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Introduction: 2021 Frameless XR Symposium

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Introduction:
2021 Frameless XR Symposium

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The Frameless XR Symposium is an interdisciplinary conference focused on research, innovation, and artistic creation in the fields of augmented reality, virtual reality, and mixed reality. As we continue to navigate the global pandemic and follow the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) COVID-19 Dashboard guidelines, the symposium organizing committee choose a hybrid format for safety and flexibility, as well as in the spirit of extended reality.

In person programming was hosted at the RIT MAGIC Center and streamed via Zoom by our MAGIC student tech team. Presentations on both days included a wide range of topics covering research in spatial audio, mixed reality, XR learning, cultural heritage, and healthcare. Following the success of last year's Mozilla Hubs student design contest, we ran another student competition that resulted in two stunning virtual worlds that were showcased at midday meet ups both days for all attendees. Taking advantage of Mozilla Hubs new Twitter functionality, we offered an in-world raffle with challenges for participants to acquire tickets to win an Oculus Quest 2, providing entertainment and engagement in the virtual spaces and on social media. For our keynote sessions, we experimented with a different format consisting of two panel discussions featuring Meta Reality Lab Directors addressing the evolving landscape of XR on day one and day two, a team of USC JOVRNALISM alumni and professor shared their XR journalism projects. Breaks during the event included opportunities to view online Flash Talks, samples of XR research at RIT, and an in person augmented reality exhibition, Hostile Terrain 94, at the RIT University Gallery (the producers of Hostile Terrain 94 spoke at the 2020 symposium). Based on positive feedback last year, we brought back the midafternoon mindful yoga break, both on line and in person. This year we were pleased to be able to bring back workshops and XR demonstrations in person, with a reception to end the event (a playlist of this years demo teaser videos can be found on the Frameless YouTube channel).

The symposium is a team effort with collaboration across disciplines and includes colleagues from both RIT and the University of Rochester. As Symposium Chair, I'd like to thank and express my gratitude to the organizing committee for their contributions to the program: Mike Murdoch/Shauna Cross/Rich Doolittle/Roshan Peiris (Programming); Riham Alieldin/David Halbstein (Journal); Meaghan Moody/Mari Jaye Blanchard/Trent Hergenrader/Missy Warp

(Marketing); Joe Geigel/Elizabeth Goins (Demos); Wendy Dannels/Mark Reisch (Mozilla Hubs); Riham Alieldin/Narges Mohammadi/Meaghan Moody/Emily Sherwood (University of Rochester liaisons); Liza Savage_Katz/Elouise Oyzon/Yunbo Zhang/Tom Dooley/Sungyoung Kim (RIT participants and moderators); with a special thanks to our student workers, Isabelle Anderson, Maxwell Bomb/Simar Khanna/Sophie Proe/Jaiden Tripi/Emma Yee; and especially our hybrid student tech team, Jonah Edick, Jonny Gates, Shanee Gordon, Max Lama, Andrea Martinez, Maggie Wehler; as well as, the continued support from Dr Ryan Raffaelle (VP for Research/Assoc Provost RIT), Ellen Granberg (RIT Provost/Senior VP for Academic Affairs), Doreen Edwards (Dean Kate Gleason College of Engineering), David Long (MAGIC Director), Jenn Hinton (MAGIC Associate Director), Brenda Schlageter (MAGIC Building and Operations), Amanda Hughes (MAGIC Technology Manager), Mark Marcello (Senior Web Developer/Programmer).

Although 2021 has been another challenging and difficult year, everyone made time in their overloaded work schedules to help deliver this year's symposium. I value their dedication and acknowledge their contributions to the success of the 6th Annual Frameless XR Symposium. Aaron Garland from RIT University News summarized the event in his article RIT transforms into XR playground for annual Frameless Symposium. We appreciate all of our participating presenters as well as those who attended the event and look forward to seeing you all next year!

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