

iLab C++ Neuromorphic Vision Toolkit Overview



- **Components:**

- Basic image processing and vision
- Attention-related neural components
- Object recognition-related neural components
- Scene gist/layout-related neural components
- Basic knowledge base / ontology
- Hardware interfacing
- Beowulf message passing
- Applications

- **Implementation:**

- C++, somewhat Linux-specific
- Additional perl/matlab/shell scripts for batch processing
- Uniprocessor as well as Beowulf

The basic architecture

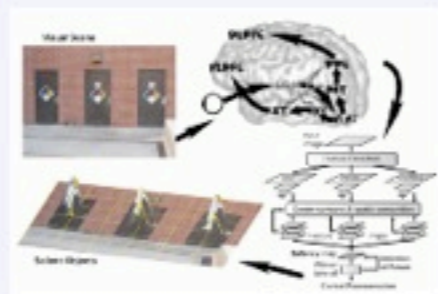
- The diagram on the next slide is an overview of this computational neuroscience model.
- Suggested readings: see <http://iLab.usc.edu/publications/>
 - Start with [Itti & Koch, Nature Reviews Neuroscience, 2001](#), for an overview.
 - Then see [Itti, Koch and Niebur, IEEE Transactions on Pattern Analysis and Machine Intelligence, 1998](#), for the core algorithm.
 - Then see [Itti & Koch, Vision Research, 2000](#) and [Itti & Koch, Journal of Electronic Imaging, 2001](#), for more advanced competition for salience.
 - See papers by [Christian Siagian](#), [Christopher Ackerman](#) & [Nitin Dhavale](#) for more on robotics applications, gist, and localization.
 - See papers by [Vidhya Navalpakkam](#), [Rob Peters](#) and [Lior Elazary](#) for more on scene understanding & top-down biasing.
 - See papers by [Nathan Mundhenk](#) for more on contour integration, surprise
 - Etc...




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Welcome to the iLab Neuromorphic Vision C++ Toolkit (iNVT)!

The *iLab Neuromorphic Vision C++ Toolkit* (iNVT, pronounced "invent") is a comprehensive set of C++ classes for the development of neuromorphic models of vision. Neuromorphic models are computational neuroscience algorithms whose architecture and function is closely inspired from biological brains. The iLab Neuromorphic Vision C++ Toolkit comprises not only base classes for images, neurons, and brain areas, but also fully-developed models such as our **model of bottom-up visual attention** and of **Bayesian surprise**.



Last SVN commit:	Wed Sep 24 11:26:50 2008
Last Forum post:	Tue Sep 23 01:02:28 2008
Last publication:	Thu Sep 18 18:57:24 2008

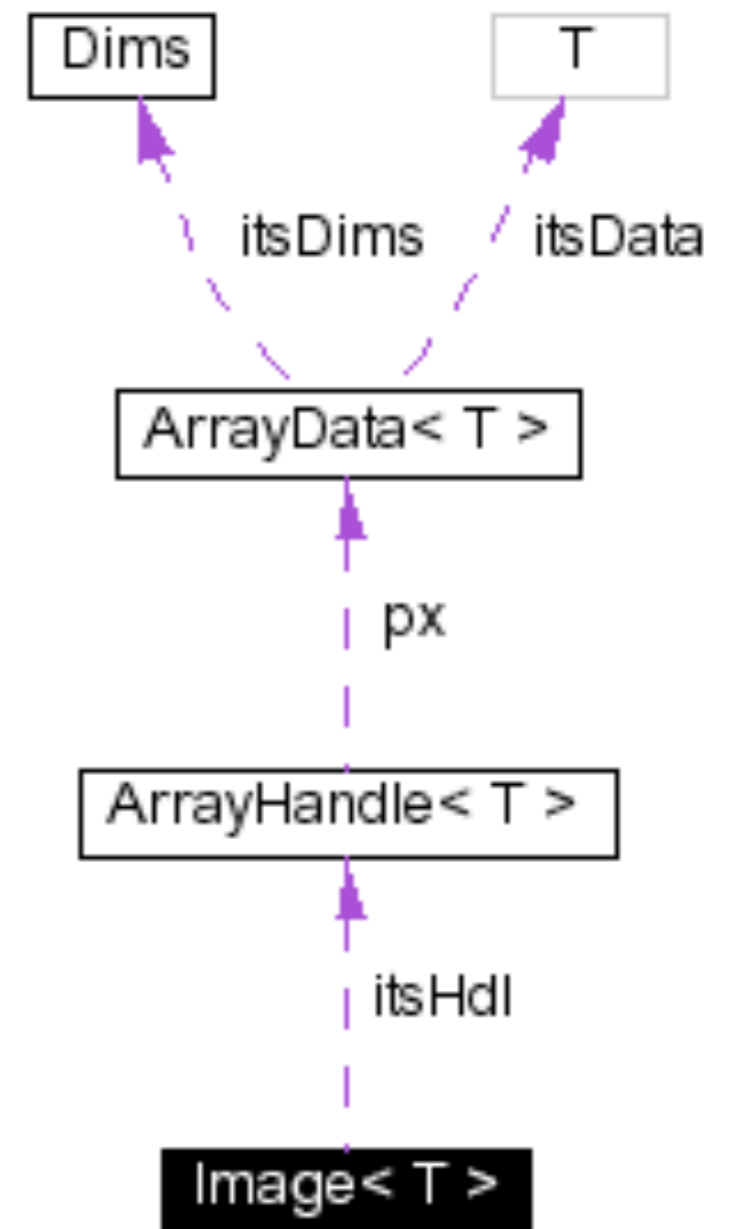


Features at a glance:

- The source tree is maintained using the **Subversion (SVN)** revision control system.
- The main development platform is Linux. However, the core programs also compile under Windows (using **cygwin**) and MacOS X.
- All source code is distributed freely under the **GNU General Public License**. Registered users get access to our central SVN source code repository and hence receive updates in real-time, not only when we make major releases.
- **Low-level helper classes**, including Point2D, Rectangle, PixRGB<T>, Range, Timer, XWindow, etc.
- **Template Image<T> and ImageSet<T> classes** with hundreds of image processing functions and copy-on-write / ref-counting semantics.

Root: Image class

- Template class
 - e.g., Image<byte>, Image<PixRGB<float>>, Image<Neuron>
- Implemented using copy-on-write/ref-counting
 - Makes copying a light operation
- Many associated methods
 - Shape ops
 - Color ops
 - Mono only
 - Math ops
 - Matrix ops
 - I/O
 - Filter ops
 - Transforms



C++ Templates

- **The old way:** ByteImage, FloatImage, ColorImage, etc. yields lots of duplicated code that achieves essentially the same operations.
- **The C++ way:** write your algorithm only once, and make it operate on an unknown data type T. The compiler will then generate machine code corresponding to your algorithm and various data types for T, such as, T=byte, T=float, T=MyClass, etc

```
template <class T> class Image {  
public:  
    Image();  
    T getPixelValue(const int x, const int y) const;  
    void setPixelValue(const T& value, const int x, const int y);  
private:  
    T* data;  
};  
  
int main(const int argc, const char **argv) {  
    Image<float> myImage; myImage.setPixelValue(1.23F, 10, 10);  
    return 0;  
}
```

See [src/Image/Image.H](#)

Operator overloads

- C++ allows you to define operators such as `+`, `-`, `*`, etc for your various classes.

- Example:

See Image/Pixels.H, Image.H

```
Image<byte> img1, img2;
```

```
img1 += 3; // calls Image<T>::operator+=(const T& value)
```

```
img1 = img1*2 + img2/3; // calls operator*(const T& value),  
                        // operator/(const T& value),  
                        // and operator+(const Image<T>& im)
```

Automatic type promotions

- Using type traits to determine at compile time whether the result of an arithmetic operation will fit in the same type as the operands.
- Extends the canonical C++ promotions to non-canonical types.
- Examples:

See Util/Promotions.H,
Image/Pixels.H, Image/Image.H

```
Image<byte> im;
```

```
im + im           is an Image<int>  
im * 2.0F        is an Image<float>  
im * 2.0         is an Image<double>
```

Automatic type demotion with clamping

- Assignment from a strong type into a weak type will ensure that no overflow occurs.
- Example:

```
Image<byte> im1, im2;  Image<float> im3;
```

```
im1 = im3;           // will clamp values of im3 to 0..255 range and convert
```

```
im2 = im1 * 2.0;    // will create an Image<double> containing the  
                    // result of im1 * 2.0, then clamp this image to  
                    // 0..255 pixel range, then assign to im2.
```


Automatic type demotion with clamping



- Promotion rules (in Util/Promotions.H):
Basically follow the C/C++ canonical promotions
 - byte, byte -> int; Byte, int16 -> int; int16, int16 -> int; etc...
 - int, int -> int
 - byte, float -> float; int, float -> float; float, float -> float, etc...
 - byte, double -> double; int, double -> double; float, double -> double, etc...

Copy-on-write / ref counting

- The standard way:

Image object contains an array of pixels:

Image<T> object

int width, height;

T* data;



Problem: copy is expensive, need to copy the whole data array (can be large, e.g., a 16MP RGB image uses 48MB of memory).

