



DIMENSION

The Newsletter of the Los Angeles Chapter of ACM/SIGGRAPH December 1997

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Upcoming Meetings

- ◆ Tuesday, December 16, 1997
L.A.SIGGRAPH Chapter meeting:
Let the Fur Fly!
- ◆ Tuesday, January 13, 1998
L.A.SIGGRAPH Chapter meeting:
An evening with Digital Domain.
- ◆ Saturday, February 7, 1998
L.A.SIGGRAPH Chapter meeting: Career
Boot Camp: How to put together your
reel and resume for your dream job in
computer animation and special effects.
- ◆ Call the SIGPHONE, 310-288-1148
For recorded information on the time
and location of our next meeting.

Announcements

- ◆ Dimension Advertising Specs:
\$5 per line (~70 char/line)
1/4 Page (3.75" x 4.75") \$50
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Full Page (7.5" x 9.5") \$200

Accepted Media and Formats: Floppy,
e-mail (<10MB), Zip, Jaz, Quark,
PageMaker, FreeHand, Illustrator, Word,
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Macintosh format preferred.

Send your ad and check, made payable
to *Treasurer L.A.SIGGRAPH*, via FedEx
or messenger to:

Hans Ku
c/o Walt Disney Feature Animation
2100 Riverside Drive
Burbank, CA 91506
Ads can be accepted via e-mail at
Hans@fa.disney.com

- ◆ The ad submission deadline for
January's issue is Dec. 19th.
- ◆ Contact us!
SIGPHONE: 310-288-1148
SIGFAX: 310-578-7369
Los_Angeles_Chapter@siggraph.org
www.siggraph.org/chapters/los_angeles/

L.A. SIGGRAPH Presents, Tuesday, December 16th:

LET THE FUR FLY!

Realistic fur and hair effects dom-
inate the screen in feature films,
Mouse Hunt and *An American
Werewolf in Paris*, this December

The Program

6:30-7:30 Social Hour
7:30-9:00 Program

The Location

UCLA Freud Playhouse Theater
MacGowan Hall
UCLA Campus, Westwood

Directions

From the 405, exit Sunset Blvd East. Right at Hilgard.
Right at Charring Cross. Parking in Structure 3 (\$5
per car). Follow pedestrian signs to Freud Playhouse
or MacGowan Hall.

Fees/Registration

This event is free to L.A. SIGGRAPH members and \$5
for non-members. New members who sign up on-site
and pay the \$25 annual membership fee (checks or
cash only) do not have to pay the \$5 registration fee.

The Event

For many years computer generated fur and hair
effects have remained a "final frontier" of sorts. Until
recently, the detail and natural qualities that every audi-
ence member is so intimately familiar with, lay just
beyond the reach of visual effects and animation mas-
ters. This holiday season, wolves and mice will boast
the best looking fur coat fashions on the screen thanks
to the accomplishments of Rhythm & Hues Studios and
Santa Barbara Studios. December's meeting will have
presentations from both of these visual effects groups
that have conquered levels of realistic fur effects.

Rhythm & Hues Studios *Mouse Hunt*

Charles Gibson, Visual Effects Supervisor

Charles Gibson (Visual Effects Supervisor on *Mouse
Hunt*) is a co-founder and principal of Rhythm & Hues

Studios. Gibson will be presenting examples of the fur
effects from that clever little mouse most of us have
been introduced to by *Mouse Hunt*'s trailers. His fea-
ture credits as Visual Effects Supervisor include
Dreamworks/SKG's *Mouse Hunt*, Disney's *Kazaam* and
MCA/Universal's *Babe*, for which he received the 1995
Academy Award for Best Visual Effects. Gibson's work
in television advertising at Rhythm & Hues garnered
several Clio awards for Computer Animation, Graphics
and Visual Effects.

Gibson has been working in digital visual effects since
the early 1980's. Before co-founding Rhythm & Hues,
he was a Senior Computer animator for Robert Abel &
Associates in Hollywood, where he collaborated on two
Clio Award-winning television commercials. Before
that, he was head of research and development for
MCA/Universal City Studio's Computer Graphics depart-
ment.

In 1987, Gibson co-founded Rhythm & Hues, a visual
effects and animation studio in Los Angeles, California,
which produces computer animation, live action and
visual effects for feature films, advertising, games and
theme park attractions. In addition to the films listed
above, Rhythm & Hues has produced Visual Effects
sequences for *Speed 2: Cruise Control*, *Batman &
Robin*, *The Nutty Professor*, *Waterworld* and *Hocus
Pocus*. Rhythm & Hues also created the animated *Polar
Bears* for the popular series of Coca-Cola television
commercials.

