Foreword

Welcome to Roma, dear attendees of the 2007 IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA'07). This is the 24th edition of the leading conference in our field, and the first time that ICRA takes place in a European capital.

The technical program of this year covers classical topics on modeling, planning and control of robots and automation devices, but also a variety of applications and research areas such as human-robot interaction, aerial, bio-inspired, marine, rehabilitation, or surgical robotics, as well as innovative automation in biotechnology or at nanoscale. This is nicely summarized in the conference theme: Ubiquitous Robotics.

ICRA'07 received a record number of 1818 submissions from 57 countries, including 1737 contributed papers, 50 papers for invited sessions, and 31 long video contributions. A well-received novelty has been the possibility of including a video for enhancing the content of a submitted paper; about one out of six submissions had a video clip. The review process was handled for the first time by the new RAS Conference Editorial Board (CEB). This three-tier reviewing structure included 136 Associate Editors and 9 Editors for the different areas, under the guidance of the CEB Editor-in-Chief, Seth Hutchinson. One of the main purposes of setting up the CEB is to maintain high quality and balance in conference paper evaluation, even beyond a single ICRA event. Having collected more than 4765 reviews, with each AE adding his/her recommendation on top of at least two independent reviews for each paper, we believe that ICRA'07 was the right start for the CEB activity. The final selection of papers and sessions was managed by the ICRA'07 Program Committee, based on the output of the CEB.

The final technical program consists of 787 papers, with an acceptance rate of 44%, and 20 long videos. Remarkably, 146 papers are accompanied by video clips, which are also included in the conference material that will appear in IEEE Xplore. Presentations at ICRA'07 are organized in 12 parallel tracks, for a total of 168 sessions, including 2 video sessions, taking place during the three conference days at the Angelicum University. Plenary talks will be delivered by three distinguished speakers: Alain Berthoz will present the challenging issues of neuro-robotics, Ken Goldberg the most recent advances in automation science, and Katsushi Ikeuchi the achievements of robot programming by demonstration. Special effort has been devoted to the organization of 19 workshops and 3 tutorials, hosted at the School of Engineering of the Università di Roma "La Sapienza". Finally, 24 robotics companies and publishers will exhibit at ICRA'07. The program is completed by several other special and social events, see www.icra07.org for further details.

We would like to thank all members of the ICRA'07 Operating Committees, the RAS CEB, and all the reviewers for having contributed to the success of this major scientific event. Our deep gratitude goes to Pradeep Misra for his flawless service with PaperPlaza. Indeed, special thanks go to all authors and participants, the real makers of ICRA'07.

It is a great pleasure and honor to host all attendees: Enjoy the conference, enjoy Roma!

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