Copy-on-write / ref counting

In particular, this makes it very expensive to return Image objects from functions, hence essentially forbidding the natural syntax:

```
Image<float> source;
```

```
Image<float> result = filter(source);
```

With a function:

```
Image<float> filter(const Image<float>& source) {
```

```
    Image<float> res;
```

```
    // fill-up pixel values of res, processing values from source
```

```
    return res;
```

```
}
```

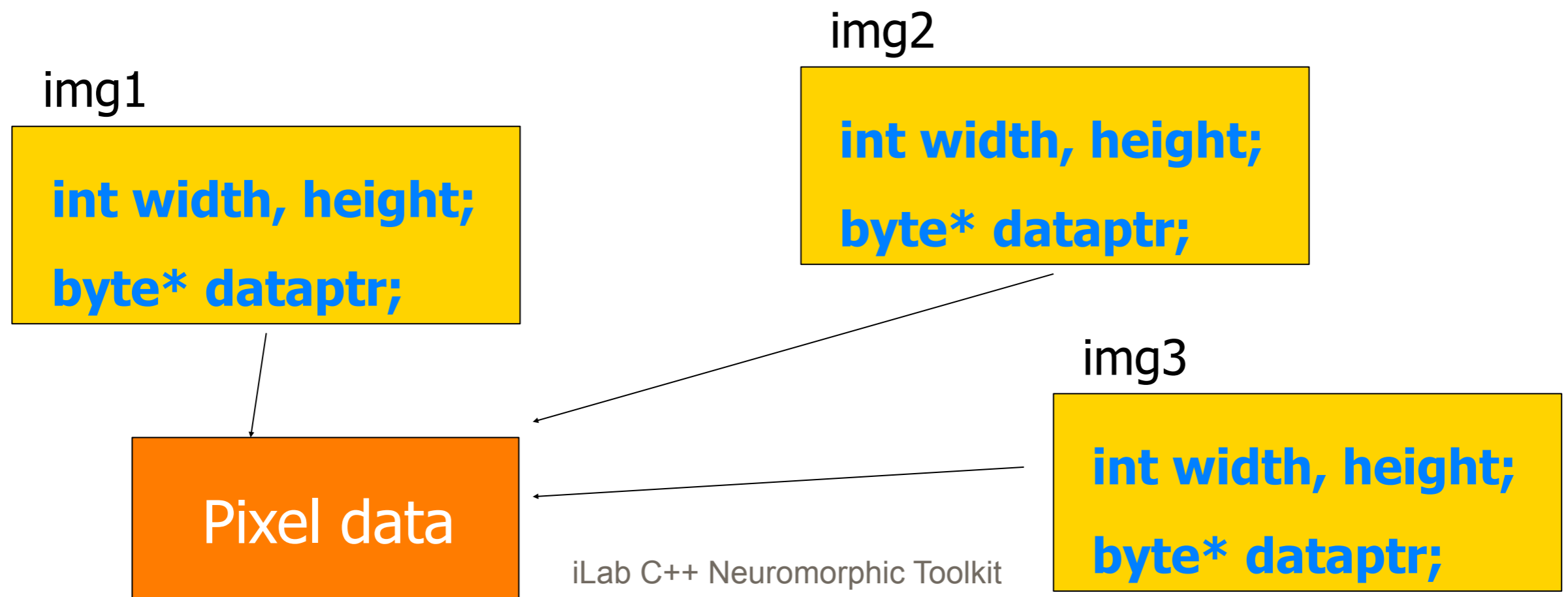
Indeed what happens here is:

- 1) Inside filter(), allocate a new image `res` to hold the result
- 2) In the 'return' statement, copy that local image to some temporary
- 3) In the '=' statement, copy that temporary to Image 'result'

Copy-on-write / ref counting

- The smart way: only keep a pointer to the actual pixel data in each Image object. When making copies of the Image object, keep track of how many are pointing to the same pixel data. When the last Image object is destroyed, free the pixel data. If the user attempts to modify the contents of one of the images that point to the same data, first make a copy of the data.

```
Image<byte> img1, img2, img3;  img2 = img1; img3 = img1;
```



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Free functions rather than methods

- Given the copy-on-write mechanism, it is now very cheap to return Image objects. Thus, the more natural 'free function' syntax may be used for most image processing functions, instead of the 'class method' syntax.
- Example: let's say I want to pass an image through 3 successive filters, filter1(), filter2() and filter3():

Class method syntax: the filterX() are methods of class Image

```
const Image<float> source;  
Image<float> result1, result2;  
result1.filter1(source);  
result2.filter2(result1);  
result1.filter3(result2);  
result2.freeMem();
```

See Image/*.H

Free function syntax: the filterX() are functions not attached to a class

```
const Image<float> source;  
Image<float> result = filter3(filter2(filter1(source)));
```

Iterators

- Accessing data via pointers is error-prone, use iterators instead. Our classes that hold some data that can be iterated on provide iterator support very similar to that of the STL classes.

- Example:

See Image/Image.H

```
Image<byte> img;
```

```
Image<byte>::iterator itr = img.beginw(), stop = img.endw();  
while (itr != stop) { *itr++ = 0; }
```

Shared pointers

- When objects communicate with lots of other objects, it is often difficult to know who will run out of scope first. When new memory is allocated for an object that will be passed around and used by several objects, we would like an automatic way of freeing the memory when everybody is done with it.
- Hence the class `shared_ptr<T>` which behaves like a pointer, except that when the last `shared_ptr` to an object runs out of scope, it will destroy/free the memory for that object.

- Example:

```
In obj1: SharedPtr<Message> mymsg(new Message());
```

```
In obj2: SharedPtr<Message> mymsg2(msg);  
        mymsg2->function();
```

See [rutz/shared_ptr.h](#),
Also [nub/ref.h](#)

Message will be destroyed only when its `SharedPtr`'s have run out of scope in both `obj1` and `obj2`.

Elementary core classes

- **Dims**: for 2D (width, height) dimensions Dims.H
- **Point2D<T>**: An (i, j) 2D point Point2D.H
- **PixRGB<T>**: a (red, green, blue) triplet Pixels.H
- **Timer**: to count time with arbitrary accuracy Timer.H
- **CpuTimer**: to measure time and CPU load CpuTimer.H
- **Range**: specifies a numeric range of values Range.H
- **LevelSpec**: specifies scales for feature/saliency map LevelSpec.H
- **Rectangle**: a rectangle Rectangle.H
- **Angle**: an angle Angle.H
- **shared_ptr<T>**: a shared pointer shared_ptr.h
- **VisualEvent**
- **VisualObject**
- **VisualFeature**
- ...

Core definitions



- [Promotions.H](#): the automatic type promotion rules
- [atomic.H](#): atomic (one-CPU-instruction) operations
- [Mathfunctions.H](#): basic math functions
- [JobServer.H](#) / [WorkThreadServer.H](#): multithreading support
- [Log.H](#): comprehensive logging facility
- [StringConversions.H](#): convert various datatypes to/from string
- [StringUtil.H](#): various string manipulation utilities (e.g., tokenize)
- [sformat.H](#): like sprintf for std::string
- [TypeTraits.H](#): compile-time information about types
- ...

Logs

- Provide a unified, convenient mechanism for text message output.
- 4 levels: LDEBUG, LINFO, LERROR, LFATAL
- printf()-like syntax
- Automatically adds class/function name, system error messages (use prefix 'P'), a user id (use prefix 'ID'), a line number (compile-time option)
- Can print to stderr or syslog

The hard way:

```
fprintf(stderr, "In myFunction(), could not open file '%s' (error: %s)\n", filename, strerror(errno));
```

```
>>>> In myFunction(), could not open file `test' (error: file not found)
```

