

Workshop on multimedia dome production

Fraunhofer Institute for Digital Media Technology

When sounds and images are beginning to fly – Fraunhofer IDMT to co-host workshop on multimedia dome production

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On November 23 and 24, 2012, Carl Zeiss AG, the Zeiss-Planetarium Jena, and Fraunhofer IDMT will be conducting a workshop entitled “360-Degree Media Production”, in preparation of the 7th International FullDome-Festival taking place in Jena next year. At two locations, Ilmenau and Jena, participants will be given the opportunity of gaining insight into the secrets of dome related image and sound production and experimenting with interactive design techniques.

Addressing both professional and student film makers as well as teachers and students in the field of 3D based multimedia design and production, the workshop is intended to inform about the theoretical foundations of audiovisual dome production. Apart from that, the workshop will be offering the opportunity to take part in practical exercises on creating sophisticated 360-degree image and sound content. Whereas in Jena, where the headquarters of Carl Zeiss AG are located, the focus will be on full-dome projection technology, participants in the Ilmenau branch of the workshop will mainly be dealing with spatial acoustics, which is one of the core research areas of Fraunhofer IDMT.

Micky Remann, co-initiator of the FullDome-Festival and lecturer at Bauhaus University Weimar, is already looking forward to the workshop: “Retaining orientation and localizing sound sources in a 360-degree environment is the most natural thing to do for the human brain and ear. For a long time this dimension had been missing in the full-dome environment. This is why we are all the more curious about this upcoming workshop, as we want to find out what impact the technical reconstruction of an acoustic 360-degree space will have on media art.”

The first stage of the two-day workshop will be held on November 23 at the premises of Fraunhofer IDMT in Ilmenau, where participants will learn about the potential of three-dimensional audio production as they will be experimenting with “SpatialSound Wave”, the sound and production system developed by Fraunhofer IDMT. Since November 2011 SpatialSound Wave has been used by the Zeiss-Planetarium Jena, providing a fantastic three-dimensional experience for visitors’ eyes and ears. “Our goal is to share our in-depth expertise regarding spatial audio reproduction technology with our workshop participants, making them familiar with the production tools used in practice for creating three-dimensional sound. Besides being provided with valuable background knowledge on acoustics, participants will also learn about the technical and design potential of three-dimensional sound”, says René Rodigast, head of the Professional Audio group at Fraunhofer IDMT. Results of the first workshop day will be presented and discussed in the Zeiss-Planetarium, together with a selection of contributions from previous FullDome Festivals.

On November 24, being the second stage of the workshop, participants visiting the premises of Carl Zeiss AG will get the chance to learn about the basics, design options, and limitations of three-dimensional image and video content for 360-degree full-dome projection. Apart from that, participants will be instructed in how to handle “Domemaster”, the image format used by operators of planetariums.

While the main goal of the workshop is to convey knowledge and skills regarding 360-degree image and sound production, it is also supposed to set an impulse for participants to create their own short films, shows, or animations. Participants may submit their work for being presented at the 7th FullDome Festival, taking place May 29 to June 1, 2013, in Jena.

The large number of applications for the workshop is giving proof that there is an enormous interest in dome based production technology. Since by far not all applicants could be granted participation due to capacity limitations, a continuation of the workshop is already being planned.

About the FullDome-Festival

Starting in 2007 the FullDome-Festival is an annual event taking place in the Zeiss-Planetarium Jena. Primarily initiated by Micky Remann, lecturer at Bauhaus University Weimar, the Festival started out as a forum for presenting full-dome related work of students. Partnering with other universities (hfg Offenbach, Mediendom Kiel, FH Potsdam), the Zeiss-Planetarium Jena, and Carl Zeiss AG, the Festival quickly developed into a hotspot for full-dome aficionados from all over the world, offering a platform on which student, professional, and freelancer producers can meet and swap ideas at eye level. The 7th FullDome-Festival, taking place May 29 to June 1, 2013, will feature 360-degree audio productions for the first time.

About the Zeiss-Planetarium Jena

Since 1926 the Zeiss-Planetarium Jena has been fascinating visitors from all over the world. The core piece of the dome is “Universarium”, a starfield projector showing 9,100 stars – the maximum number of stars that can be seen on the Northern and on the Southern hemisphere. Taking advantage of highly sophisticated astronomy software it is possible to have visitors view the movement of the planets from a geocentric perspective or make journeys through the planetary system. The Planetarium is technically complemented by “VELVET Powerdome”, a projection

system developed by Carl Zeiss AG offering the highest contrast ratio worldwide as well as an extended color spectrum, and “Spatial-SoundWave”, a three-dimensional sound system developed by Fraunhofer IDMT providing an unparalleled spatial sound experience. By coupling the two systems, fascinating three-dimensional environments can be created for the human eye and ear. This outstanding integrated image and sound concept makes the Zeiss-Planetarium Jena one of the most advanced planetariums in the world, exceeding all the requirements that usually allow a technical facility to be called “state of the art”.

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