Roman Verostko receives award from Cynthia Rubin at the 2009 ACM SIGGRAPH Conference in New Orleans.

# The 2009 ACM SIGGRAPH Distinguished Artist Award

**The 2009 ACM SIGGRAPH Distinguished Artist Award for Lifetime Achievement** is presented to Roman Verostko for his seminal contributions to the creation and promotion of digital art. Fusing his knowledge of computer programming with a long engagement with diverse cultural and philosophical traditions, Roman developed a highly personal approach to using a pen plotter to layer elegant lines into astoundingly beautiful compositions. His work stands as a monument to the aesthetic power of algorithmic art, and continues to inspire artists to take charge of their own tools in exploring new media.

In 1982, with over 30 years' experience as an artist, Roman added digital imaging to his repertoire with his animated *Magic Hand of Chance*. He began integrating the computer with more traditional studio practice in 1986 by programming a plotter with multiple pen stalls to draw with rich colors, adding oriental brushes in 1987. Built of expressive algorithmic strokes, the work evokes traditional Chinese calligraphy but is also informed by American and European influences ranging from illuminated manuscripts to constructive-ism, high modernism and be-yond. Roman brought spiritual contemplation to his new methodology, breathing life into the mechanical with his algorithms.

Roman's artistic career developed from a humanist perspective. After graduating from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh in 1949 he embraced religious life as a Benedictine Monk. He received the BA in Philosophy from St. Vincent College (1955), the MFA from Pratt Institute (1961) with further studies in Medieval Art at NYU and Columbia, and a year of printmaking with Hayter at Atelier 17 in Paris. Turning away from a life of religion, in 1968 he left monasticism to teach Humanities at the Minneapolis College of Art & Design, eventually serving as Academic Dean, then Chair of Liberal Arts. He retired as a Professor Emeritus in 1994.

In 1985 Roman was a Visiting Professor at the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou. Drawing on the cultural aesthetics of Asian and Euro-American traditions he has furthered the discipline by demonstrating the power of algorithmic art to engage meaningful semiotic content. He has been an advocate for compelling digital art, speaking and writing about his work and humanist philosophy as well as exhibiting internationally, including many editions of SIGGRAPH.

Roman Verostko is an internationally recognized pioneer who has advanced both the aesthetics and techniques of digital art over an extraordinarily accomplished and fruitful career. ACM SIGGRAPH is very pleased to honor him.