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CHI 2008 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS ILLUMINATE HOW PEOPLE AND COMPUTERS INTERACT

McAra-McWilliam and Buxton Merge Scientific Discipline with the Art of Design

FLORENCE, ITALY — April 2, 2008 - CHI 2008, the leading international conference for Human-Computer Interaction, features two innovators known worldwide for their ideas on how people communicate and interact with computer systems. **Irene McAra-McWilliam,** who heads the design school at the **Glasgow School of Art,** and **Bill Buxton of Microsoft Research,** will present their respective observations on merging human computer interaction as a scientific discipline with the art of design. The CHI 2008 conference runs from **April 5-10 at the historic Fortezza da Basso**, in the heart of Florence. CHI 2008 is sponsored by the Special Interest Group on Computer Human Interaction (SIGCHI), an active community within the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM).

"What excited us about Irene McAra-McWilliam as the opening plenary speaker is that she represents the 'art.science.balance' theme of CHI2008 so perfectly," said Arnie Lund, co-chair of CHI 2008. "She has been recognized as one of the top design leaders in the UK, but she is also an expert in cultural research for social innovation, emerging technology and community." Lund is Director of User Experience for Microsoft's Mobile Platforms Division.

CHI 2008 co-chair Mary Czerwinski characterized Bill Buxton, the closing plenary speaker, as one of the forefathers of Human-Computer Interaction, but she said, "He's really more of a rock star for the field in my book. There isn't a computing endeavor around today that Bill didn't prototype and evaluate in some manner 20 years ahead of its time. And, his emphasis has always been heavily on design as one of the most important aspects of HCI," said Czerwinski, Research Area Manager of Microsoft Research's Human-Centered Computing groups.

McAra-McWilliam was previously at the Royal College of Art in London where she headed the Interaction Design Department. Using examples from art, psychology and science, she will reflect on will reflect on the concept of creativity, and the ability to deal positively with complexity, paradox, and ambiguity in processes where uncertainty is certain.

Buxton, a computer scientist and designer specializing in the human aspects of technology, contends that great design equates to great experience. His presentation will examine the design process as a comprehensive approach that involves everyone in the product production chain. Buxton is also the SIGCHI 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award winner, and will be honored during the conference.

CHI 2008 features hundreds of sessions for the 2,000 expected attendees covering a wide range of research in human computer interaction. Presentations include studies on improved video navigation, interactivity on mobile phones, activating text-to-speech, the challenges of mobile learning, measuring trust in Wi-Fi hotspots, and exploring human robot interactions, among many others.

Organizations contributing to the financial support of the conference include (Hero Level) Microsoft Corp.; (Champion Level) Autodesk; Google, Inc.; the National Science Foundation (NSF); Oracle, SAP AG; and SourceForge (OSTG). For more information about the conference or to register, visit www.chi2008.org

About ACM
ACM, the Association for Computing Machinery www.acm.org, is the world's largest educational and scientific computing society, uniting computing educators, researchers and professionals to inspire dialogue, share resources and address the field's challenges. ACM strengthens the computing profession's collective voice through strong leadership, promotion of the highest standards, and recognition of technical excellence. ACM supports the professional growth of its members by providing opportunities for life-long learning, career development, and professional networking.

About SIGCHI
The ACM Special Interest Group on Computer-Human Interaction http://www.sigchi.org is the world's largest association of professionals in the research and practice of computer-human interaction. SIGCHI serves as a forum for ideas on how people communicate and interact with computer systems. This interdisciplinary group of computer scientists, software engineers, psychologists, interaction designers, graphic designers, sociologists, and anthropologists is committed to designing useful, usable technology which has the potential to transform individual lives. SIGCHI has more than 60 local chapters for HCI professionals across five continents, publishes the SIGCHI Bulletin quarterly, and co-sponsors conferences and workshops to advance the field of computer-human interaction.

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