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NATURAL FORMS AND PATTERNS IN PARAMETRIC DESIGN

LIU Wei[1,2], BEZUHLA Ruslana[1]

[1]Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Kyiv, Ukraine
[2]Qilu University of Technology (Shandong Academy of Sciences), Jinan, People`s Republic of China
Liuwei082918@gmail.com, bezuhla.ri@knutd.edu.ua

This paper analyzes modern parametric design tools used to create natural forms and identifies three main types of such tools: programming tools, visual programming tools, and traditional software. Four generative algorithmic models and methods are considered, including physics engine modeling, fractals, L-system, and cellular automata, which expand the possibilities of parametric creation of natural forms and patterns.

Key words: *parametric design, natural forms, pattern, generation, method.*

INTRODUCTION

Natural forms and patterns offer designers a multifaceted repository of aesthetic inspiration, demonstrating unique characteristics manifested through stochastic variation, ordered complexity, proportional relationships, and functional logic. Since the mid-20th century, computational technologies have enabled the systematic simulation of natural phenomena through mathematical abstraction. Contemporary parametric design methodologies leverage these computational models to simulate, generate, and optimize biologically informed configurations, creating an operational bridge between organic morphogenesis and artificial form-making processes.

PURPOSE

This paper aims to study and classify potential parametric design tools for generating natural shapes and patterns. The study aims to highlight the most relevant algorithms and methods that can be used for the parametric generation of natural patterns.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Parametric Generation Tools

In the generation of natural forms and patterns, parametric design has become an ideal approach due to its ability to effectively simulate the complexity, randomness, and inherent laws of nature. Traditional design methods often struggle to accurately express these characteristics and reproduce the diversity of natural phenomena. Parametric tools for generating natural patterns can be categorized into three main types: programming tools, visual programming tools, and conventional design software.

Firstly, there are programming tools, with notable examples being Processing and Python. Processing is a programming language specifically

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developed for visual arts and graphic design. It allows designers and artists to write code and control parameters to generate complex natural forms and patterns using algorithms and mathematical formulas. It is particularly suitable for simulating particle systems and fluid dynamics but requires users to have advanced programming skills.

Secondly, there are visual programming tools. Most parametric design software adopts a visual, modular programming approach for generating algorithms and building models, as seen in tools such as Grasshopper. Visual programming tools offer a graphical interface where design processes are visualized through nodes and connecting lines. Designers can generate complex natural patterns by adjusting parameters, without needing to possess extensive programming knowledge. This approach is well-suited for tasks involving intricate variations and controls.

Additionally, some conventional design software, such as Cinema 4D, offer a range of modules for simulating natural forms, including fluid simulations, collision modeling, particle effects, and randomness. These tools use integrated physics engines and particle systems to easily simulate dynamic natural phenomena, such as water flow, wind, or fire.

2. Methods of Parametric Generation of Natural Forms and Patterns

The essential process of parametric design involves defining relevant parameters and constructing algorithmic models to describe design problems. Adjusting these parameters triggers responses and variations in the generated results, thereby simulating and producing natural graphics. The commonly used parametric generation methods and models for natural forms and patterns are as follows:

Physical Engine Simulation.

Physical engine simulation uses computer algorithms to model physical laws from nature, such as gravity, friction, collision, and fluid dynamics, generating forms and graphics that align with physical reality. Forces play a crucial role in shaping nature, and the essence of a physical engine's function is to simulate the results of natural processes shaped by such forces. This method can realistically reproduce phenomena in nature, such as fluid flow, particle movement, and rigid body collisions. It is particularly suitable for generating highly realistic natural forms and graphics. Many software tools feature modules and functions for physical simulation, such as the Kangaroo plugin, which is an important tool in parametric design for simulating elasticity and collisions.

Fractals.

Fractals refer to geometric shapes that exhibit self-similarity, meaning they present identical structural characteristics at different scales [2]. Natural objects such as trees, mountains, and clouds can often be identified as fractal models. Fractal models and algorithms primarily use recursive and iterative techniques to generate such patterns. Parametric design tools are well-equipped for this task. For example, the Anemone plugin can establish iterative algorithms to simulate the natural growth process of plants, generating forms that resemble those found in nature.

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L-system (Lindenmayer system).

L-system is a rule-based generative method that effectively represents the growth and development processes of biological organisms in nature. By setting initial symbols and generation rules, L-systems use recursive methods to generate complex geometric shapes and natural forms. Although it is fundamentally a mathematical description, the results it generates closely resemble natural forms. The most prominent application of L-system models is the generation of plant-like structures, such as branches and leaves. Parametric design tools can be used to build and execute such models, generating design results that closely mimic natural forms.

Cellular Automata (CA).

Cellular automata is a mathematical model based on discrete space and time, where local rules and the interaction of neighboring states generate complex global behaviors. This characteristic allows cellular automata to simulate processes such as the evolution of biological communities, dynamic changes in ecosystems,
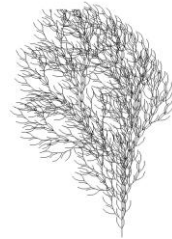

Fig. 1. Fractal geometry   **Fig. 2**. L-system graphic generation

and the evolution of climate systems [4]. By using simple rules, CA can exhibit complex patterns and dynamic processes in nature, particularly self-organizing phenomena. This model can simulate the growth, reproduction, and death processes of cells, generating self-organizing patterns and collective behaviors. It is also commonly used to simulate changes in terrain and the evolution of landforms, such as generating mountain ranges and river meanders.

Parametric methods for generating natural graphics rely on algorithms rooted in mathematics and physics, aiming to simulate natural growth and evolution. While these methods excel in simulation, they do not fully replicate nature. Nevertheless, their effectiveness is undeniable in current applications. As interdisciplinary research progresses, our understanding of natural forms and processes will become more accurate, offering designers tools that better reflect nature's true essence. In this context, parametric design will continue to serve as a crucial technological foundation for such advancements.

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CONCLUSIONS

Natural forms and patterns offer significant design value in aesthetics, functionality, and logic, displaying complexity, randomness, and proportional relationships. Parametric design leverages computational power to create generative algorithmic models, providing a more precise, flexible, and comprehensive approach to simulating and hybridizing natural forms compared to traditional methods. Tools such as programming, visual programming, and conventional modeling software can be selected based on design needs and technical complexity. The methods for generating natural patterns, including physical engine simulation, fractals, L-systems, and cellular automata, are used to create diverse forms like fluid dynamics, plant growth, and animal textures. These methods lay the foundation for parametric natural form generation, allowing designers to develop natural configurations.

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ЛЮ Вей, БЕЗУГЛА Р.
ПРИРОДНІ ФОРМИ І ВІЗЕРУНКИ В ПАРАМЕТРИЧНОМУ ДИЗАЙНІ
У роботі проведено аналіз сучасних інструментів параметричного дизайну, які використовуються для створення природніх форм та візерунків, виокремлено три основні види таких інструментів: інструменти програмування, візуальні інструменти програмування та традиційне програмне забезпечення. Розглянуто чотири генеративні алгоритмічні моделі і методи, зокрема моделювання фізичного двигуна, фрактали, L-система та клітинні автомати, що розширюють можливості параметричного створення природних форм та візерунків.
Ключові слова: параметричний дизайн, природні форми, візерунок, генерація, метод.