The easy way:

```
PLError("Could not open file '%s' ", filename);
```

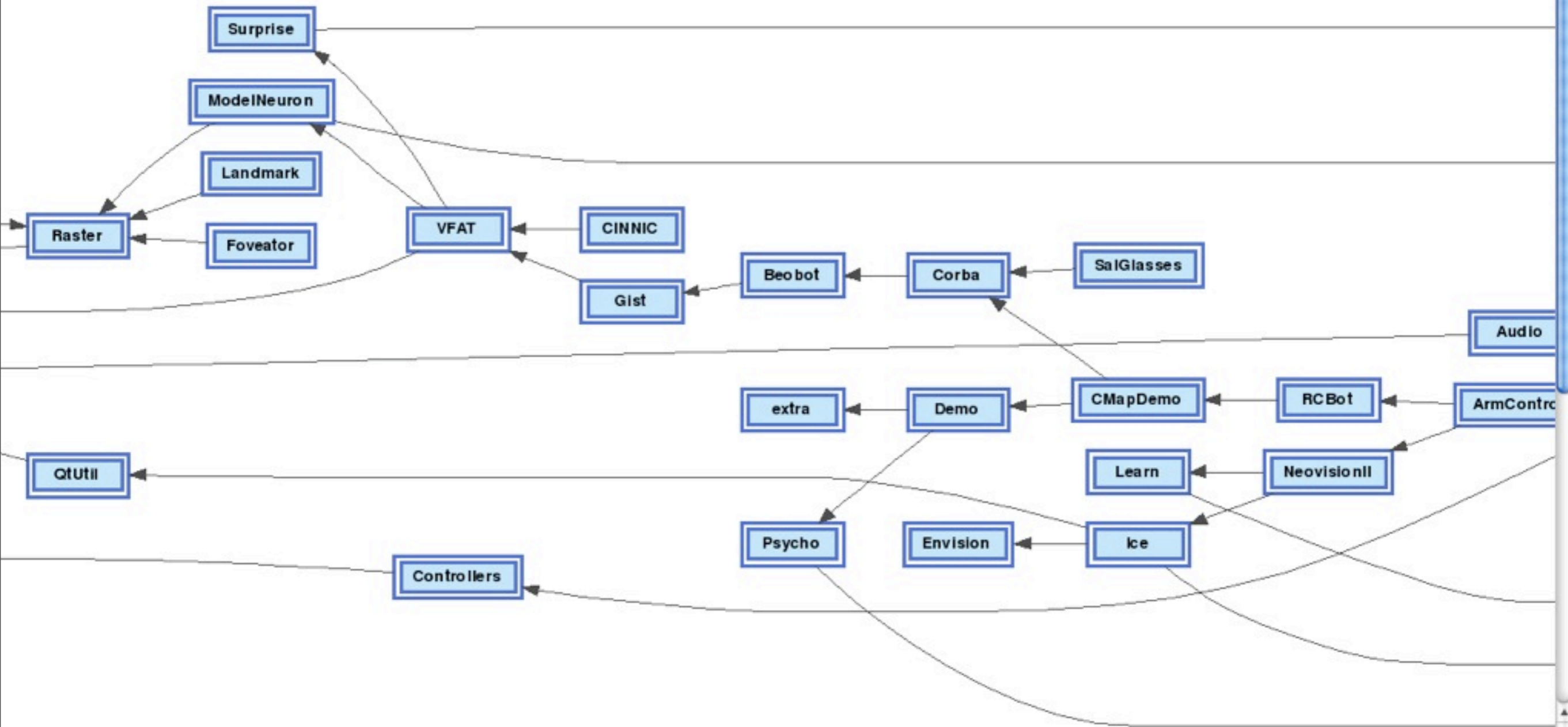
```
>>>> MyClass::myFunction: Could not open file `test' (file not found)
```

See Util/log.H

Helper classes



- **Raster**: to read/write/display Images in various formats
- **V4Lgrabber**: to grab images from video source (PCI/USB)
- **XWindow**: to display image collections & interact
- **FrameIstream, FrameOstream, FrameSeries**: easily read images from image files, movies, cameras, etc
- Etc...



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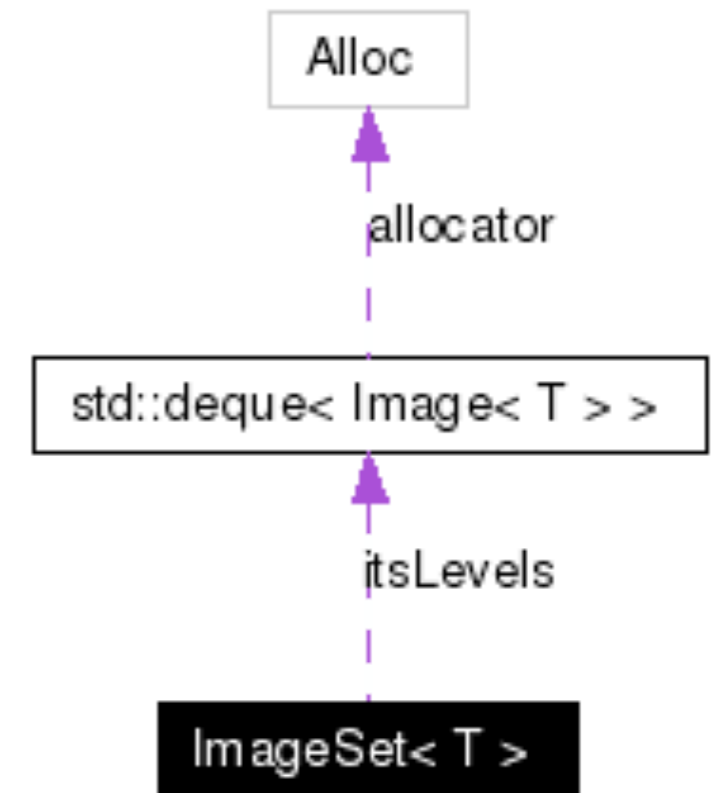
src/ directories

AppDevices/	Channels/	GUI/	nub/	SceneUnderstanding/
AppEye/	CINNIC/	HMAX/	ObjRec/	Script/
AppGUI/	CMapDemo/	Ice/	Parallel/	SeaBee/
AppMedia/	CmuCam/	Image/	pbot/	SIFT/
AppNeuro/	Component/	inst@	plugins/	Simulation/
AppPsycho/	Controllers/	INVT/	PointCloud/	Surprise/
Apps/	Corba/	Landmark/	Psycho/	tcl/
ArmControl/	Demo/	Learn/	Qt/	TestSuite/
Audio/	Devices/	Matlab/	QtUtil/	TIGS/
Beobot/	Envision/	MBARI/	Raster/	Transport/
BeoSub/	extra/	Media/	RCBot/	Util/
Beowulf/	Foveator/	ModelNeuron/	Robots/	VFAT/
BO/	GA/	NeovisionII/	rutz/	Vgames/
BPnnet/	GameBoard/	Nerdcam/	SalGlasses/	Video/
Cell/	Gist/	Neuro/	Sbqa/	

iLab C++ Neuromorphic Toolkit

ImageSets, a.k.a. Image Pyramids

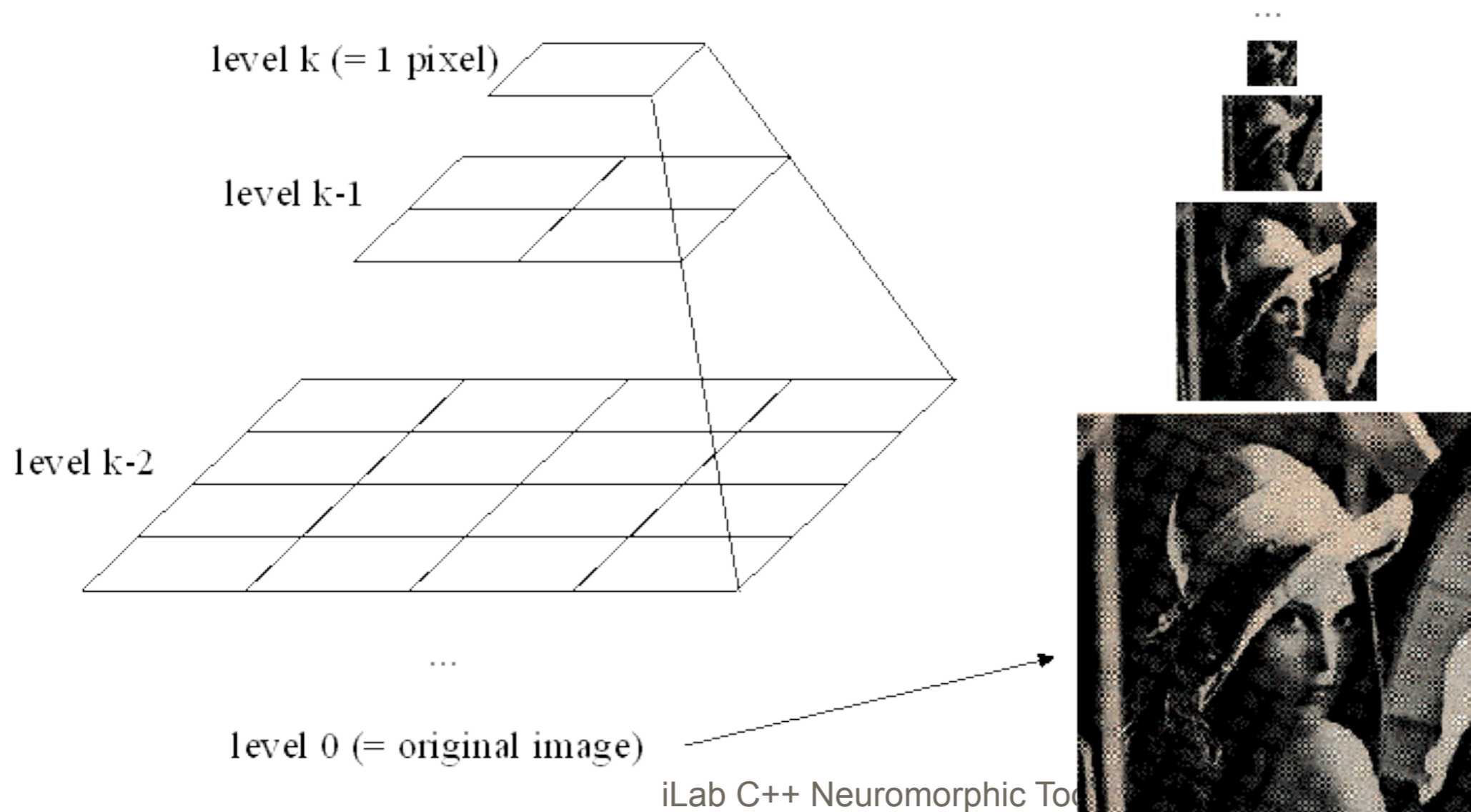
- Collection of images
- Dyadic image reduction from one level to next
- Various filters applied before reduction



