

Preface

This volume, containing the proceedings of IVA 2003, held at Kloster Irsee, in Germany, September 15–17, 2003, is testimony to the growing importance of Intelligent Virtual Agents (IVAs) as a research field. We received 67 submissions, nearly twice as many as for IVA 2001, not only from European countries, but from China, Japan, and Korea, and both North and South America.

As IVA research develops, a growing number of application areas and platforms are also being researched. Interface agents are used as part of larger applications, often on the Web. Education applications draw on virtual actors and virtual drama, while the advent of 3D mobile computing and the convergence of telephones and PDAs produce geographically-aware guides and mobile entertainment applications. A theme that will be apparent in a number of the papers in this volume is the impact of embodiment on IVA research – a characteristic differentiating it to some extent from the larger field of software agents. Believability is a major research concern, and expressiveness – facial, gestural, postural, vocal – a growing research area. Both the modeling of IVA emotional systems and the development of IVA narrative frameworks are represented in this volume. A characteristic of IVA research is its interdisciplinarity, involving Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Artificial Life (ALife), Human-Computer Interaction (HCI), Graphics, Psychology, and Software Engineering, among other disciplines. All of these areas are represented in the papers collected here. The purpose of the IVA workshop series is to bring researchers from all the relevant disciplines together and to help in the building of a common vocabulary and shared research domain. While trying to attract the best work in IVA research, the aim is inclusiveness and the stimulation of dialogue and debate.

The larger this event grows, the larger the number of people whose efforts contribute to its success. First, of course, we must thank the authors themselves, whose willingness to share their work and ideas makes it all possible. Next, the Program Committee, including the editors and 49 distinguished researchers, who worked so hard to tight deadlines to select the best work for presentation, and the extra reviewers who helped to deal with the large number of submissions. The local arrangements committee played a vital role in the smooth running of the event. Finally, all those who attended made the event more than the sum of its presentations with all the discussion and interaction that makes a workshop come to life.

July 2003

**Ruth Aylett
Daniel Ballin
Jeff Rickel
Thomas Rist**

To Our Friend and Colleague Jeff

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Jeff Rickel (USC Information Sciences Institute, USA)

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