

**Pointtools Laser Images Help CyArk Visualise World Heritage Sites**

Hi tech laser mapping is being used to help digitally preserve cultural heritage sites around the world. Using software from Pointtools to process millions, sometimes billions, of 3D measurements captured by laser scanning instruments, heritage preservation specialist CyArk is creating animated videos, architectural drawings and 3D visualisations of sites such as Mount Rushmore, the Leaning Tower of Pisa and an ancient Egyptian temple at Thebes (modern day Luxor). The Pointtools generated models provide visually stunning content for educational and tourism materials and provide a foundation for conservation, restoration and management works.

CyArk is a non-profit entity whose mission is to digitally preserve cultural heritage sites by collecting, archiving and providing open access to data created by laser scanning, digital modelling, and other state-of-the-art technologies. Using Pointtools, a suite of software specifically designed for the processing, visualisation, drawing and modelling of point cloud data, CyArk generates animated videos of the 3D data as well as creating architectural drawings. CyArk is currently working on projects to document the four missions of the San Antonio Missions National Park in Texas, USA and have just completed a joint venture project with the US National Park Service and Scotland's Centre for Digital Documentation and Visualisation (formed of Historic Scotland and the Glasgow School of Art) to fully document the sculpture and ground facilities of Mount Rushmore National Monument.

CyArk's invaluable work has been highlighted recently in Africa. In 2008 a CyArk partner travelling in Uganda laser scanned a portion of the Kasubi Tombs, the royal tomb of the last four Bugandan kings and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Earlier this year the wood and thatch structure of the tomb was destroyed by fire; CyArk has since been in direct contact with Prince James of the Buganda Kingdom and the captured data is now being reviewed by the experts in charge of rebuilding the structure.

"Pointtools gives us the best of both worlds," commented Justin Barton, Production Manager at CyArk. "The superior rendering abilities enable us to create stunning 3D visualisations for education and outreach work while the highly accurate models, such as brick-by-brick elevation, provide information for conservators and restoration experts."

"In addition, some of our clients in the heritage sector do not have access to suitable software or the experience and knowledge of 3D point clouds. Using Pointtools we can provide simple, scaled image files which helps us overcome that hurdle," continued Barton. "A great example of this was the Kasubi Tombs reconstruction effort where access to advanced, expensive software was limited but we were easily able to send Pointtools generated image files via email."

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