See `Image/ImageSet.H`, `ImageSetOps.H`, `PyramidOps.H`, `PyrBuilder.H`, etc

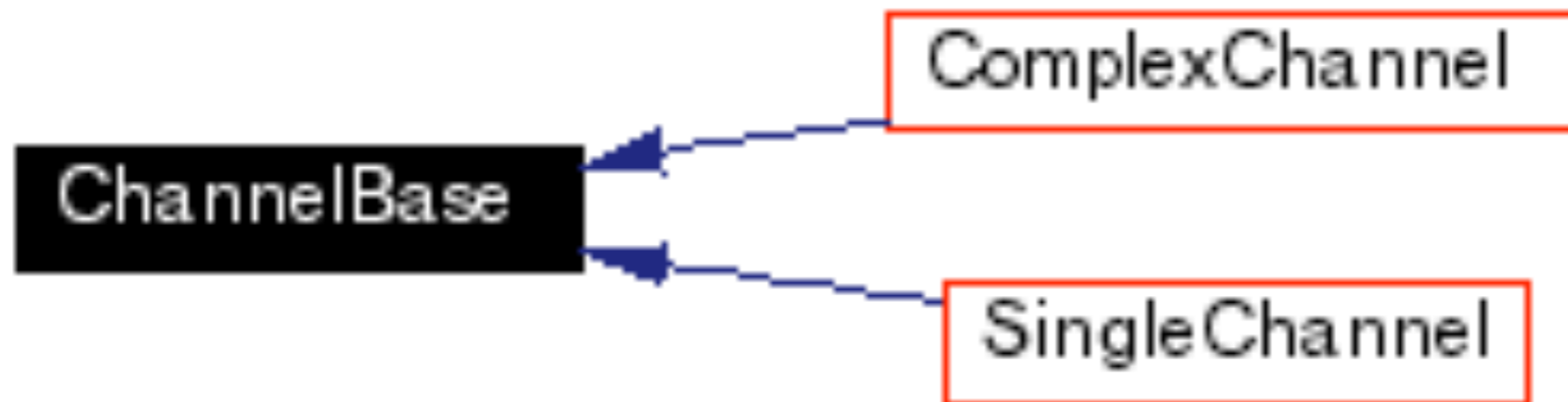
Gaussian Pyramid

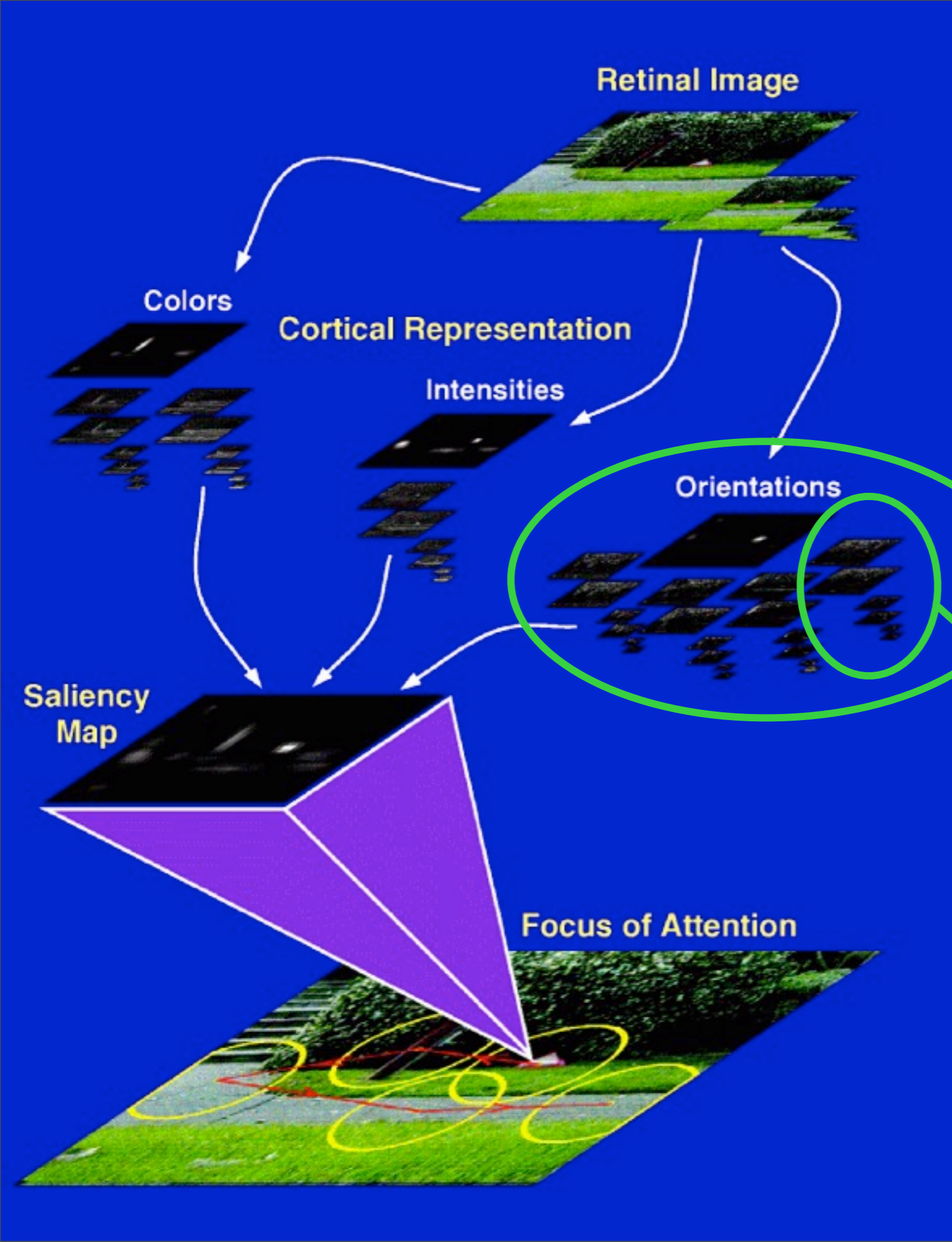
Idea: Represent $N \times N$ image as a “pyramid” of $1 \times 1, 2 \times 2, 4 \times 4, \dots, 2^k \times 2^k$ images (assuming $N = 2^k$)



Channels

- Implement a pyramid or collection of pyramids plus some I/O functions and additional processing
- Various derived instances can be identified by name
- SingleChannel: contains one pyramid
- ComplexChannel: contains a collection of SingleChannels





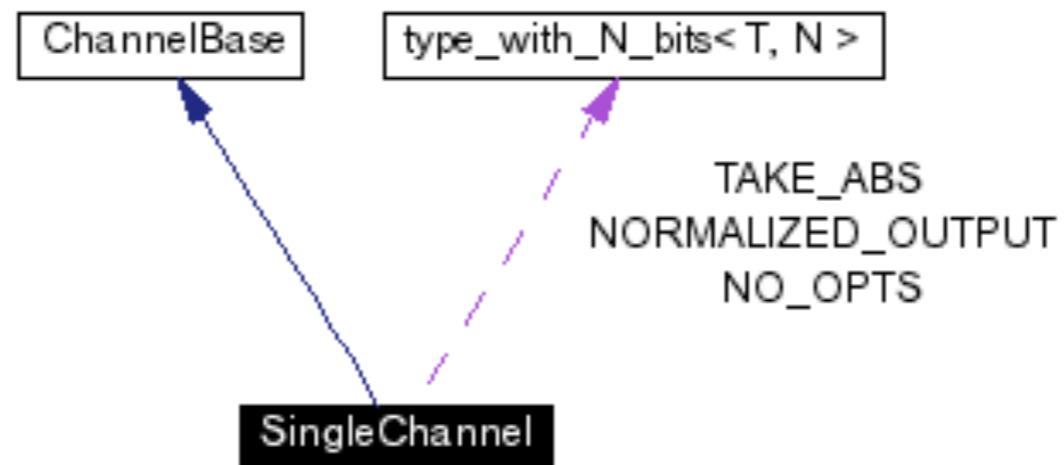
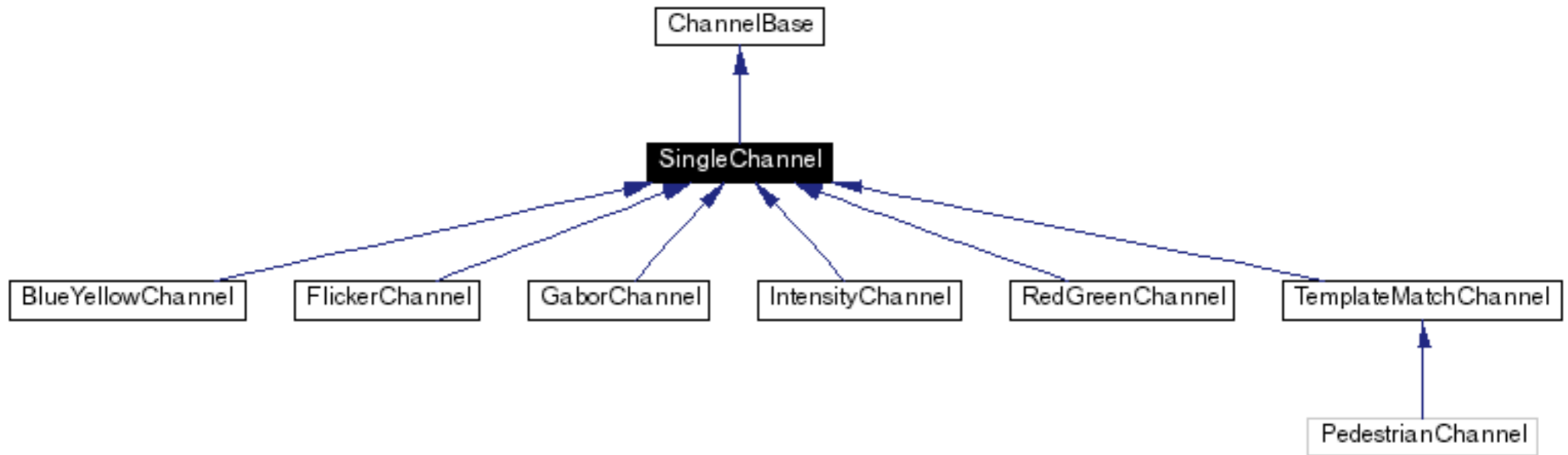
ComplexChannel

