

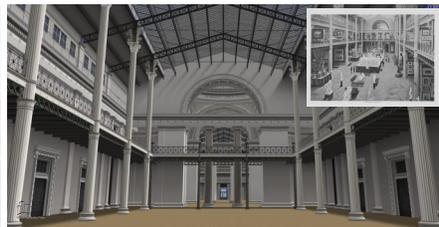
The Devil in the Details: Reconstructing Chicago's White City

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DHCS ABSTRACT

The humanistic promise of virtual reality reconstructions is that they provide the opportunity to experience a surrogate for a world that no longer exists, thereby allowing users to expand their understanding of a specific time and place. But the three-dimensional computer model alone is unable to convey the social context and historical narratives of even the most compelling virtual world. For users to make sense of the reconstruction in a meaningful way, the virtual environment must also be layered with real-world imagery, primary resources, and subject expert commentary. It is the goal of the Urban Simulation Team's real-time visual simulation reconstruction of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 to create such a world—a learning environment that fosters free exploration of a highly detailed virtual world augmented with resources to build knowledge about this seminal event in American history. The presentation will address the theoretical, methodological, and technical challenges for the project in four critical areas: computer modeling, embedded resources, user interface, and dissemination.

All images are screen snapshots taken from the Urban Simulation Team's real-time visual simulation model of the World's Columbian Exposition. Left column, from top to bottom: the Court of Honor at dusk; the Court of Honor looking north along the secondary axis; the electric launch ticket office, Statue of the Republic, and the Peristyle; the state zone in the northern part of Jackson Park; the Fine Arts building; a Hygeia water kiosk on the Wooded Island. Center column, from top to bottom: inside the Fine Arts building; the Fine Arts building from the porch of the Louisiana state building. Below: the southern bridge to the Wooded Island.



More information on the work of the Urban Simulation Team at UCLA is available online at www.ust.ucla.edu. The exposition model has been funded in part with grants from The Brinson Foundation and is being shown at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago. The project website with additional images and video clips is at www.ust.ucla.edu/ustweb/Projects/columbian_expo.htm.