

**Dr. Ergun Akleman, Texas A&M University**

**TITLE: A Qualitative Approach to Design Characters for Visual Storytelling**

**ABSTRACT:**

In this talk, I will present a qualitative approach to derive the rules for character design. I will demonstrate how this approach can be used for designing archetypes, creating caricatures and finding visual representations of the internal states of the characters. I will also show some of character designs I have created using the approach.

Character design is an important element of visual storytelling, which is an area that is widely neglected by researchers. One can find a wide variety of literature on writing (or telling) stories in any library; but we do not see such a variety in visual storytelling. The visual storytelling practitioners who are usually commercial artists such as cartoonists, comic book artists and storyboard artists learn the tools of the trade from each other or from existing works.

As a computer graphics researcher with a professional commercial art background, I have always been interested in formalization of visual storytelling. I have also been motivated for finding ways to formalize visual storytelling while teaching courses in our Visualization program, which combines art and science. During last 10 years, I have developed a set of practical methods to convincingly demonstrate various aspects of visual storytelling. I will show that many of these practical methods resulted from the qualitative approach that I will present in this talk.

**Short BIO:**

Ergun Akleman Ph.D. is a professor in the Department of Visualization at the Texas A&M University. He received his M.S. and Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology jointly with Graphics, Visualization and Usability laboratory and his B.S. in Electronic engineering from Istanbul Technical University. He worked as an assistant professor in Computer Science Department of Yildiz Technical University and as an adjunct professor Computer Science Departments of Marmara and Bosphorous Universities. He is also a cartoonist who has published more than 500 cartoons in various newspapers and magazines. His research interests include shape modeling, visual storytelling, rendering, animation, and visualisation. Dr. Akleman has authored or co-authored more than 70 shape modeling, computer graphics and art+math publications.