DIGM Colloquium Series

presents

Histories and Counter-Histories of CGI in Movies

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Yale University

The history of computer-generated imagery (CGI) in movies is often presented as a hero's journey. Starting in the 1980s, a scrappy group of computer scientists went up against the large, powerful, but inert, Hollywood studio empire, and forever changed how movies are made. In this talk, I will present that history, and a counter-history. Starting in the 1980s, a scrappy group of computer scientists ensured that historical biases towards young, white skin and straight, blond hair embedded in film and photography technology would be carried over from the analog era into the digital. I will conclude with current efforts to confront these biases after the murder of George Floyd. This is a multi-institution effort spanning the sciences and humanities, and includes our group at Yale.

Theodore Kim is an Associate Professor in Computer Science at Yale University, where he investigates topics in solid and fluid mechanics. Previously, he was a Senior Research Scientist at Pixar Animation Studios. He is the recipient of the NSF CAREER Award, multiple Best Paper awards, and two Scientific and Technical Academy Awards (SciTech Oscars). His algorithms have appeared in over 20 films, and he has screen credits for Cars 3, Coco, Incredibles 2, and Toy Story 4.

Tuesday,
December 5, 2023
1PM

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