ACM SIGMM Award for Outstanding PhD Thesis in Multimedia Computing, Communications and Applications 2015

ACM Special Interest Group on Multimedia (SIGMM) is pleased to present the 2015 SIGMM Outstanding Ph.D. Thesis Award to Dr. Ting Yao and Honorable Mention recognition to Dr. Britta Meixner.

The award committee considers Dr. Yao’s dissertation entitled “Multimedia Search by Self, External, and Crowdsourcing Knowledge” worthy of the recognition as the thesis proposes an innovative knowledge transfer framework for multimedia search which is expected to have significant impact, especially in boosting the search performance for big multimedia data.

Dr. Yao’s thesis proposes the knowledge transfer methodology in three multimedia search scenarios:

1. Seeking consensus among multiple modalities in the context of search re-ranking,
2. Leveraging external knowledge as a prior to be transferred to a problem that belongs to a domain different from the external knowledge, and
3. Exploring the large user click-through data as crowdsourced human intelligence for annotation and search.

The effectiveness of the proposed framework has been successfully justified by thorough experiments. The proposed framework has substantial contributions in principled integration of multimodal data which is indispensable in multimedia search. The publications related to the thesis clearly demonstrate the major impact of this work in many research disciplines including multimedia, web, and information retrieval. The fact that parts of the proposed techniques have been and are being transferred to the commercial search service Bing further attest to the practical contributions of this thesis. Overall, the committee recognizes the significant impact and contributions presented in the thesis to the multimedia community.

Bio of Awardee
Dr. Ting Yao is an associate researcher in the Multimedia Search and Mining group at Microsoft Research, Beijing, China. His research interests are in multimedia search and computing. He completed a Ph.D. in Computer Science at City University of Hong Kong in 2014. He received the B.Sc. degree in theoretical and applied mechanics (2004), B.Eng. double degree in electronic information engineering (2004), and M.Eng. degree in signal and information processing (2008) all from the University of Science and Technology of China, Hefei, China. The system designed by him achieved the second place in the THUMOS action recognition challenge at CVPR 2015. He was also the principal designer of the image retrieval systems that achieved the third and fifth performance in the MSR-Bing image retrieval challenge at ACM MM 2014 and 2013, respectively. He received the Best Paper Award of ACM ICIMCS (2013).

**Honorable Mention:**

The award committee is pleased to present the Honorable Mention to Dr. Britta Meixner for the thesis entitled: “Annotated Interactive Non-linear Video - Software Suite, Download and Cache Management.”

The thesis presents a fully functional software suite for authoring non-linear interactive videos with downloading and cache management mechanisms for effective video playback. The committee is significantly impressed by the thorough study presented in the thesis with extensive analysis of the properties of the software suite. The implementation which has been made available as open source software along with the thesis undoubtedly has very high potential impact to the multimedia community.
Bio of Awardee

Dr. Britta Meixner received her Master’s degree (German Diplom) in Computer Science from the University of Passau, Germany, in 2008. Furthermore, she received the First State Examination for Lectureship at Secondary Schools for the subjects Computer Science and Mathematics from the Bavarian State Ministry for Education and Culture in 2008. She received her Ph.D. degree from the University of Passau, Germany, in 2014. The title of her thesis is “Annotated Interactive Non-linear Video · Software Suite, Download and Cache Management.” She is currently a postdoctoral research fellow with the University of Passau, Germany, and will be a postdoctoral research fellow at FXPAL, Palo Alto, CA, USA, starting October 2015. Her research interest is mainly in hypermedia. She is an award winner of the 2015 Award “Women + Media Technology,” granted by Germany’s public broadcasters ARD and ZDF (ARD/ZDF Förderpreis “Frauen + Medientechnologie” 2015). She was a Reviewer for Springer Multimedia Tools and Applications (MTAP) Journal, an Organizer of the “International Workshop on Interactive Content Consumption (WSICC)” at ACM TVX in 2014 and 2015, and Associate Chair at ACM TVX2015.