SingleChannel

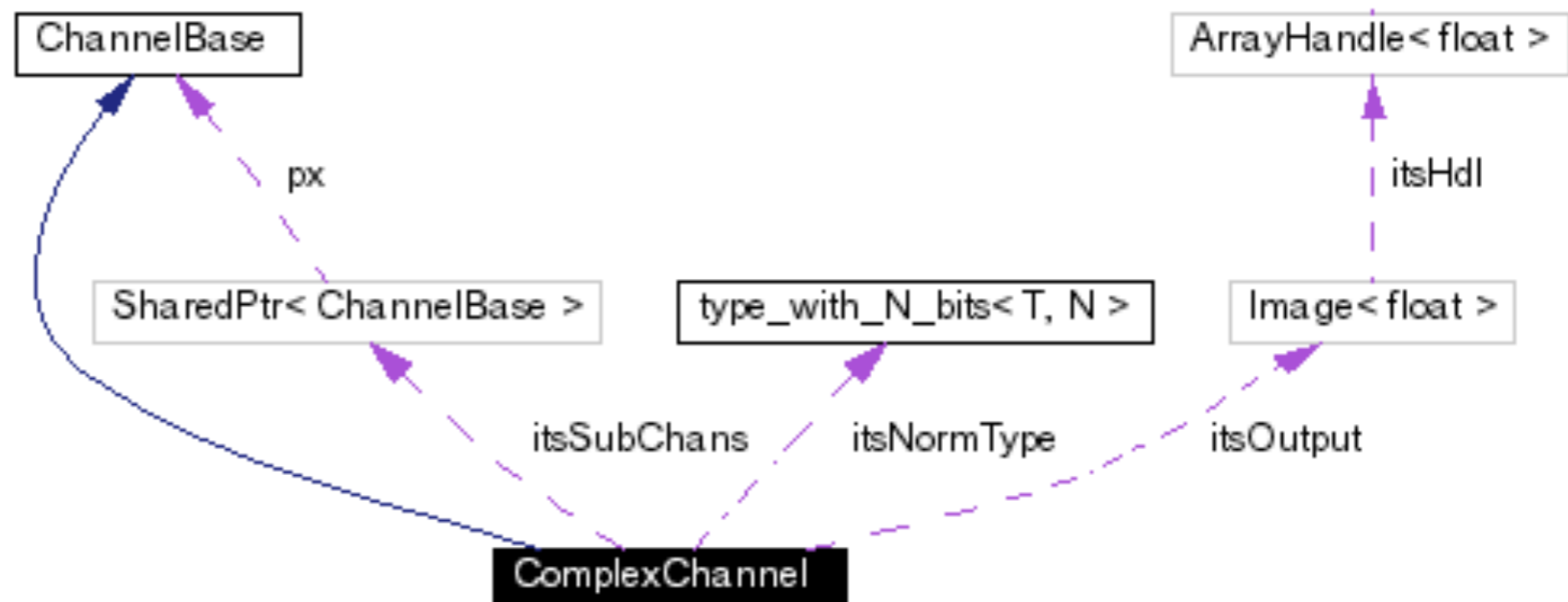
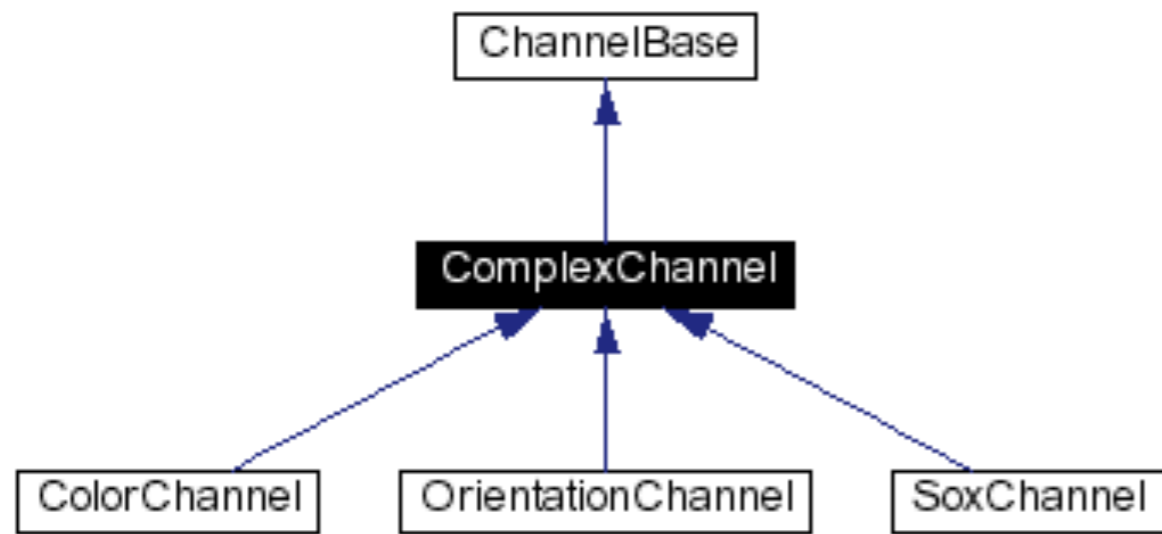
Itti & Koch,
Vision Research 2000

