

# ALBERT DUAN CONDUCTS RESEARCH IN 3D ANIMATION

Albert Duan, a visiting scholar from China, has been conducting research here at the Rogers Communications Centre on a provincial scholarship from Xihn Radio and TV University located some 500 km from Beijing. Xihn is the University from which Albert graduated in 1982 and the same place he has been employed ever since. Although new to Canada, Albert has visited North America before, having spent a year in Texas at Houston University between 1988 and 1989. Albert arrived in Canada for the first time in March of 2001. Since then, he has been working hard researching various multimedia applications for 3D animation software.

In his native China, Albert's official title at Xihn University is Computer Engineer. However, because the University is so small, Albert fills a variety of roles at Xihn including Computer Programmer, Campus Night Manager and Instructor. Most of the University's curriculum is offered on-line using distance education methodology, which is also one of the specializations of Xihn, in addition to multimedia applications.

Since his arrival, Albert has been investigating various 2D and 3D animation software including Macromedia Flash,

3DS Max 4, and Atmosphere, the newest 3D animation software from Adobe. Albert predicts that the future of the Internet is 3D space, which is already becoming far more prominent on the Web. However, according to him, this does not mean that 2D animation software such as Flash will become obsolete. It just means that there will be more reasons to combine 2D and 3D software resulting in more dynamic web sites. In fact, Albert has been experimenting with various web-based, multimedia applications in which the two types of software can be merged for maximum benefit. One such trial involves turning the Rogers Centre into a 3D virtual space on the Internet. Using still pictures and Adobe Atmosphere, Albert has been able to turn the Rogers Centre into a 3D environment in cyberspace, one in which a browser can explore at will. The power required to process 3D animation is quite enormous, but Albert is examining various ways to compress the information and make it easier to download.

Albert is set to return to China in March 2002, but before leaving, he would like to transform all of Ryerson University into a 3D environment on the Web. It's an enormous task, but according to Albert, it would be well worth it. If successful,

Ryerson would be the first University to have its entire campus represented in cyberspace via 3D animation. Browsers would be able to access the Ryerson website and get a virtual, 3D tour of any building on campus.

The virtual 3D tour of the Rogers Centre can be accessed on-line at the following URL: <http://www.rcc.ryerson.ca/usr/albert/rccmap/main.html>. You will need to download the Atmosphere browser, which can be found at: [http://www.adobe.com/products/atmosphere/betareg\\_player.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/atmosphere/betareg_player.html). Simply follow the instructions and download the browser only. If you wish to see more of what Albert has been working on visit: <http://www.rcc.ryerson.ca/usr/albert/>.

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