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Boston Fashion Show Blurs Boundaries Between Wearables and Technology

(Boston, MA) SIGGRAPH 2006, the 33rd International Conference and Exhibition on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques held 30 July to 3 August 2006 in Boston, Massachusetts, presents *Unravel* - a runway fashion show of innovative and experimental works in computational and conceptual couture, science-inspired form, fashion with a social agenda, and new technologies of material fabrication. The fashion show begins at 10 pm on 31 July 2006 at The Roxy, a Boston nightclub.

Unravel brings together the work of designers and artists from throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia who are seeking to redefine the notion of 'wearable.'

"In the increasingly mobile nature of contemporary life, it has become more and more important to contemplate how the devices we carry and the garments we wear converge into a 'secondary skin' which functions as an extension of ourselves, in both ability and perception," stated Amanda Parkes, SIGGRAPH 2006 Fashion Show Curator from the MIT Media Lab.

According to Parkes, by using fashion - a medium always associated with self-expression and personal identity - these designers seek to demonstrate how the use (or misuse) of technology can be interwoven to strengthen those statements and enhance life. Technology also has the capability to stimulate, delight, and inspire in ways as yet untapped in the fashion world.

Many of the pieces featured will bring to light important social issues -- redefining notions of personal space, networked environments, and issues of privacy and protection. Other examples will remind the audience how technology has the power to enhance personal relationships and daily life, celebrate fantasy, and play a part in improving the human condition.

Specific highlights include:

- **Keitai Girl**, meaning 'mobile phone girl,' presents futuristic predictions of human beings who have implanted electronic communication devices all over their bodies. The technologies offer expansive possibilities including electronic built-ins and enhanced audio capabilities.
- The **No-Contact Jacket** is a wearable defensive jacket created to protect women from violence. When activated by the wearer, 80,000 volts of low amperage electric current pulses just below the surface of the jacket preventing any would-be attacker from contact with the wearer's body.
- The **Computer Hood** facilitates an amplified engagement between the user and their preferred technology. It secludes the person in a digital enclosure where the outside world is a memory and attention is undivided. People outside are encouraged to 'speak' towards a marked area on the back of the hood. Anything they say will be recorded and saved as an audio file on the computer desktop for perusal at the computer user's leisure.

High-resolution images are available **here** <link to: <http://www.siggraph.org/s2006/unravel/>>

Private interviews are available with Amanda Parkes or Josh Strickon, SIGGRAPH 2006 Special Sessions Chair from New York Times Company upon request.

Note: Admission to the SIGGRAPH Fashion Show requires official conference registration and identification.

SIGGRAPH 2006 will bring an estimated 25,000 computer graphics and interactive technology professionals from six continents to Boston, USA for the industry's most respected technical and creative programs focusing on research, science, art, animation, gaming, interactivity, education, and the web from 30 July to 3 August 2006. SIGGRAPH 2006 includes a three-day exhibition of products and services from the computer graphics and interactive marketplace from 1-3 August 2006. More than 250 international exhibiting companies are expected. Registration for the conference and exhibition is open to the public.

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ACM SIGGRAPH, the leading professional society for computer graphics and interactive techniques, sponsors SIGGRAPH 2006.