Toolkit

Single Channels

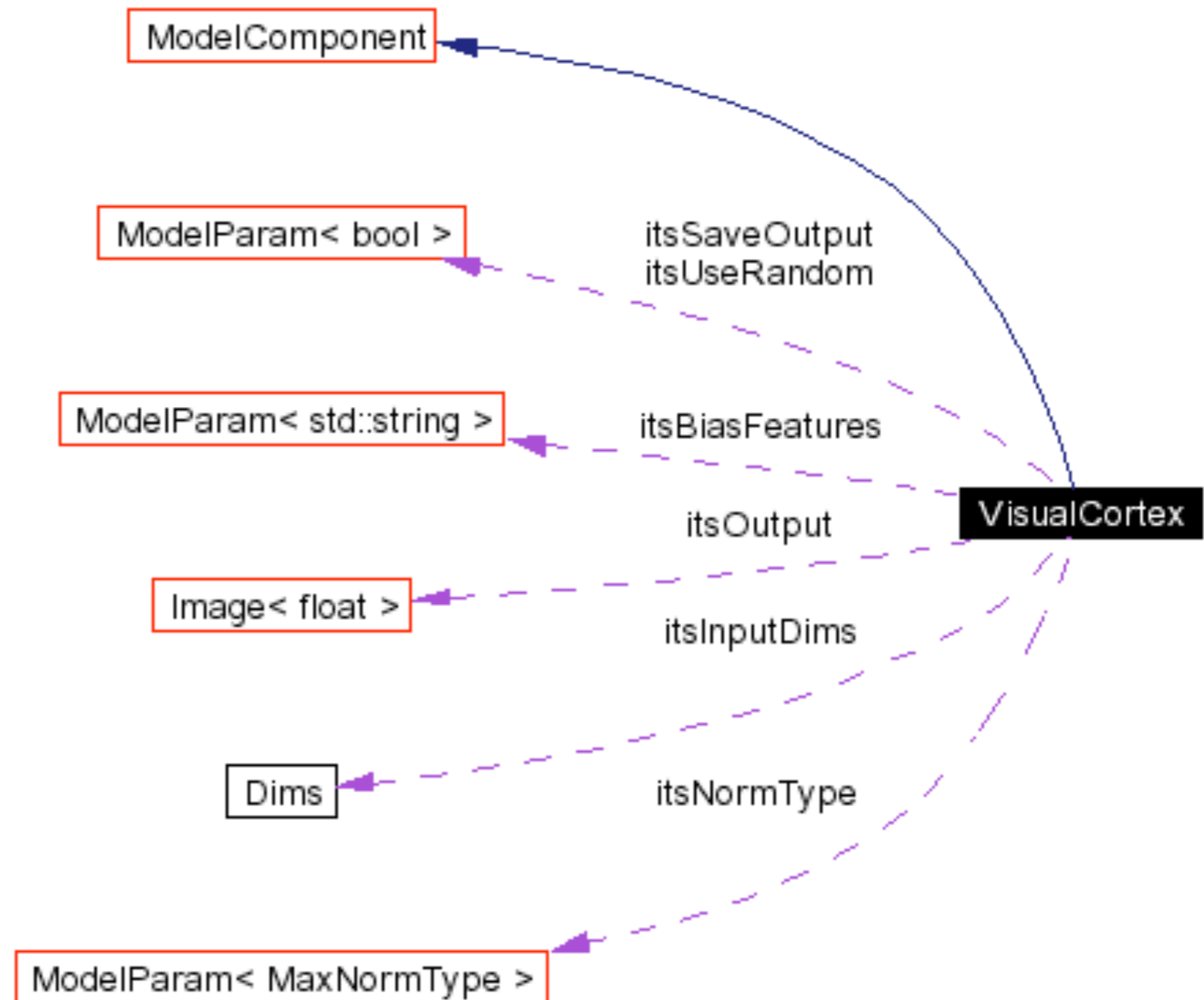


Complex channels



VisualCortex

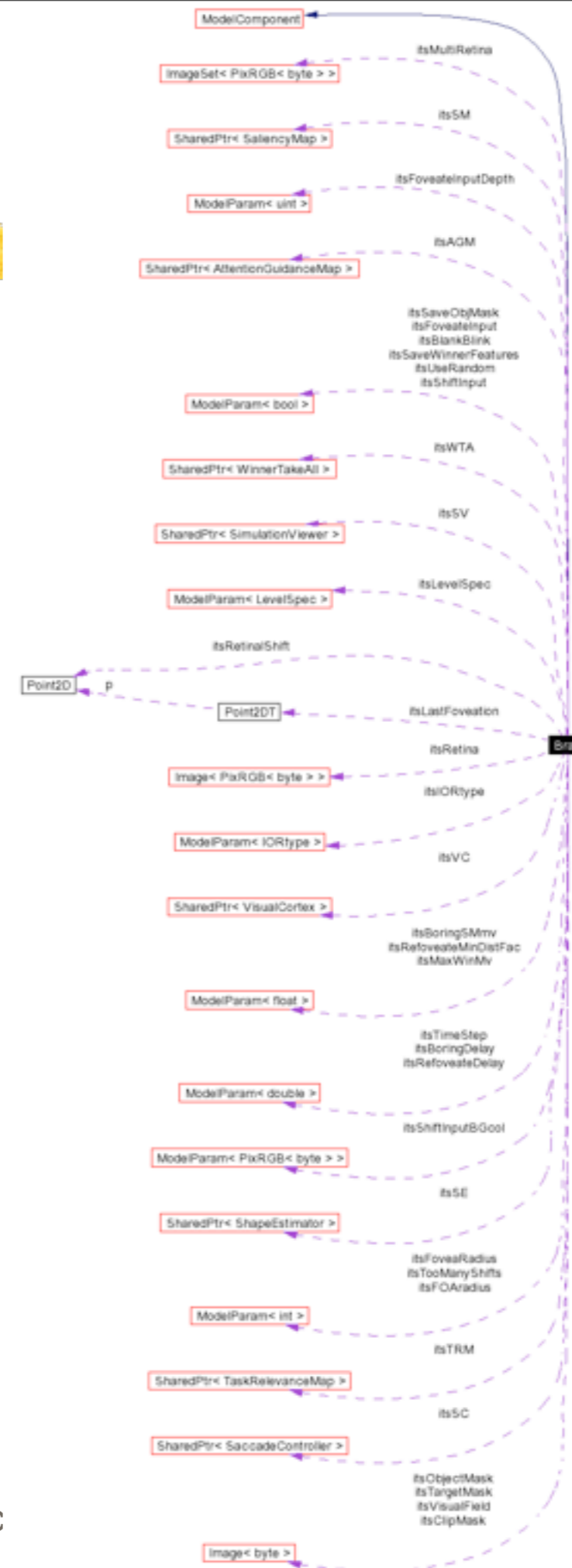
- Run-time configurable collection of channels, plus additional I/O and access methods



Brain



VisualCortex plugged-in
at run-time



iLab C++ Neuromorphic

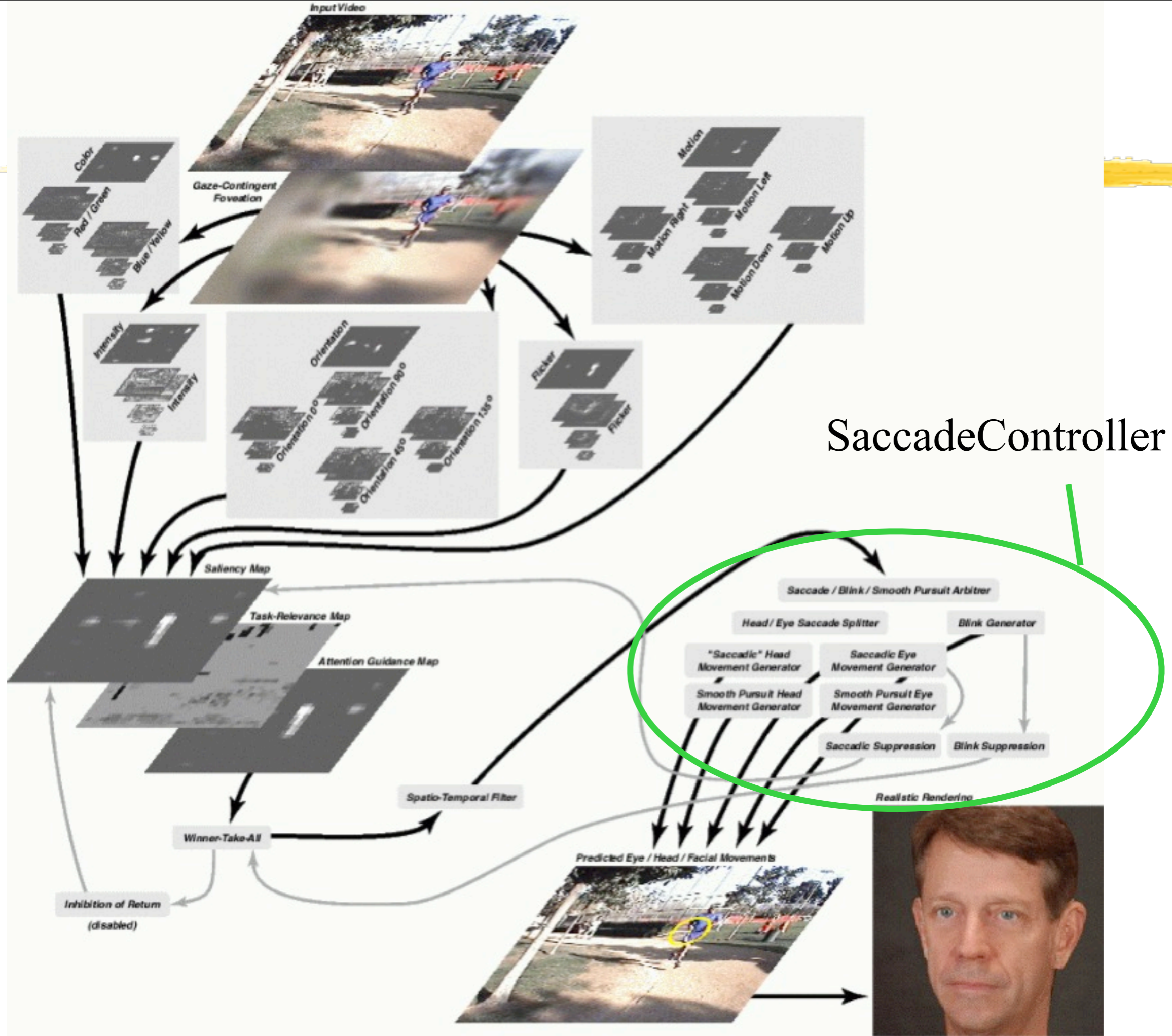
Brain: basic operation



Data flow is controlled by a **blackboard architecture**: Brain modules can **post** messages and can register **callbacks** which will be called when some messages are posted by other modules.

