

CHI 2008 Keynote Speaker

Bill Buxton

Bill Buxton is a principal researcher at Microsoft Corp. Trained as a musician, he began using computers over thirty years ago in his art. This early experience, both in the studio and on stage, helped develop a deep appreciation of both the positive and negative aspects of technology. It drew him to design and research, with an emphasis on interaction and the human aspects of technology.

Buxton first came to prominence at the University of Toronto for his work on digital musical instruments and the novel interfaces that they employed. In the late 70s, he gained the attention of Xerox PARC, where he participated in pioneering research in collaborative work, interaction techniques and ubiquitous computing. During that time, he was Scientific Director of the Ontario Telepresence Project at the University of Toronto.

In 1994, Buxton joined Alias Research (and in 1995 its parent company, SGI) where he worked with some of the world's top filmmakers and industrial designers. He was Chief Scientist for Maya, an animation package which won an Academy Award for Scientific and Technical Achievement.

Buxton splits his time between research and helping make design a fundamental pillar of the corporate culture. In 2007, he was named Doctor of Design, Honoris Causa, by the Ontario College of Art and Design. He is the author of *Sketching User Experiences: Getting the Design Right and the Right Design*.

Keynote Presentation - *From the Materialistic to the Experiential – A Changing Perspective on Design*

Buxton will discuss the transition from viewing design as primarily concerned with the material object (devices, dresses, home, services) to a new state that focuses on the experience that result from these same objects and services. As a consequence, great design (which equates to great experience) cannot be confined to, or be the sole purview of, any one department – be it design, marketing, or engineering. Design must be viewed holistically, and executing great design must involve every person in the production chain. This perspective has deep implications not only on what designers do. It compels us to rethink who or what a designer is. To achieve great design—whatever that may mean – implies that the most important thing we need to design is design itself. Yet, the paradox is, this is the only way to save design as a distinct and critical profession.

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Irene McAra-McWilliam

Irene McAra-McWilliam is Head of the School of Design at the Glasgow School of Art. Prior to her move to Glasgow in September 2005, she was Professor and Business Fellow in Innovation at The Royal College of Art in London and Head of its Interaction Design Department.

Previously, as professor of Design Research at the University of Technology in Eindhoven, the Netherlands, she examined ways in which technology can enhance community and social sustainability. As Director of Design Research at Philips Electronics in the Netherlands, she directed global research in ambient intelligence, interaction design, brand design and user experience. She also established design teams in Philips' research laboratories world-wide as part of the company's long term technology research strategy. For the European Commission, she created and coordinated the research theme Connected Community, and directed the award-winning project Living Memory. She continues as an advisor to the EC in the strategic domain of ambient intelligence.

McAra-McWilliam is a frequent speaker at international conferences and works as a consultant to industry and government. She has been voted one of fifty top design leaders by the UK's Design Week magazine, and is an expert in cultural research for social innovation, creativity, new technology and community.

Keynote Presentation - *Design Transformations*

McAra-McWilliam will discuss an evolution of design which can be described historically, envisaging its future as a relational and transformational discipline. With the design of networked products such as iPods and mobile telephones, it is crucially important for designers to consider the dynamic of the relational sensibility as well as the aesthetics of three-dimensional form. The product is not merely a useful object but, rather, a mediator of relationships and particular cultural codes. McAra-McWilliam will examine changing design sensibilities, suggesting that as design develops to include, for example, the relational sensibility used in interaction design, so it reinterprets and refreshes existing practice.