Big Data Simulation using ScalaTion

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1 Introduction to Simulation

ScalaTion supports multi-paradigm modeling that can be used for simulation, optimization and analytics. The focus of this document is simulation modeling. Viewed as black-box, a simple model maps an input vector \mathbf{x} and a scalar time t to an output/response vector \mathbf{y} .

$$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{f}(\mathbf{x}, t)$$

A simulation model adds to these the notion of state, represented by a vector-valued function $\mathbf{s}(t)$. Knowledge about a system or process is used to define state as well as how state can change over time. Theoretically, this should make such models more accurate, more robust, and have more explanatory power. Ultimately, we may still be interested in how inputs affect outputs, but to increase the realism of the model with the hope of improving its accuracy, much attention must be directed in the modeling effort to state and state transitions. This is true to a degree with most simulation modeling paradigms or world views.

The most recent version of the Discrete-event Modeling Ontology (DeMO) lists five simulation modeling paradigms or world-views for simulation (see the bullet items below). These paradigms are briefly discussed below and explained in detail in [?].

- State-Oriented Models. State-oriented models, including Generalized Semi-Markov Processes (GSMPs), can be defined using three functions,
 - an activation function $\{e\} = a(\mathbf{s}(t)),$
 - a clock function $t' = c(\mathbf{s}(t), e)$ and
 - a state-transition function $\mathbf{s}(t') = \mathbf{d}(\mathbf{s}(t), e)$.

In simulation, advancing to the current state $\mathbf{s}(t)$ causes a set of events $\{e\}$ to be activated according to the activation function a. Events occur instantaneously and may affect both the clock and transition functions. The clock function c determines how time advances from t to t' and the state-transition function determines the next state $\mathbf{s}(t')$. In this paper we tie in the input and output vectors. The input vector \mathbf{x} is used to initialize a state at some start time t_0 and the response vector \mathbf{y} can be a function of the state sampled at multiple times during the execution of the simulation model.

• Event-Oriented Models. State-oriented models may become unwieldy when the state-space becomes very large. One option is to focus on state changes that occur by processing events in time order. An event may indicate what other events it causes as well as how it may change state. Essentially, the activation and state transition functions are divided into several simpler functions, one for each event e:

$$- \{e\} = a_e(\mathbf{s}(t)) \text{ and}$$
$$- \mathbf{s}(t') = \mathbf{d_e}(\mathbf{s}(t)).$$

Time advance is simplified to just setting the time t' to the time of the most imminent event on a future event list.

- Process-Oriented Models. One of the motivations for process-oriented models is that event-oriented models provide a fragmented view of the system or phenomena. As combinations of low-level events determine behavior, it may be difficult to see the big picture or have an intuitive feel for the behavior. Process-oriented or process-interaction models aggregate events by putting them together to form a process. An example of a process is a customer in a store. As the simulated customer (as an active entity) carries out behavior it will conditionally execute multiple events over time. A simulation then consists of many simultaneously active entities and may be implemented using co-routines (or threads/actors as a more heavyweight alternative). One co-routine for each active entity. The overall state of a simulation is then a combination of the states of each active entity and the global shared state, which may include a variety of resources types.
- Activity-Oriented Models. There are many types of activity-oriented models including Petri-Nets and Activity-Cycle Diagrams. The main characteristics of such models is a focus on the notion of activity. An activity (e.g., customer checkout) corresponds to a distinct action that occurs over time and includes a start event and an end event. Activities may be started because time advances to its start time or a triggering condition becomes true. Activities typically involve one or more entities. State information is stored in activities, entities and the global shared state.
- System Dynamics Models. System dynamics models were recently added to DeMO, since hybrid models that combine continuous and discrete aspects are becoming more popular. In this section, modeling the flight of a golf ball is considered. Let the response vector $\mathbf{y} = [y_0 \ y_1]$ where y_0 indicates the horizontal distance traveled, while y_1 indicates the vertical height of the ball. Future positions \mathbf{y} depends on the current position and time t. Using Newton's Second Law of Motion, \mathbf{y} can be estimated by solving a system of Ordinary Differential Equations (ODEs) such as

$$\dot{\mathbf{y}} = \mathbf{f}(\mathbf{y}, t), \ \mathbf{y}(0) = \mathbf{y_0}.$$

The Newtons2nd object uses the Dormand-Prince ODE solver to solve this problem. More accurate models for estimating how far a golf ball will carry when struck by a driver can be developed based on inputs/factors such as club head speed, spin rate, smash factor, launch angle, dimple patterns, ball compression characteristics, etc. There have been numerous studies of this problem, including [?].

In addition to these main modeling paradigms, ScalaTion support a simpler approach called Tableau Oriented Models.

2 Tableau Oriented

In tableau oriented simulation models, each simulation entity's event times are recorded in a row of a matrix/tableau. For example in a Bank simulation, each row would store information about a particular customer, e.g., when they arrived, how long they waited, their service time duration, etc. If 10 customers are simulated, the matrix will have 10 rows. Average waiting and service times can be easily calculated by summing columns and dividing by the number of customers. This approach is similar to, but not as flexible as Spreadsheet simulation. The complete code for this example may be found in Bank.

```
object Bank extends App
                                                           // random number stream (0 to 99)
    val stream
                   = 6.0
                                                           // customer arrival rate (per hour)
    val lambda
   val mu
                   = 7.5
                                                           // customer service rate (per hour)
    val maxCusts
                   = 10
                                                           // stopping rule: simulate maxCusts
   val iArrivalRV = Exponential (HOUR/lambda, stream)
                                                           // inter-arrival time random variate
    val serviceRV = Exponential (HOUR/mu, stream)
                                                           // service time random variate
                   = Array ("ID-0", "IArrival-1", "Arrival-2", "Start-3", "Service-4",
    val label
                            "End-5", "Wait-6", "Total-7")
    val mm1 = new Model ("M/M/1 Queue", maxCusts, Array (iArrivalRV, serviceRV), label)
    mm1.simulate ()
    mm1.report
} // Bank
```

2.1 Tableau.scala

The Model class support tableau oriented simulation models in which each simulation entity's events are recorded in tabular form (in a matrix). This is analogous to Spreadsheet simulation (http://www.informs-sim.org/wsc06papers/002.pdf).

```
@param name     the name of simulation model
@param m          the number entities to process before stopping
@param rv          the random variate generators to use
@param label          the column labels for the matrix

class Model (name: String, m: Int, rv: Array [Variate], label: Array [String])

def simulate ()
def report
```

3 Event Oriented

ScalaTion supports two types of event oriented simulation modeling paradigms: Event Scheduling and its extension, called Event Graphs. For both paradigms, the state of the system only changes at discrete event times with the changes specified via event logic. A scheduler within the model will execute the events in time order. A time-ordered priority queue is used to hold the future events and is often referred to as a Future Event List (FEL). Event Graphs capture the event logic related to triggering other events in causal links. In this way, Event Graph models are more declarative (less procedural) than Event Scheduling models. They also facilitate a graphical representation and animation.

3.1 Event Scheduling

A simple, yet practical way to develop a simulation engine to support discrete-event simulation is to implement event-scheduling. This involves creating the following three classes: Event, Entity and Model. An Event is defined as an instantaneous occurrence that can trigger other events and/or change the state of the simulation. An Entity, such as a customer in a bank, flows through the simulation. The Model serves as a container/controller for the whole simulation and carries out scheduling of event in time order.

For example, to create a simple bank simulation model, one could use the three classes defined in the event-scheduling engine to create subclasses of Event, called Arrival and Departure, and one subclass of Model, called BankModel. The complete code for this example may be found in Bank.

The event logic is coded in the occur method which in general triggers future events and updates the current state. It indicates what happens when the event occurs. For the Arrival class, the occur method will schedule the next arrival event (up to the limit), check to see if the teller is busy. If so, it will place itself in the wait queue, otherwise it schedule its own departure to correspond to its service completion time. Finally, it adjusts the state by incrementing both the number of arrivals (nArr) and the number in the system (nIn).

```
Oparam customer the entity that arrives, in this case a bank customer
case class Arrival (customer: Entity) extends Event (customer, this) // entity, model
    def occur ()
        if (nArr < nArrivals-1) {</pre>
            val iArrivalT = iArrivalRV.gen
            val next2Arrive = Entity (clock + iArrivalT, serviceRV.gen)
                                                                           // next customer
            schedule (iArrivalT, Arrival (next2Arrive))
        if (nIn > 0) {
                                                                     // teller is busy
            waitQueue.enqueue (customer)
        } else {
            t_q_stat.tally (0.0)
            t_s_stat.tally (schedule (customer.serviceT, Departure (customer)))
        } // if
        nArr += 1
                                                                     // update the current state
       nIn += 1
    } // occur
} // Arrival class
```

For the Departure class, the occur method will check to see if there is another customer waiting in the queue and if so, schedule that customer's departure. It will then signal its own departure by updating the state; in this case decrementing nIn and incrementing nOut.

In order to collect statistical information, the occur methods of both event classes call the tally method from the Statistics class to obtain statistics on the time in queue t_q_stat, the time in service t_s_stat

The three classes used for creating simulation models following the Event Scheduling paradigm are discussed in the next three subsections.

3.1.1 Event.scala

} // Departure class

and the time in system t_y_stat.

The Event class provides facilities for defining simulation events. A subclass (e.g., Arrival) of Event must provide event-logic in the implementation of its occur method. The Event class also provides methods for comparing act times for events and converting an event to its string representation. Note: unique identification and the event/activation time (actTime) are mixed in via the PQItem trait.

Class Methods:

3.1.2 Entity.scala

An instance of the Entity class represents a single simulation entity for event oriented simulation. For each instance, it maintains information about that entity's arrival time and next service time.

Class Methods:

```
@param arrivalT the time at which the entity arrived
@param serviceT the amount of time required for the entity's next service
case class Entity (val arrivalT: Double, var serviceT: Double)
override def toString = "Entity-" + eid
```

3.1.3 Model.scala

The Model class schedules events and implements the time advance mechanism for event oriented simulation models. It provides methods to schedule and cancel events. Scheduled events are place in the Future Event List (FEL) in time order. The simulate method will cause the main simulation loop to execute, which will remove the most imminent event from the FEL and invoke its occur method. The simulation will continue until a stopping rule evaluates to true. Methods to getStatistics and report statistical results are also provided.

Class Methods:

The animate methods are used with Event Graphs (see the next section).

3.2 Event Graphs

Event Graphs operate in a fashion similar to Event Scheduling. Originally proposed as a graphical conceptual modeling technique (Schruben, 1983) for designing event oriented simulation models, modern programming languages now permit more direct support for this style of simulation modeling.

In ScalaTion, the simulation engine for Event Graphs consists of the following four classes: Entity, Model, EventNode and CausalLink. The first two are shared with Event Scheduling. An Entity, such as a customer in a bank, flows through the simulation. The Model serves as a container/controller for the whole simulation. The last two are specify to Event Graphs. An EventNode (subclass of Event), defined as an instantaneous occurrence that can trigger other events and/or change the state of the simulation, is represented as a node in the event graph. A CausalLink emanating from an event/node is represented as an outgoing directed edge in the event graph. It represents causality between events. One event can conditionally trigger another event to occur some time in the future.

For example, to create a simple bank simulation, one could use the four classes provided by the Event Graph simulation engine to create subclasses of EventNode, called Arrival and Departure, and one subclass of Model, called BankModel. The complete code for this example may be found in Bank2. In more complex situations, one would typically define a subclass of Entity to represent the customers in the bank.

```
class BankModel (name: String, nArrivals: Int, arrivalRV: Variate, serviceRV: Variate)
    extends Model (name)
```

The Scala code below was made more declarative than typical code for event-scheduling to better mirror event graph specifications, where the causal links specify the conditions and time delays. For instance,

```
() => nArr < nArrivals
```

is a closure returning Boolean that will be executed when arrival events are handled. In this case, it represents a stopping rule; when the number of arrivals exceeds a threshold, the arrival event will no longer schedule the next arrival. The serviceRV is a random variate to be used for computing service times.

In the BankModel class, one first defines the state variables: nArr, nIn and nOut. For animation of the event graph, a prototype for each type of event is created and displayed as a node. The edges connecting these prototypes represent the casual links. The aLinks array holds two causal links emanating from Arrival, the first a self link representing triggered arrivals and the second representing an arrival finding an idle server, so it can schedule its own departure. The dLinks array holds one causal link emanating from Departure, a self link representing the departing customer causing the next customer in the waiting queue to enter service (i.e., have its departure scheduled).

```
//:: define the state variables for the simulation
```

An animation of the Event Graph consisting of two EventNodes Arrival and Departure and three CausalLinks is depicted in Figure 1.

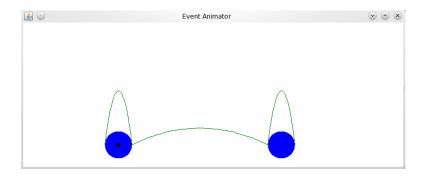


Figure 1: Event Graph Animation of a Bank.

The main thing to write within each subclass of EventNode is the occur method. To handle arrival events, the occur method of the Arrival class first calls the super.occur method from the superclass to trigger other events using the causal links and then updates the state by incrementing both the number of arrivals (nArr) and the number in the system (nIn).

To handle departure events, the occur method Departure class first calls the occur method of the superclass to trigger other events using the causal links and then updates the state by decrementing the number in the system (nIn) and incrementing the number of departures (nOut).

Two of the three classes used for creating simulation models following the Event Scheduling paradigm can be used for Event Graphs, namely Entity and Model. Event must be replaced with its subclass called EventNode. These form the nodes in the Event Graphs. An edge in the Event Graph is an instance of the CausalLink class. These two new classes (EventNode and CausalLink) are described in the subsections below.

3.2.1 EventNode.scala

The 'Event' class provides facilities for defining simulation events. Subclasses of Event provide event-logic in their implementation of the occur method. Note: unique identification and the event/activation time (actTime) are mixed in via the PQItem trait.

Class Methods:

```
@param proto
                 the prototype (serves as node in animation) for this event
@param entity
                 the entity involved in this event
@param links
                 the causal links used to trigger other immediate/future events
Oparam director the controller/scheduler that this event is a part of
                 the location of this event
Oparam at
abstract class EventNode (val proto: Event, entity: Entity, links: Array [CausalLink],
                      director: Model, at: Array [Double] = Array ())
         extends PQItem with Ordered [Event]
def compare (ev: Event): Int = ev.actTime.compare (actTime)
def occur ()
def display ()
def displayLinks (outLinks: Array [CausalLink])
```

3.2.2 CausalLink.scala

The 'CausalLink' class provides casual links between events. After an event has updated the state, it checks its causal links to schedule/cancel other events.

4 Process Interaction

Many discrete-event simulation models are written using the process-interaction world view, because the code tends to be concise and intuitively easy to understand. Take for example the process-interaction model of a bank (BankModel a subclass of Model) shown below. Following this world view, one simply constructs the simulation components and then provides a script for entities (SimActors) to follow while in the system. In this case, the act method for the customer class provides the script (what entities should do), i.e., enter the bank, if the tellers are busy wait in the queue, then receive service and finally leave the bank.

The development of a simulation engine for process-interaction models is complicated by the fact that concurrent (or at least quasi-concurrent) programming is required. Various language features/capabilities from lightweight to middleweight include continuations, coroutines, actors and threads. Heavyweight concurrency via OS processes is infeasible, since simulations may require a very large number of concurrent entities. The main requirement is for a concurrent entity to be able to suspend its execution and be resumed where it left off (its state being maintained on a stack). Since preemption is not necessary, lightweight concurrency constructs are ideal. