More than twenty years ago (1984), the first IEEE Visual Language (VL) workshop was organized in Hiroshima with the goal in mind to design visual programming languages that will sooner or later replace all sorts of textual programming languages. At that time, one of the driving visions of the VL community was to simplify all kinds of programming activities by using visual languages (only) and to open thereby the world of computers and computing to end users.

By now we have realized that visual programming languages will probably never replace textual programming languages. Nevertheless, the importance of executable visual modeling languages is steadily increasing. Furthermore, we are aware of the fact that we are living in a multi-modal world, where we employ all kinds of communication channels and representations to interact with computers. Many popular computer languages mix textual and visual elements or even use gesture-based or speech-based user interfaces. These new forms of user interaction and their integration pose not only technical challenges, but also raise the question of their usability.

Consequently, the scope of our conference series has been constantly extended over the years, and the former Visual Language Symposium was renamed to the “IEEE Symposium on Visual Languages and Human-Centric Computing” to reflect this fact.

Looking into the proceedings of VL/HCC ’05 you will recognize that today only a minority of the accepted 28 full papers and 15 tech notes (from 90 submissions) invent new visual programming languages. Instead, many of the accepted submissions are related to still evolving themes and can be found in sessions like “new modes of programming”, “studies of end users”, “visual modeling languages”, and so forth. The high number of this year’s submissions (which is a record compared to all previous events of this conference in North America) and the diversity of topics indicate that visual languages and human-centric computing are indeed very active research fields. We hope that you will enjoy the papers and tech notes representing the broadened scope of the VL/HCC symposium and the diversity of the presented research topics as well as the first days of autumn here in Dallas.

We would like to express our gratitude to all the people who contributed significant amounts of time, expertise, and work, without which this event would not have been possible. It is thanks to their effort that we can enjoy a high quality conference with a superb scientific program. First of all, we would like to thank the authors for writing, submitting, and revising their papers. Moreover, we thank our program committee members and all additional reviewers for reviewing the submissions in a rather short period of time and spending many hours to discuss papers and reviews. Finally, we gratefully acknowledge the never ending efforts of Kang Zhang, our general chair, and his team to organize VL/HCC’05.

Martin Erwig & Andy Schürr

PC Co-Chairs, VL/HCC 2005