



## **Avid Previews Groundbreaking Facial Animation Technology: SOFTIMAGE|FACE ROBOT; Company pioneers new approach to believable, emotional digital acting**

LOS ANGELES, Aug 01, 2005 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Avid Technology, Inc. (NASDAQ: AVID) today announced that it will preview SOFTIMAGE®|FACE ROBOT™ - its revolutionary new facial animation technology. Face Robot software is the first technology that allows 3-D artists to achieve realistic, lifelike facial animation for high-end film, post and games projects. The technology is built on a groundbreaking new computer model of facial soft tissue that mimics the full range of emotions portrayed by the human face. SIGGRAPH attendees can experience the Face Robot system in the Avid® Computer Graphics booth and see how this new technology offers artists a very intuitive way to interact with CG characters while providing precise control over facial details, including wrinkles, frowns, flaring nostrils and bulging neck muscles.

"On our projects, digital acting is important and the face is the most critical piece," said Tim Miller, creative director and co-founder of Blur Studio in Los Angeles. "There were no tools on the market that could get us close to the quality we wanted, so we began to work with Softimage on a solution. Face Robot has made a huge difference in the quality of the facial animation of our characters. For the first time, I look forward to the moment when the characters stop beating each other up and have a little chat!" Blur, an acclaimed animation studio recently nominated for an Academy Award® in the animated short category, is using the technology and will be showing work created with it at SIGGRAPH.

Adds Jeff Wilson, animation supervisor at Blur Studio, "Creating believable facial animation is very important because the face is fundamental in understanding emotion. It is also very difficult because facial expressions emerge primarily from deformations of the soft tissue on the face, which is nearly impossible to capture with existing 3-D software. Face Robot removes the cumbersome, repetitive work of legacy approaches and allows us to focus on bringing a character to life. Softimage is creating a truly incredible tool for facial animation."

The Face Robot software supports both keyframe animation and motion capture, the primary techniques used for digital acting today. The soft tissue model at the core of the technology removes the need to manually create dozens or even hundreds of 3-D shapes for different facial expressions and allows animators to work with an optimal number of control points. Keyframe animators can gain very direct, intuitive access to facial expressions, while motion capture animators can work with fewer markers to reduce setup and cleanup time.

"We work closely with many of the world's most renowned animation studios to understand their challenges in key areas like facial animation. This new technology is the culmination of years of research and development in support of ambitious animation and effects productions," said Michael Isner, head of the special projects consulting group at Softimage. "Now, with innovative, dedicated facial animation technology, Softimage has created a new category for computer graphics. We are breaking down the barriers to believable digital acting to help the 3-D community fulfill their creative imagination."

The technology preview will be shown publicly for the first time at SIGGRAPH. Videos and background information on the technology are available at [www.softimage.com/facerobot](http://www.softimage.com/facerobot).

### **About Softimage Co.**

Softimage is a subsidiary of Avid Technology, Inc. focused on 3-D modeling and animation solution for the film, broadcast, post-production and interactive entertainment industries. Softimage is the creative engine behind the Avid Computer Graphics toolset, and an integral player in Avid's Make, Manage and Move Media™ strategy. It's SOFTIMAGE|XSI® system is the industry's first 3-D nonlinear production environment providing artists the freedom to make professional computer graphics, 3-D animation, and visual effects - from major motion pictures to CG features and commercials, to video games. Softimage is proud to count amongst its customers: Troublemaker Studios, CafeFX, Giant Killer Robots, R!OT, The Mill, Stan Winston Studios, Pixel Liberation Front, La Maison, Hybride, Janimation, Quiet Man, PSYOP, Cinepix and Nerd Corps. For more information about Softimage visit [www.softimage.com](http://www.softimage.com).

### **About Avid Technology, Inc.**

Avid Technology, Inc. is the world leader in digital nonlinear media creation, management, and distribution solutions, enabling film, video, audio, animation, games, and broadcast professionals to work more efficiently, productively, and creatively. For more information about the company's Oscar®, Grammy®, and Emmy® award-winning products and services, please visit: [www.avid.com](http://www.avid.com).

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