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Preface

The origin of the Intelligent Virtual Agents conference dates from a successful workshop on Intelligent Virtual Environments held in Brighton, UK at the 13th European Conference on Artificial Intelligence (ECAI'98). This workshop was followed by a second one held in Salford in Manchester, UK in 1999. Subsequent events took place in Madrid, Spain in 2001, Isree, Germany in 2003 and Kos, Greece in 2005. Starting in 2006, Intelligent Virtual Agents moved from being a biennial to an annual event and became a full fledged international conference, hosted in California.

This volume contains the proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents, IVA 2006, held in Marina del Rey, California, USA from August 21–23. For the second year in a row, IVA also hosted the Gathering of Animated Lifelike Agents (GALA 2006), an annual festival to showcase the latest animated lifelike agents created by university students and academic or industrial research groups. IVA 2006 received 73 submissions from Europe, the Americas and Asia. The papers published here are the 24 full papers and 11 short papers presented at the conference, as well as one-page descriptions of posters and the featured invited talks by Brian Parkinson of Oxford University, Rod Humble of Electronic Arts, and Michael Mateas of the University of California, Santa Cruz and Andrew Stern of Procedural Arts.

We would like to thank a number of people who contributed to the success of this conference. First of all, we thank the authors for their high-quality work and their willingness to share their ideas. We thank the Program Committee, consisting of the editors and other distinguished researchers who worked hard to review the submissions and to select the best of them for presentation. A special thanks goes to the Local Organizing Committee and the student volunteers – Cornelis Versloot, Mark terMaat and Judith Siegel – for their efficient work on preparing and running the event. We would like to thank the University of Southern California's Institute for Creative Technologies for their overwhelming support, our sponsors for their financial support, and last but not least, we thank all those who attended the conference.

We invite readers to enjoy the papers in this book and look forward to the next Intelligent Virtual Agents conference.

June 2006

Jonathan Gratch
Michael Young
Ruth Aylett
Daniel Ballin
Patrick Olivier

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