

Montreal/Quebec, Ottawa, Rochester, and Toronto Sections Mini-Conference

Montreal did it again! The 1988 Montreal/Quebec, Ottawa, Rochester, and Toronto Sections Mini-Conference, held April 29-May 1, 1988, at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal, was a great success, both from the quality of the technical presentations to the fun enjoyed by all at the Saturday evening festivities.

Conference Committee

Under the careful guidance of the Conference Chairman, Leonard Green, the committee consisted of the following: Janet West-Cyr (Co-Chairman and Publicity), Paul Bellerose (Assistant), Christo Georges (Program Chairman), James Brydges (Assistant), Grant Dearnaley (Finance and Registration Chairman), Claude Tressider (Sponsorship Chairman), Pierre Campeau (Assistant), René Villeneuve (Hotel and Luncheon Chairman), Jacques Lachapelle (Audio Visual Chairman), Michael Hazel and Guy Fournier (Assistants), Marcel Charette (Membership Chairman), Michel Delisle (Assistant), Garry Teltscher (Hospitality and Spouses Chairman), and Pierre Payant (Assistant).

Maurice L. French, SMPTE Executive Vice-President (CBC), gave the opening address to a packed audience. A total of 235 delegates registered for the conference, and 32 wives attended the spouses program.

Conference Activities

The guest speaker at the luncheon was Adrien Pouliot, president, CFCF Inc. In a lighthearted manner, Mr. Pouliot described the effect that ambitious engineers have on television executives and the need to make everyone in a TV station work as a team in order to be effective. He touched on the problems of dealing with rapidly changing technologies and their financial impacts.

The organizers were surprised at the number of spouses registered for the spouses program. Equipped with disposable cameras and other gifts, the ladies were escorted to the Olympic site, where they rode the cable car and toured the Botanical Gardens and the city.

After a day of very interesting technical papers, registrants and their guests headed to the Ramada Inn for a surprise evening's entertainment. In true Montreal tradition, over 250 people enjoyed a delicious buffet, followed by a chance to risk SMPTE "funny money" on the different gambling tables. Laughter and the excitement of winning filled the room around blackjack, roulette, and money wheel tables. The generosity of the many sponsors who contributed to this event was appreciated by all those who attend this soirée.

The Sunday morning session started with a unique opportunity to see

the video, *Le Chant des Etoiles (The Song of the Stars)*. This music video was a co-production by Andre Perry in Quebec and Sogitec and TDI in France. It was a surprise to see so many bright and cheerful delegates so early in the morning, thanks to the program committee which selected the programs and papers.

In closing the session on Sunday, Ross Mutton, Ottawa Section, introduced a short video entitled *Destination 88*. This travelogue on Ottawa was to remind delegates that the next mini-conference will be held in Ottawa, May 12-14, 1989, at the Skyline Hotel.

Claude Tressider, chairman of the Montreal/Quebec Section, closed the conference by congratulating Len Green on his dedication and leadership in organizing the mini-conference. He also thanked all those committee chairmen, assistants, and others behind the scenes who, with their energy and enthusiasm, made this mini-conference a stimulating, fun, and informative weekend.

The Program

The opening session on Saturday, April 30, was chaired by Howard Wilkinson and Jim Brydges. The opening film, *George and Rosemary*, a National Film Board of Canada production, was followed by the welcoming address of Maurice L.



The Conference Committee: (L-R) Gary Teltscher, Pierre Campeau, Marcel Charette, Paul Bellerose, Michel Delisle, Christo Georges, Leonard Green, Janet West-Cyr, René Villeneuve, Grant Dearnaley, Pierre Payant, Guy Fournier, Jacques Lachapelle, Claude Tressider, and James Brydges.



Chairman Len Green, guest luncheon speaker Adrien Pouliot, and Co-Chairman Janet West-Cyr.



SMPTE Executive Vice-President Maurice L. French (L) and Sessions Chairman Howard Wilkinson.

French. Sessions Chairman Howard Wilkinson introduced the speakers.