Santa Barbara Studios *An American Werewolf in Paris*

Director Anthony Waller had met with
several of the larger effects companies
about his project *An American
Werewolf in Paris* when he
approached John Grower in 1996.
Waller's vision for the film required the
creation of a believable, photoreal
wolf/human creature with hair. He
wanted it to jump out of a fountain, attack crowds of
people in broad daylight, and get really close to cam-
era – yet his European-based independent production
could not bear the kind of budget historically associat-
ed with effects of such complexity.

A lucky introduction brought him to Grower and Santa



See Fur, page 5



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Fur, from page 1

Barbara Studios, where he found a group of very smart, very talented artists who were just bold enough to take on the huge challenge of delivering such a vision, yet small enough to maintain the efficiencies that only boutique-sized shops can enjoy.

It was this collaboration that gave rise to some of the most memorable fx shots in recent memory, seen by thousands at Siggraph this year, in the Electronic Theatre and on the convention floor as well. In all, Santa Barbara Studios' tiny team delivered 175 high end fx shots, and developed what our industry is calling the fastest and best looking hair renderer around.

Join us to see their work and talk about the project with CGI Supervisor Mark Wendell and Software Developer Matt Rhodes, with an introduction by Visual Effects Producer Diane Holland.

Founded by John Grower in 1989, Santa Barbara Studios (SBS) and its principals have had key roles in pioneering the development of computer-based design tools and new creative techniques that are used throughout the film, video, and graphic arts industries. The leading particle based production software package Dynamation, currently licensed to Alias/Wavefront, was developed at SBS. The group enjoys on-going relationships with leading software and hardware companies for the development of new products.

Mark Wendell, CGI Supervisor

A versatile animator, Mark is skilled in painting, texture mapping, procedural animation and dynamics, design, lighting, compositing, and all-around effects animation. Mark earned a masters degree in biological sciences from the University of California at Santa Barbara, and is self-taught in both traditional and digital media. Mark joined Santa Barbara Studios in 1992 and has created some of the best effects produced by the studio to date, including shots from many Star Trek feature and TV episodes, Warner Bros.' Marvin the Martian in the Third Dimension, and the exciting Eiffel Tower sequence in the upcoming *An American Werewolf in Paris*. As a key member of the staff that gave regular feedback to the Dynamation development team, Mark is one of the premier experts in the software and its capabilities. Mark was the lead technical director for the *Spawn* hell sequence, and is currently CGI Supervisor on Santa Barbara Studios work for *Parasite Eve*, an upcoming game from Square L.A.

Matt Rhodes, Software Developer

Matt earned a Masters degree in computer science from the University of California at Santa Barbara. While in school, he focused on learning techniques and algorithms for computer graphics. As he earned his degree, he worked at Comptek Federal Systems, where he wrote interactive graphics applications. In mid-1995, Matt was hired on at Santa Barbara Studios to write custom software tools for the production of *An American Werewolf in Paris*. Working with the head of R&D Phil Brock, Matt helped write a portion of Santa Barbara Studio's hair renderer. He was also responsible for writing most of the in-house Softimage plug-ins, mental ray shaders, and custom tools needed for the *Werewolf* production. Matt continued with this role during the production of the *Spawn* hell sequences and the *Parasite Eve* game sequences.

Program Coordinator

Leslie Mais

Special Thanks

Diane Holland

Upcoming Conferences

- ◆ December 15-18, 1997
 EDUGRAPHICS '97
 Third International Conference on Graphics Education and
 COMPUTUGRAPHICS '97
 Sixth International Conference on Computational Graphics and
 Visualization Techniques: Algarve, PORTUGAL; Further details and
 updates: www.geocities.com/ResearchTriangle/2217/ec97.html
 Contact: Harold P. SANTO
 GRASP - EDU+COMPUTUGRAPHICS '97
 P. O. Box 4076, Massama 2745 Queluz PORTUGAL
 Tel. + AM + Fax : +351-1-439-2571, grasp@ip.pt,
www.geocities.com/ResearchTriangle/2217
- ◆ January 26-29, 1998
 7TH USENIX SECURITY SYMPOSIUM at the Marriott RiverCenter Hotel
 in San Antonio, Texas. In cooperation with The CERT Coordination
 Center. Reports of the how-to and what's up on the latest advances in
 computer/network/ internet security and cryptography.
 January 26-27: Tutorial Program
 January 28-29: Technical Sessions
 January 28-29: Exhibition: FREE admission call 1.408.335.9445
 Call for Papers (Submissions due September 9, 1997) is available by
 email to info@usenix.org or at <http://www.usenix.org/events/sec98/>
- ◆ February 9-13, 1998
 W S C G '98: The Sixth International Conference in Central Europe on
 Computer Graphics and Visualization 98 in Plzen at the University of
 West Bohemia. Call for Papers and Participation Deadline September
 30,1998. e-mail: skala@kiv.zcu.cz subj. WSCG98. <http://wscg.zcu.cz>
<http://herakles.zcu.cz> subj.: WSCG