Alyn Rockwood, Ph.D. has recently published a new novel: [How Noble in Reason](#).

Artificial Intelligence has already pervaded our lives in so many subtle ways, but how will humans react to the creation of a completely sentient super computer: a hyper-intelligent brain without a body who is as omniscient and omnipresent as the internet itself? How will people approach something that is distinguishable from a human only in its appearance?

Dr. Andreas Rasmusson, inventor of Cornell University's "A," "B," and "C" sentient computers, is caught up in a whirlwind of conspiracies surrounding his research that implicate him in the assassination of his revolutionary sentient computer and best friend, "B". Tracked by the government and estranged from his friends and wife, Rasmusson exiles himself to his cabin in Colorado, but even there, plagued by fatigue and paranoia, he isn't safe as he searches for the truth. This fascinating novel explores the controversial topic of our inevitable future with sentient computers.

Member Bio

Currently serving as Vice President of ACM SIGGRAPH, Alyn has dedicated many years of hard work, previously serving as the SIGGRAPH conference chair in 2003 and as the SIGGRAPH Research Papers Chair in 1999.

Primarily known for his innovative research in computer graphics and geometric modeling, Alyn received a Ph.D. in Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics from Cambridge University in Cambridge, England. While a research scientist at Cambridge University in the 1980's, he invented a new area of mathematics involving the definition and blending of surfaces. His entire professional life has been involved in studying the mathematics of the representation of objects.

To share your updates with our community, appointments, gallery shows, patents, publications, research, grants awarded, moves, etc, please email our editor Hans Westman at: hwestman@edmc.edu

Member Update: Terrence Masson

by [Valerie Tuffy](#) — last modified 25 February 2007
11:22 AM

Terrence Masson's new book: CG101 : A Computer Graphics Industry Reference (Second Edition)



ACM SIGGRAPH

Member Terrence Masson, founder of Digital Fauxtography Inc has just published [CG101 : A Computer Graphics Industry Reference \(Second Edition\)](#)

Eight years after the sold out first edition, and follow-up special Japanese version, CG101 has been completely revised and updated for 2007 by author Terrence Masson. CG101's history has been exhaustively researched for accurate and up-to-date insider info. Tips for students on how to get into the biz, never before seen color photos and hundreds of unique first hand stories (like how Pixar got its name) .. It's all in CG101, 2nd Edition; an indispensable companion for producers, students



and CG veterans alike.

Member Bio

Since his first SIGGRAPH in 1988 Terrence has been an active volunteer, most recently serving as the Computer Animation Festival Chair for 2006. Over the past 17 years, he has served the production and academic computer graphics community with inspiring leadership, innovative creative techniques and technical problem solving. After earning his BFA (Graphic Design and Art History) and MA (Computer Animation) Terrence spent his early years in New York and Boston in graphic design, commercial flying logos, large format and interactive projects; specializing in camera and lighting.

To share your updates with our community, appointments, gallery shows, patents, publications, research, grants awarded, moves, etc, please email our editor Hans Westman at: hwestman@edmc.edu

Graphbib Database Updated

by [Valerie Tuffy](#) — last modified 24
February 2007 04:34 PM

The 'graphbib' database contains over 20,000 references to articles and publications in the fields of computer graphics, computer animation, geometric modeling, and computer vision, and has been in existence, in various forms, since 1992.

A number of changes have been to the database and its interface in recent months:

- the Web-based front end to the database is completely rewritten
- more accurate and flexible keyword and phrase searching
- nearly 1,000 entries added over the last three months, bringing
- the total to over 20,000 unique references

[http://www.siggraph.org/
publications/bibliography/](http://www.siggraph.org/publications/bibliography/)