

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

Friday, 26th February 2010

The Glasgow School of Art's Digital Design Studio to boost access to virtual heritage

The Glasgow School of Art's Digital Design Studio (DDS) has won a grant of £139,531 from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) for new research to improve access to, and knowledge of, the UK's virtual heritage.

The purpose of the project is to improve interpretation of a detailed, photorealistic 3D model of the famous 1938 British Empire Exhibition held in Glasgow, which the DDS created as part of a previous AHRC project. Aiming to provide an extensible toolkit for researchers to use with other 3D datasets, the project will improve interpretation of the Exhibition by linking, in a meaningful way, the related cultural artefacts on which the 3D model was based with the modelled data itself.

The 1938 British Empire Exhibition was a stunning display of architectural achievement and a reflection of the life and culture of Glasgow, the UK and the Commonwealth. It incorporated over 100 innovative buildings, including the world famous Tait's Tower and attracted over 12.5million people to Bellahouston Park, Glasgow over its six month run. This last public showcase of the Empire was of huge international significance and continues to be relevant to the study of British social and industrial history and modernist architecture.

DDS's considerable expertise in digital documentation, along with an exceptionally unique real-time visualisation facility at their base in Glasgow's Pacific Quay, will allow both researchers and the general public to virtually experience and better understand the outstanding achievement of the historic 1938 British Empire Exhibition.

Head of Visualisation at DDS and principal investigator on the project, Doug Pritchard said: *"The original AHRC-funded British Empire Exhibition project was exceptionally rewarding, especially working with people who actually attended the 1938 event. This new award will enable further research and continue our engagement with the public".*

Chris McGregor, Deputy Director, Technical Research Group at Historic Scotland said *"This is a very exciting project using the historical archival evidence of this very significant event and the*

presentation of this research using cutting edge 3D virtual reconstruction in a new and very dynamic way.”

Images, videos, and an overview of the 1938 British Empire Exhibition 3D model with some interactivity are available on the project website at <http://www.empireexhibition1938.co.uk>

-ENDS-

For further information or a selection of images, contact Alison Hunter, Media Relations Officer, The Glasgow School of Art. Tel: 0141 566 1442 or e-mail a.hunter@gsa.ac.uk. M: 07939 954 836.

Note to editors:

- The Digital Design Studio (DDS) is a postgraduate and research centre of the Glasgow School of Art specialising in 3D visualisation. It does this through a mixture of research and commercial projects that explore and exploit the creative potential of digital visualisation. It has been successful in securing funding from AHRC, EPSRC, SFC, and has worked on commercial projects for the Ford Motor Company, BBC Scotland, QinetiQ and Glasgow City Council.
Other projects completed by the DDS include Glasgow City Model, John Brown’s Shipyard, Submarine Rescue Service, Pacscat.
- The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) supports research within a huge subject domain from traditional humanities subjects, such as history, modern languages and English literature, to the creative and performing arts. In December 2005, it awarded the Digital Design Studio £146k to conduct research into the British Empire Exhibition and in particular, to produce accurate 3D models of the buildings that formed the Exhibition.