Saturday Papers

Computers in Sound Editing and Mixing, by Jean-Louis Ostrowski, Sono-Technique

Ostrowski gave the first paper of the mini-conference, which dealt with the way new post-production techniques were affecting sound editing and mixing. He provided an overview of existing systems which use microcomputers in the control and processing of sound, describing the hardware available and how it can be used. Ostrowski stressed that such systems would never replace the talent and imagination of operators and artists, but would provide better and more precise control of the creative process. He touched on the new types of human interfaces evolving for these new systems and the need for a uni-

form control buses so that these facilities can be integrated into new production plants.

A Revolution in Computer Graphics for Micros, by Jacques Lambert, Lambert Multimedia

Lambert presented a new micro-computer-based simulation system called Simulatix, which can be used for training and development purposes. Simulatix is a joint Franco-Quebec venture and is similar in concept to flight simulators; however, this IBM PC-based system for "light" simulation costs a fraction of the larger systems and is very well adapted to modeling and the type of control processes found in television and film production. The graphics capability of Simulatix presents models of control panels, measurement instruments, and related displays. Full interaction with the normal control functions of the process being modeled is available to operators, with the

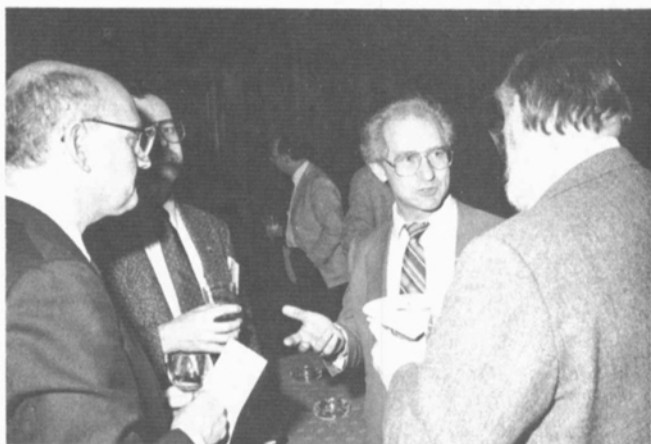
results communicated to them by both the screen and audible alarms.

Automatisation de la mise en ondes, by Ghislain Saint-Pierre, Television Quatre Saisons

Saint-Pierre provided an overview of the broadcast control systems that



Jacques Lambert presenting his microcomputer-based simulation system.



Sessions Chairmen Howard Wilkinson and Ross Mutton in conversation with Program Chairman Christo Georges and Assistant Program Chairman Jim Brydges.



SMPTE Canadian Governor and Mrs. Gordon Ballantyne, SMPTE President M. Carlos Kennedy, and SMPTE Sections Vice-President and Mrs. Irwin Young at the Friday evening cocktail party.



Janet West-Cyr presenting plaques to Yves Senecal and Matthew Duncan in gratitude for their Touch Vision presentation.



Sessions Chairman Glenn Kennel (R) presents speaker Ed Huang with plaque.

have been in use at Montreal's newest television station for the 1½ years it has been in operation. He explained how this automation system was extended to all levels of the broadcast presentation and distribution system and how this approach results in a smooth and efficient operation with a minimum of staff. The data base and control functions are done using IBM AT computers, and the programs and commercials are all available from Sony Betacart videocassette machines.

Television Data Transmission, by James Carruthers, Norpak

Carruthers gave a presentation on the latest developments in Canada's Telidon technology and showed how it had evolved from a public broadcast concept to a more general-purpose, point-to-point data distribution mechanism, suitable for use by business, industry, and government. He explained how the images are all encoded as mathematical formulas, which results in a very great reduction in bandwidth requirements. The visual portion of his presentation included many examples of the images generated using this technology.

New Technique in Digital Video Post Production, by Mike Taylor, Quantel

Taylor explained how the acceptance of a common digital video standard has given the broadcast industry an opportunity to adopt alternative production methods which use advanced, visually interactive control systems. These permit operators and artists greater flexibility and creativity in the operation of image creation, processing, and recording facilities. He went on to explain how emerging digital video technologies will offer

transparency in the recording and transmission of images, elegance of control and ease of use, and a second generation of visual special effects and processes. In all of this, computer systems will serve to bring the artist closer to the creative process, and his work will be less obscured by the technology.