Processing flow is driven by reading new input images (stream oriented):

- Get an input image
- Process it through VisualCortex, get saliency map input
- Feed saliency map
- Let saliency map evolve
- Let task-relevance map evolve
- Combine saliency map and task-relevance map outputs to feed attention-guidance map
- Let attention-guidance map evolve
- Feed output of attention-guidance map to winner-take-all
- Get winner-take all output, if any
- Feed that to saccade controller
- Also feed it to shape estimator
- Activate inhibition of return
- ...





Welcome to iLab at the University of Southern California!

Research

Publications

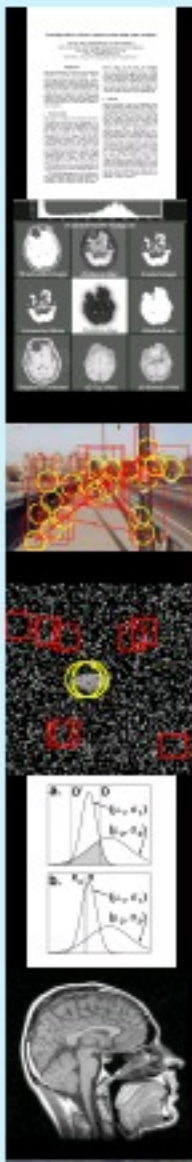
People

Facilities

Classes

Opportunities

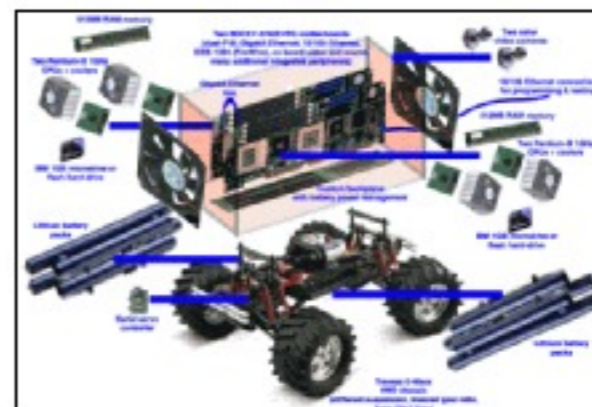
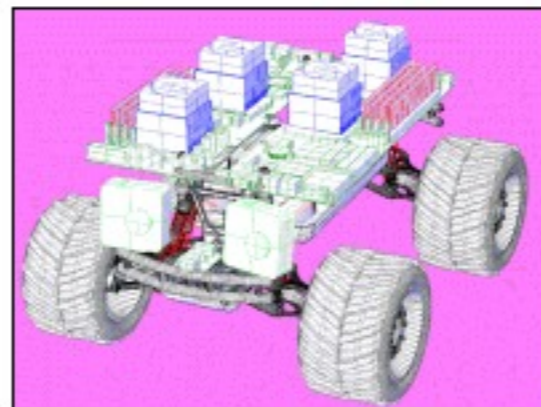
Events + Links

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Towards Visually-Guided Neuromorphic Robots

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Welcome to the Beobot Project!

Beobots are autonomous robots whose brains are standard Linux clusters of computers which run real-time neuromorphic vision algorithms.














Just like **Beowulf Clusters** have revolutionized the world of high-performance computing, replacing costly and slowly-evolving custom supercomputer hardware by assemblies of inexpensive, mass-produced personal computers, we hope that Beobots (a **Beowulf** cluster on a mobile **robot**) will lead the way towards a new generation of robotics systems that are inexpensive, rapidly evolving, built from standard mass-produced components, and armed with sufficient computational power to run real-time neuromorphic vision algorithms.

- So **what exactly** is a Beobot?
- What **hardware** is it made of?
- What **software** does it run?
- Who are the **people** working on it?

Last CVS commit: [Mon Sep 1 19:06:20 2003](#)

Recent CVS / Forum Activity

Ordered by last CVS commit date/time.

	User	Last CVS Commit	Last iLab Forum Post
	walther	2003-09-01 at 19:06 saliency/src3/shapeEstimatorWebpage.C 1.5	Wed Aug 27 08:41:39 2003
	zhanshi	2003-08-29 at 10:15 saliency/src3/dummySTL.H 1.3	Sun Aug 31 19:44:22 2003
	itti	2003-08-27 at 11:04 saliency/src3/SimulationViewerEyeMvt.C 1.9	Fri Aug 29 14:04:17 2003
	mundhenk	2003-08-19 at 20:40 saliency/src3/stats.conf 1.21	Sat Aug 23 15:57:03 2003
	rjpeters	2003-08-02 at 11:06 saliency/src3/corrcoef.C 1.1	Wed Jul 23 18:03:45 2003
	vidhya	2003-06-25 at 01:03 saliency/src3/VisualCortex.H 1.73	Sun Jan 12 11:43:12 2003
	daesu	2003-05-13 at 14:40 saliency/src3/test-roadShape.C 1.1	---
	dhavale	2003-05-09 at 18:58 saliency/src3/wrapping/test-Cam.C 1.2	Wed Aug 20 05:47:41 2003
	beobot	2003-02-20 at 21:56 saliency/bin/bbsync 1.5	---
	rhirata	2002-10-23 at 14:54 beobots/software/gyro/Gyro2.C 1.2	---
	jsn	2001-12-10 at 13:16 beobots/software/lcd/lcd.C 1.2	---
	juliet	---	Sun Jun 1 23:25:23 2003
	aprilla	---	Mon Jun 3 01:53:33 2002

Latest CVS commits

Ordered by commit date/time.

Date	Time (PST)	User	Version	File	Log Message
------	------------	------	---------	------	-------------

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iLab Neuromorphic Vision Toolkit Documentation

Version 3.1

Welcome to the iLab Neuromorphic Vision C++ Toolkit. This toolkit is being developed at USC and Caltech to provide a comprehensive suite of C++ classes for image processing, biologically-inspired computational vision, hardware interfacing, and parallel processing on Linux beowulf clusters. Among the executables included in the distribution are our bottom-up, saliency-based visual attention model (single-CPU and beowulf versions), models of contour integration in primary visual cortex, models of object recognition in inferotemporal cortex, and our beobots quad-CPU autonomous neuromorphic robot code. Please see the README for installation and compilation instructions.

The main program to use is called **ezvision** in the saliency/bin/ directory.

See the [README](#) and [programmer notes](#) for detailed information on building and using the programs in the toolkit.

Here are links to several key classes in the toolkit:

- [Image](#)
- [ModelComponent](#)
- [ModelManager](#)
- [ChannelBase](#)
- [VisualCortex](#)
- [Brain](#)
- [InputFrameSeries](#)
- [OutputFrameSeries](#)

Other pages of interest:

ILab Neuromorphic Vision Toolkit - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address: <http://ilab.usc.edu/sdoc/html/>

Google

- ContourNeuronProp
- ContourNeuronPropVec
- contourRun
- convert_helper< T, TT, false
- convert_helper< T, TT, false
- convert_helper< T, TT, true,
- convert_helper< T, TT, true,
- CpuTimer
- std::deque
- Dims
- DispFlags
- DOMPrintFormatTarget
- Edge
- Entity
- EpsInv
- ExtTable
- FeedForwardNetwork
- FFTWWrapper
- FOEstimator
- Foveator
 - BlurFoveator
 - LPTFoveator
 - PyrFoveator
- FrameRange
- gaborElement
- GPSLocation
- GPSPvtDataType
- Gyro
- Hmax
- Image

[List of all members.](#)

Public Methods

PyrFoveator (const **Image**< **PixRGB**< **byte** >> &img, int filterSize)
 Construct a *PyrFoveator* for img. [More...](#)



Hey, Laurent Itti, you have 7 messages.
 Sep 2nd, 2003, 1:20am

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iLab Forum

News

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Openings Find openings for positions at iLab <i>Moderators: Forum Admin, Laurent Itti</i>	2	3	Dec 3 rd , 2002, 8:46am by Laurent Itti
C++ Neuromorphic Vision Toolkit			
General Discussion General discussion around the iLab C++ Neuromorphic Vision Toolkit <i>Moderators: Forum Admin, Laurent Itti</i>	35	258	Aug 30 th , 2003, 2:19am by lynnxn
Bugs Bugs and other problems <i>Moderators: Forum Admin, Laurent Itti</i>	32	207	Aug 29 th , 2003, 12:18pm by yamini
Feature Requests Feature Requests <i>Moderators: Forum Admin, Laurent Itti</i>	22	155	Aug 31 st , 2003, 7:44pm by zhanshi
Neuroscience Issues Discussion of neuroscience issues and their implementation in the toolkit <i>Moderators: Forum Admin, Laurent Itti</i>	4	59	Oct 31 st , 2002, 2:44pm by Dirk Walther
Architecture Issues Discussion of general architecture issues, in particular regarding the abstraction of brain operating	4	72	Jun 28 th , 2003, 12:00pm by zhanshi



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 Sep 2nd, 2003, 1:21am

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iLab Forum « Feature Requests »

iLab Forum
 C++ Neuromorphic Vision Toolkit
 Feature Requests (Moderators: Forum Admin, Laurent Itti)

