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### Human-Plant Interaction – and More – at SIGGRAPH 2012

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Posted by [Neal Leavitt](#) on August 11th, 2012 at 2:43 pm

The annual [SIGGRAPH](#) conference, which recently concluded in Los Angeles, always draws an eclectic bunch of developers, artists, filmmakers, scientists, academics and students from around the globe.

This year was no exception – SIGGRAPH reported that 21,212 attendees from 19 countries roamed the exhibit hall at the Los Angeles Convention Center. There were also more than 1,200 speakers/contributors who participated in an array of panels, screenings, tutorials and presentations.

One of the most interesting exhibits was a human-plant interaction that added capacitive touch to ordinary plants. As reported by [engadget](#), Walt Disney's development arm, [Disney Research](#), unveiled a project called *Botanicus Interacticus*.

*engadget* said the project is centered on a custom-built capacitive sensor module, which pipes a low current through a plant, then senses when/where you touch (bit creepy).

“Assuming your body is grounded, the device uses more than 200 frequencies to determine exactly where you’ve grabbed hold of a stem, reported *engadget*. “Then, depending on how it may be programmed, the sensor can trigger any combination of feedback, ranging from a notification that your child is attempting to climb that massive oak in the yard again, to an interactive melody that varies based on where your hand falls along the plant.”

Besides new things to do with house plants, a section of the floor was devoted to *Emerging Technologies*



– there were more than two dozen innovations submitted from the U.S., China, Hungary, Japan, Singapore, and other nations worldwide.

SIGGRAPH featured a number of them in pre-conference announcements. Three of these included:

TELESAR V – Created at Tokyo University, it enables users to bind with a dexterous robot and experience what it feels with its fingertips when manipulating/touching objects remotely.

MIT Media Lab - Demonstrated ‘Tensor Displays: Compressive Light-Field Synthesis Using Multilayer Displays with Directional Backlighting.’ In plain English, glasses-free 3D displays that are viewed from any angle. Very cool.

Gocen – From Tokyo Metropolitan University. It’s a small optical musical recognition device that detects musical notation from handwritten notes. When connected to a MIDI instrument (Musical Instrument Digital Interface; a communications protocol/hardware standard that enables electronic musical instruments and computers to communicate), it plays the notes as the Gocen sensor bar is traced over them.

Next year SIGGRAPH heads south to Anaheim. I’m thinking of bringing along some of my house plants so they can enjoy the show too.

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