A Montage of Digital Animation, by Catherine Richards, CBC

Richards presented an edited version of the tape produced after the CHI-GI Electronic Theatre Workshop. The audience was impressed by the creative possibilities that were interpreted with the use of computer graphics. An unedited version is available from Siggraph.

An Interactive Video Workstation for the 1990s, by Gerry Sullivan, Matrox

Sullivan defined interactive video as combining traditional audio/visual technologies and computer technology in a single multimedia communication system. He described an interactive video workstation, electronic information delivery system (EIDS) to be used by the U.S. Army training program for the next ten years. He discussed the four interface issues: video, audio, interactivity, and information storage and retrieval. In closing, Gerry predicted developments for the next five to ten years such as realistic synthesized audio, optical storage media, and the existing possibility of Holographic Video Interactive (HV-I).

3-2 Pull-Down in Time Code for Computer Editing, by Steve Scott, Skotel

Scott described the recently developed time code generator which produces time code referenced to a film

transport. This equipment, which generates a code conforming to video practices, also includes a footage count in the user bit portion of the time code. This capability provides the production process with a means of editing film material using video techniques while maintaining a reference back to the original film footage. This may be utilized to conform a film print to the edited video master. The footage count provides a measurement which is familiar to many personnel with a primary background in film post-production. While further development remains to be done, the product is finding wide acceptance in many film production centers.

Film Editing with Electronic Speed Touch Vision System, by Matthew Duncan and Yves Senecal, Sonolab

Sonolab's Touch Vision system for editing feature films was described by Matthew Duncan. This system is comprised of nine tape recorders and a workstation of three tape recorders used by the assistant editor to prepare material. Industrial VHS tape recorders are presently used but will soon be replaced by Super VHS. The system operates using an IBM-compatible computer with a 40-Mbyte hard disk. The Touch Vision system provides the flexibility to work on two edited versions of the same film simultaneously.

Library Management System Control Software, by John Howells, Sony

Howells described how Sony's new library management system will help TV stations by offering a flexible, expandable system to control their commercial libraries. The system controls on-air reply with frame-accurate timings and switching and also provides

tight control designed to be linked to such key areas in a station as traffic and engineering.

High Resolution Video Graphics for Broadcasters, by Ed Huang, JVC

This paper described the problems of using high-resolution graphics on a standard 525-line NTSC television system and how JVC proposes a solution to what has so far been an incompatibility problem. "Videographics" is a system which works with high-resolution video and graphics in a desktop environment. The ideal system exists today but without affordable real-time video processing due to the incredible amount of information that needs to be handled with speed. He then described the dedicated computer-imaging camera announced by JVC.

Sunday Papers

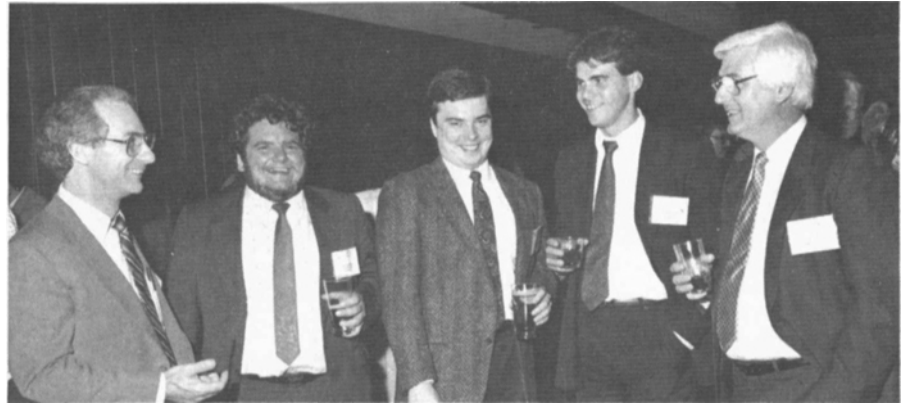
On Sunday, May 1, the program began with an opening film, *Le Chant des Etoiles*. The session was led by Sessions Chairman Ross Mutton and Co-Chairman Stephen Romain. The following papers were presented:

"Dim" Me Up, Scotty!" or Lighting Control Since the Dark Ages, by Ron Morisset, Provispec

Morisset gave a concise description of how computer control and modeling has essentially taken the guesswork out of television or film-set lighting. By entering a set model description into a PC, a lighting specialist is able to predict accurately the illumination over the set area for a given configuration of luminaires. Computer control during program production allows precise changes in illumination levels over the set.

A Multi-User Control System for Station Automation, by Ken Shaw, Ampex

This paper described Ampex's new ACR235 automatic cassette record/playback system for television station automation. The system has 256 cassette storage bins. A cassette may be selected by the system and loaded, by the robotics, onto any one of three (optionally four) transports for playback. Cassettes are externally identified by bar code user bits. The system can store a list of up to 1000 events in internal RAM and offers a variety of interconnect options for external remote control. It can support up to four RS232 (or RS422) serial ports, a GPIB parallel interface, or an SMPTE bus interconnect. The speci-



Program Chairman Christo Georges, guests, and Montreal/Quebec Section Chairman Claude Tressider enjoying the Friday evening cocktail party.

fied external remote-control workstation is IBM AT-compatible with 2 Mbytes of memory and a 30-Mbyte disk. For playlist protection against power failure, it is recommended that the AT be equipped with a UPS.

Automation of CBC's Shortwave Facilities, by Michel Fortin, CBC

This paper described a new automatic control system being installed at Radio Canada International's HF transmission site in Sackville, N.B. The system schedules, controls, and monitors the audio feed matrix, a number of tunable HF transmitters (at present, 8) and the antenna switching matrix. Fortin pointed out that, although the system does not conform to the SMPTE bus protocol, it is functionally very similar in that it is a polled network, has a star configuration, and uses serial lines conforming to the RS422 standard. The bus controller is implemented using a pair of PDP11/73s in a hot standby configuration. The micro-PDP11 is run under the micro-RSX real-time operating system, and the controller software is written in FORTRAN. The software is written so that new devices to be controlled (e.g., additional transmitters) can be added merely by editing system configuration tables. Local control of the matrices and transmitters is implemented using Z80-based single-board microcomputers. IBM PS/2 desktop computers are used as workstations for display and data entry to the micro-PDP11 controller.

Computers in Broadcast Automation, by Gilles Fortin, Solutec

In this paper, Solutec's line of microprocessor-based broadcast system controllers, the SOL-6800 and the smaller SOL-6800/MICRO were de-

scribed. The capabilities of the units were illustrated by describing three installed systems, Réseau Quatre Saisons in Montreal, Vidéotron in Montreal and Quebec City, and the Metropolitan Transmission Center in New York. The basic rack-mount SOL-6800 can accommodate up to eight VTR controller cards, a video card, two audio cards, and a 12-input to 1-output switcher.

The Kodak Computerized Automatic Plotting Densitometer System, by Michael Chewey, Systems Unlimited

This paper described a densitometer data acquisition system for use in film laboratories. The system hardware consists of a stepping densitometer and an HP 8-pen digital plotter, controlled by a IBM XT-compatible computer. System software is menu-driven, and it was indicated that it could be customized (by the supplier) to suit particular laboratory requirements.

Teleproduction: Convergence through Computers, by Christian Tremblay, CDL

This paper reviewed the problems caused in teleproduction suites by diverging technologies and the proliferation of new equipment, each with its own complex control interface. A solution was presented in terms of the teleproduction workstation, a programmable interface and controller which would tie the equipment together and create a modular system.

Conclusion

In summary, the weekend was enjoyed by all, and the attendees left the conference excited at the future possibilities offered by computers to the motion-picture and television industries. —Janet West-Cyr