



The best way to predict the future is to invent it!
— Alan Kay

Alan Kay is one of the earliest pioneers of object-oriented programming, personal computing, and graphical user interfaces. His contributions been recognized with the **Charles Stark Draper Prize** of the National Academy of Engineering¹ “for the vision, conception, and development of the first practical networked personal computers,” the **Alan. M. Turing Award** from the Association of Computing Machinery “for pioneering many of the ideas at the root of contemporary object-oriented programming languages, leading the team that developed Smalltalk, and for fundamental contributions to personal computing”, and the **Kyoto Prize** from the Inamori Foundation “for creation of the concept of modern personal computing and contribution to its realization”. This work was done in the rich context of ARPA and Xerox PARC with many talented colleagues.



FLEX Machine,

While at the ARPA project at the University of Utah in the late 60s, he invented dynamic object-oriented programming², was part of the original team that developed continuous tone 3D graphics, was the co-designer of the FLEX Machine³, an early desktop computer with graphical user interface and object-oriented operating system, participated in the design of the ARPAnet, and inspired by children⁴, conceived the Dynabook, a laptop personal computer for children of all ages,.



Dynabook 1968

At Xerox PARC he invented Smalltalk, the first completely object-oriented programming, authoring and operating system (which included the now ubiquitous overlapping window interface), instigated the bit-map screen, screen painting and animation, participated in desk-top publishing, other desktop media, and the development of the Alto, the first modern networked personal computer. This was part of the larger process at PARC that created an entire genre of personal computing including: the GUI, Ethernet, Laserprinting, modern word processing, client-servers and peer-peer networking.



The Dynabook

He has been a Xerox Fellow, Chief Scientist of Atari, Apple Fellow, Disney Fellow, and HP Senior Fellow. In 2001 he founded Viewpoints Research Institute, a non-profit organization dedicated to children and learning. He is currently an Adjunct Professor of Computer Science at UCLA a Visiting Professor at Kyoto University, and an Adjunct Professor at MIT.



Alto at Xerox PARC

He has been elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, the Royal Society of Arts, and the Computer History Museum.



Early GUI at PARC

He has a BA in Mathematics and Biology with minor concentrations in English and Anthropology from the University of Colorado, 1966. MS and PhD in Computer Science (1968 and 1969, both with distinction) from the University of Utah, and Honorary Doctorates from the Kungl Tekniska Hoegskolan in Stockholm, Columbia College in Chicago, and Georgia Tech.



Desktop Publishing

Other honors include: J-D Warnier Prix d'Informatique, ACM Systems Software Award⁵, NEC Computers & Communication Foundation Prize, Funai Foundation Prize, Lewis Branscomb Technology Award and the ACM SIGCSE Award for Outstanding Contributions to Computer Science Education.

He entered show business in the 50s as a professional jazz guitarist. Much of his subsequent work combined music and theatrical production. Today he is an avid amateur classical pipe organist.



Music Room

¹ with Robert Taylor, Butler Lampson, and Charles Thacker.

² Inspired by Sketchpad and Simula

³ with Ed Cheadle

⁴ after meeting Seymour Papert and seeing the amazing work he was doing with children and LOGO

⁵ with Dan Ingalls and Adele Goldberg