Lindenmayer Systems, Fractals, and Plants (Lecture Notes in Biomathematics)

Przemyslaw Prusinkiewicz, James Hanan

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1-systems are a mathematical formalism which was proposed by Aristid 1indenmayer in 1968 as a foundation for an axiomatic theory of develop ment. The notion promptly attracted the attention of computer scientists, who investigated 1-systems from the viewpoint of formal language theory. This theoretical line of research was pursued very actively in the seventies, resulting in over one thousand publications. A different research direction was taken in 1984 by Alvy Ray Smith, who proposed 1-systems as a tool for synthesizing realistic images of plants and pointed out the relationship between 1-systems and the concept of fractals introduced by Benoit Mandel brot. The work by Smith inspired our studies of the application of 1-systems to computer graphics. Originally, we were interested in two problems: • Can 1-systems be used as a realistic model of plant species found in nature? • Can 1-systems be applied to generate images of a wide class of fractals? It turned out that both questions had affirmative answers. Subsequently we found that 1-systems could be applied to other areas, such as the generation of tilings, reproduction of a geometric art form from East India, and synthesis of musical scores based on an interpretation of fractals. This book collects our results related to the graphical applications of- systems. It is a corrected version of the notes which we prepared for the ACM SIGGRAPH '88 course on fractals.

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