

The EVA London Conference Archive

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1. INTRODUCTION

The EVA series of conferences began in London in 1990 under the title “Electronic Imaging and the Visual Arts”. Established by James Hemsley, interest in EVA spread across Europe, and beyond, resulting in a large network of EVA groups and conferences.

In its earlier years, the UK EVA conferences took place in various locations, mostly in London but also in Cambridge (1998), Edinburgh (2000) and Glasgow (2001). In 2008 EVA London (now styled as “Electronic Visualisation and the Arts”) became an official conference of the Computer Arts Society (CAS) and has since been hosted by the BCS (British Computer Society) at their London offices, first in Camden and now in Moorgate.

2. THE EVA LONDON ARCHIVE

Since 1990, EVA founder James Hemsley has built up a large collection of EVA-related materials. In 2021, these were transferred to the Computer Arts Archive CIC in Leicester (<http://www.computer-arts-archive.com>) to become the basis of an official EVA London Archive (Figure 1). Materials in the collection included an almost complete set of printed UK/London conference proceedings (1993 and 1999 are currently missing), proceedings from other EVA conferences (most notably EVA Florence), project documents and assorted books, papers, proposals and ephemera.

In addition to this, the Computer Arts Archive already had access to digital copies of all the EVA London conference proceedings from 2008 to the present day, following the move to the BCS and the eWiC catalogue (ScienceOpen, 2024) and video recordings of EVA London conferences since 2020 on the Computer Arts Society YouTube Channel (<https://youtube.com/ComputerArtsSociety>).

Finally, assorted floppy disks containing EVA London conference proceedings from before 2008 had already been transferred to the Computer Arts Archive, although these had not been catalogued.

These materials, together with the contents of the EVA London Conference website (<http://www.eva-london.org>), form the current EVA London Archive.



Figure 1: Jim Hemsley’s EVA materials following their arrival at the Computer Arts Archive in Leicester.

3. A SEARCHABLE EVA LONDON DATABASE

The James Hemsley materials, plus the digital resources, have resulted in a collection of many hundreds of EVA-related items. The first cataloguing task being undertaken is the creation of a

searchable database of EVA London conference papers.

At the time of writing, each paper in the 2008 to 2023 EVA London conferences has been indexed in terms of title, author(s), year, session and full paper link. For the 2000 to 2023 conferences, links to videos on YouTube are also included (where permission to upload the video was given by the presenter. This has resulted in over 500 records with papers and almost 200 video links.). For all of the conferences, an image of the proceedings cover has also been included (Figure 2).



Figure 2: The more recent EVA London proceedings feature unique cover images.

The database was edited in Google Sheets and uses the “Sheety” (<https://sheety.co>) web service to convert it into a web-friendly JSON file. The JSON file is then automatically uploaded to the Computer Arts Society Web site, where JavaScript is used to generate conference web pages and a search facility.

The resulting system is simple to use and provides insights into the changing nature of the papers presented at EVA London since 2008, as well as the names of all of those who have presented over the years. Of particular interest for this group, is the ability to produce a web address containing the author’s name. This allows members of the EVA London community to easily share a link to all their EVA contributions. The usefulness of this facility will be further enhanced as the data is standardised. For example, the author, Jonathan Bowden, sometimes appears as J P Bowden or Jonathan P Bowden.

Adding the EVA London conference proceedings before 2008 remains an ongoing task. While floppy disks containing at least some of these are in the EVA Archive extracting data from them is proving time-consuming. Therefore, a more manual process of scanning the paper proceedings is now underway. Starting with a scan of the proceedings index, the EVA London conference database is

being gradually completed, although including copies of full papers will take some time. Indeed, while later proceedings were produced as published books, early copies were spiral bound, or in the case of EVA London 1990, contained in a lever-arch file (Figure 3).

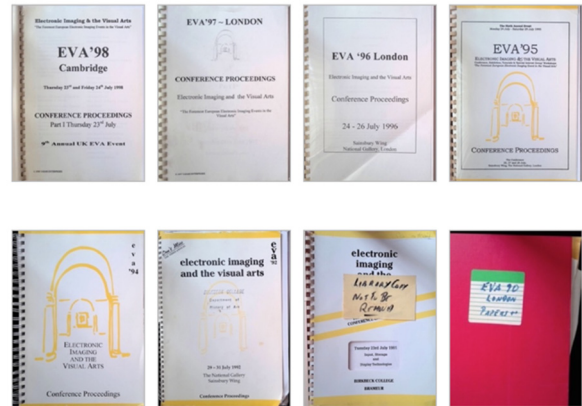


Figure 3: The proceedings of early EVA London conferences were often provided as a set of simply-bound loose sheets.

4. NEXT STEPS

Once the work to add the early EVA London conference papers to the database has been completed, we intend to move our attention to the other EVA-related items contained within the James Hemsley materials.

We also encourage the organisers of international EVA conferences to take an interest in the project and consider producing a similar archive to EVA London. The software developed will be made available to our international colleagues.

5. EVA LONDON ARCHIVE WEB ADDRESS

The EVA London Archive, with the latest version of the searchable conference proceedings, will be officially launched in July 2024 at the EVA London conference at BCS Moorgate. The initial web address will be:

<https://www.computer-arts-society.com/evaarchive>

Expect to see the papers and videos for EVA London 2024 in the archive by the end of July 2024.

6. REFERENCES

ScienceOpen (2024). Electronic Workshops in Computing (eWiC): A ScienceOpen Collection: <https://www.scienceopen.com/collection/f9a30221-4fef-4d53-bc0a-e5f0327d4090> (retrieved 13th March 2024).