Feature Requests

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	Subject	Started by	Replies	Views	Last post
	X-Windows as command-line option	zhanshi	14	142	Aug 31 st , 2003, 7:44pm by zhanshi
	IEEE1394 update	Laurent Itti	6	76	Aug 30 th , 2003, 9:27pm by zhanshi
	STL, doxygen, and graphviz	zhanshi	4	53	Aug 29 th , 2003, 10:43am by Laurent Itti
	Added PNG write capability	Rob Peters	1	16	Jul 23 rd , 2003, 6:34pm by Laurent Itti
	Methods for computing orientations	Dirk Walther	7	71	Apr 28 th , 2003, 11:12am by Laurent Itti
	Dust off the Raster interface?	Rob Peters	11	88	Mar 21 st , 2003, 5:49pm by Rob Peters
	Pyramids; LOGVERB+FULLTRACE « Pages 1 2 »	Rob Peters	22	185	Mar 8 th , 2003, 4:53pm by Laurent Itti
	tests that take a long time	Laurent Itti	11	96	Mar 6 th , 2003, 4:29pm by Laurent Itti
	threadsafe recounting	Laurent Itti	4	54	Jan 25 th , 2003, 11:20am by Laurent Itti
	Detection of targets by biasing features	vidhya	1	57	Jan 13 th , 2003, 5:20pm by Laurent Itti
	itsLevels in PyramidBase	Dirk Walther	4	67	Dec 3 rd , 2002, 11:44am



Publications

Welcome to the iLab Publication Server!

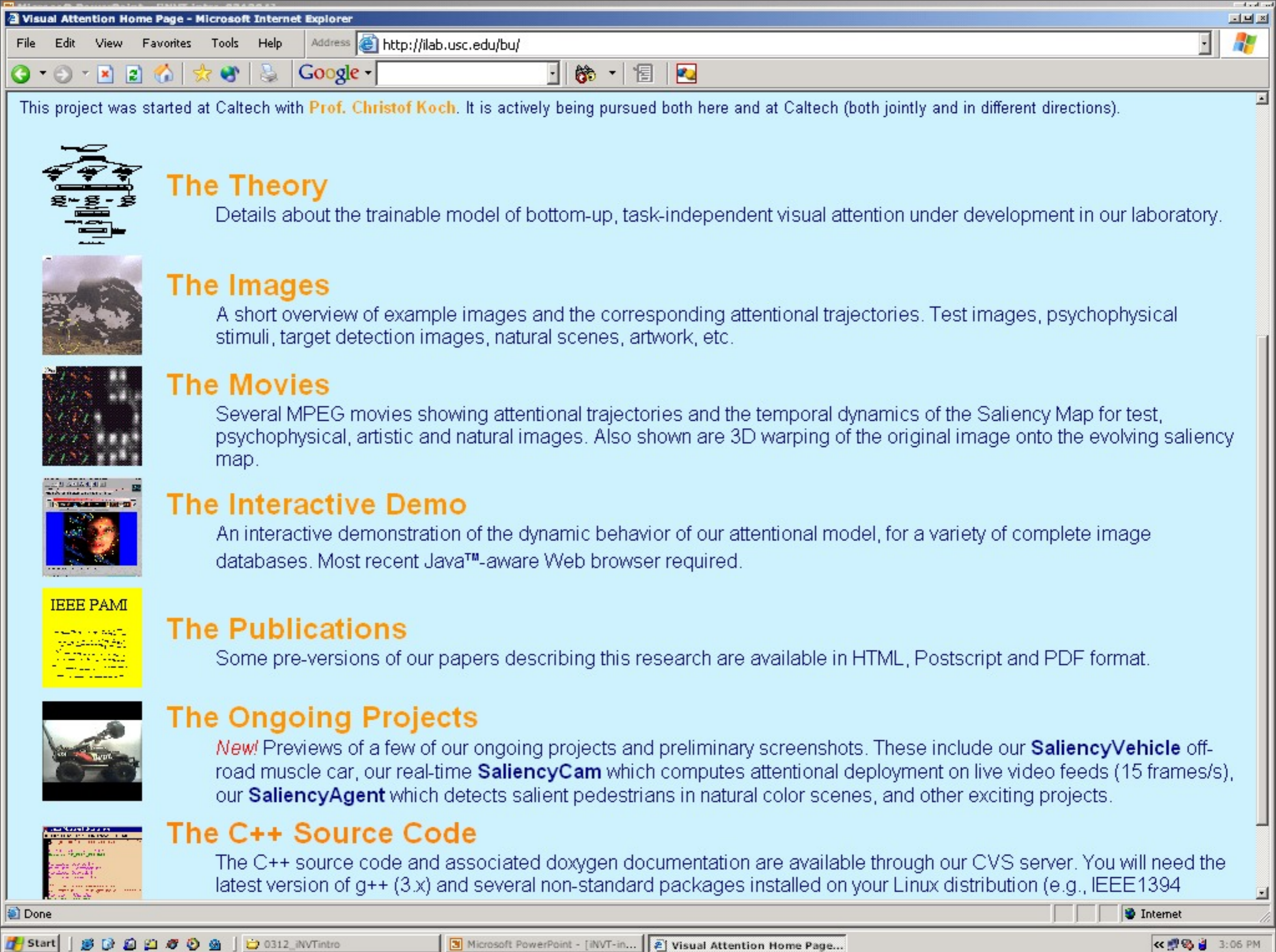
115 publications, 73 with abstract, 55 available as PDF.

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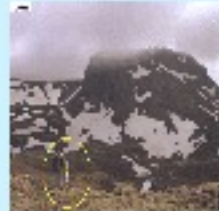


This project was started at Caltech with **Prof. Christof Koch**. It is actively being pursued both here and at Caltech (both jointly and in different directions).



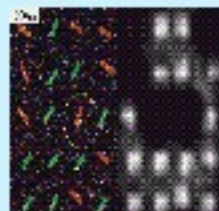
The Theory

Details about the trainable model of bottom-up, task-independent visual attention under development in our laboratory.



The Images

A short overview of example images and the corresponding attentional trajectories. Test images, psychophysical stimuli, target detection images, natural scenes, artwork, etc.



The Movies

Several MPEG movies showing attentional trajectories and the temporal dynamics of the Saliency Map for test, psychophysical, artistic and natural images. Also shown are 3D warping of the original image onto the evolving saliency map.



The Interactive Demo

An interactive demonstration of the dynamic behavior of our attentional model, for a variety of complete image databases. Most recent Java™-aware Web browser required.



The Publications

Some pre-versions of our papers describing this research are available in HTML, Postscript and PDF format.



The Ongoing Projects

New! Previews of a few of our ongoing projects and preliminary screenshots. These include our **SaliencyVehicle** off-road muscle car, our real-time **SaliencyCam** which computes attentional deployment on live video feeds (15 frames/s), our **SaliencyAgent** which detects salient pedestrians in natural color scenes, and other exciting projects.



The C++ Source Code




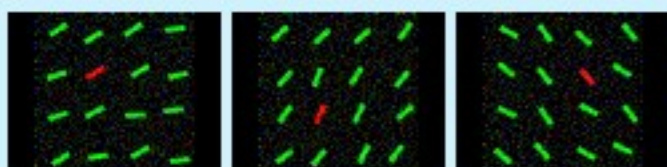
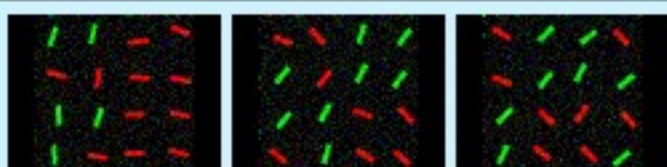

The C++ source code and associated doxygen documentation are available through our CVS server. You will need the latest version of g++ (3.x) and several non-standard packages installed on your Linux distribution (e.g., IEEE1394

iLab Image Databases

These image databases are provided for testing and evaluation only. Some of the images in the databases have been grabbed from the web, and may be subject to copyright. So, do not use these images in any commercial application!

All images are in *PPM* (24-bit color) or *PGM* (8-bit greyscale) format, compressed with *bzip2* and compiled in *tar* archives.

Note: We have put a lot of effort into making these databases available to you. By downloading any of the databases below, you agree to properly cite the associated master reference, which typically is the paper where we first described the database and used it with our model, and to provide a link to the present web page.

Samples	Database	# Images	Size	Description	Master Reference
	STIMart.tar	20	4.0 MB	Miscellaneous artwork, posters and portraits	Itti et al., IEEE PAMI, 1998
	STIMautobahn.tar	90 + 90	56 MB	Color images with German traffic signs + target masks	Itti & Koch, J. Elec. Imag., 2001
	STIMcoke.tar	104 + 104	53 MB	Color images with a red can + target masks	Itti & Koch, J. Elec. Imag., 2001
	STIMcolor.tar	180 + 180	2.1 MB	Color popout search arrays + target masks	Itti & Koch, Vis. Res., 2000
	STIMoricol.tar	180 + 180	2.1 MB	Orientation/color conjunctive search arrays + target masks	Itti & Koch, Vis. Res., 2000
		180 +	2.1	Orientation popout search arrays +	Itti & Koch, Vis. Res.