

Spring Academy Pula 2011



Building on the success of the ArchiCAD Summer and Winter Schools, the two day ArchiCAD Spring Academy in Pula, Croatia, organised by ArchiCAD Users Association and 3Dart, Croatian ArchiCAD and Artlantis distributor, emerged as another must attend symposium .

The Hotel Histria surrounded by a net work of hotels on the outskirts of Pula with one of the best preserved Roman Coliseums on a peninsular overlooking the Adriatic provided a great venue with an abundance of good quality restaurants with welcoming and friendly staff.

The presentations and demonstrations in the programme was considerably organised with provision of 15 minute coffee breaks on the terrace between speakers and 75 minute buffet lunch just enough time to soak up the sun and the 45 delegates (up on last year) from wide variety of nationalities from Norway, Denmark, Italy, France, England, Ireland, Austria, Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia and Bosnia & Herzegovina to meet and get to know one another.

The Symposium got started on Friday 13th at 9am with a warm welcome from Marin Racic of 3Dart and opened with the launch of ArchiCAD 15 by Eniko Pauko from the Graphisoft Team, who promptly handed out a non disclosure document for us all to sign regarding Project X to be launched in Autumn 2011. All I can say at this point it involves a computer programme and an iPad. – and no doubt some gaffer tape and a pair of concrete boots from some Graphisoft hit man should I say any more.

What I can reveal is ArchiCAD 15 will include a new dynamic shape tool and an improved roof tool which will belike manner to architectural and design students to articulate their ideas of organic shaped buildings but will become the dread of structural engineers in years to come when the are asked to provide calculations and stress bends.

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Other key features will be 3D navigation, additional library objects such as boats, medical and contemporary furniture together with an array of wind and solar objects. Ecodesigner has been expanded with tools to evaluate day light analysis as well as enabling various assessments. To address the issue of refurbishment ArchiCAD 15 has a new feature to enable building alterations to be highlighted on a single drawing for compliance with European standards. All exciting stuff and can't wait for the new release!.

To conclude the Friday morning Andrej Markovic demonstrated how to collaborate IFC components in ArchiCAD with Structural Data programme SCIA. Fabrizio Diodati presented the changes to ArchiSuite which now includes all 17 different products including GDL modeller ArchiForma.

The symposium really got into gear in the afternoon with Marin Racic demonstrating the use of HQ (high quality) Textures from Arroway (www.arroway-textures.com) in Artlantis. During this very informative presentation Marin explained how to reduce a 53mb HQ image file to 7.7mb and then through use of Photoshop to create a jpeg reducing the file size by a further 75%. Creating a new shader he explained the process of importing the image and formatting the settings.

Herbert Peter eloquently demonstrated embedding hotlinks and the advantages when producing repetitive room layouts, multiple storey layouts etc followed by Til Breton showing how to synchronise textures and fill in 3D with the ArchiCAD rendering engines. The presentation was supported by a hand out with a list of tips, explanations and demonstrated the advantages and disadvantages of internal, light-work and open GL engines.

A short coach journey in the evening treated the delegates to the excellent local culinary delights of the region and time to socialise, reflect upon the day and replenish our energy for the final day.

Day two was equally informative and stimulating. Roberto Vdovic from Zagreb University, Faculty of Architecture, started the proceedings with an overview of the course content and inclusion of ArchiCAD within the curriculum with three way open debate with Ray Elysee from Huddersfield University in the UK and Dr. Berndt Gensel Professor for Computer Sciences, School of Civil Engineering, Spittal Austria, concluding they all had common issues on how they support the students learning and deliberated to collaborate, share resources and develop an international educational forum with links to other universities.

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Daniel Dusoswa from Dod Architects Ireland demonstrated a simple but effective method of creating a Landscape model complete with a road rising across the terrain with dry stone walls, a derelict building, gravel pits and rock formations with caves all using the mesh tool. The model was developed using a few datum points with contours and outlines using the line and circle tool but as Daniel reiterated never the spline tool. Using the magic wand with a series of defined mesh settings it was a very efficient method and eloquently explained.

The concluding presentation was extended to 90 minutes (partially because Ivan Peric and Andreas Lettner were unable to attend at the last moment) but to give the opportunity to demonstrate the collaborative use of Teamwork. Til Breton (French) and Herbert Peter (Austrian) in Pula and Andreas Lettner (via a Skype link working from his office in Tyrol) all via a shared BIM server in Herbert's office in Vienna gave a seamless and entertaining demonstration how Teamwork in ArchiCAD works. It was for me a humbling experience watching three people from two different nationalities all communicating in English and felt what other CAD programme would do this and was very proud to be associated with the ArchiCAD community.

For the die-hards that stayed including those who were tethered to Tuesday timetable of Ryan Air. Sunday gave us the opportunity to explore the ancient architecture of Pula and to sail around the neighbouring islands. Unfortunately the weather on Sunday changed and even though the water was a bitter choppy at times causing the boat to roll when leaving the protection of the bay. The captain managed to find us a sheltered spot off a small island (once the residence of the former Yugoslavia president General Tito) and served us grilled fish from a very small galley on the covered deck – which was superb and some very dubious un chilled white wine with a screw top.



Hope to see you again!

For Links to forthcoming seminars including Sailing on a schooner from Amsterdam in June and the September ArchiCAD Summer School for the first time at John Moors University in Liverpool please go to the ACUA website

www.archicadusersassociation.com