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Chinese students create Photosketch software

Turns hand-drawn pictures into real photos

by Duncan Geere published on 6 October 2009

A group of Chinese students have created a remarkably impressive bit of technology which takes an annotated hand-drawn sketch, finds photos on the web, and then stitches it all together automatically. It's called Photosketch. Hit play on the video above to find out how it works, and see what it can do. Both the technique and the results are remarkably impressive. The software is available for download, though the site is offline at the time of writing due to the weight of traffic. In case you can't get there, the project's abstract says: "We present a system that composes a realistic picture from a simple freehand sketch annotated with text labels. The composed picture is generated by seamlessly stitching several photographs in agreement with the sketch and text labels; these are found by searching the Internet". "Although online image search generates many inappropriate results, our system is able to automatically select suitable photographs to generate a high quality composition, using a filtering scheme to exclude undesirable images". "We also provide a novel image blending algorithm to allow seamless image composition. Each blending result is given a numeric score, allowing us to find an optimal combination of discovered images. Experimental results show the method is very successful; we also evaluate our system using the results from two user studies". It'll be interesting to see how the students propose to employ the technology.

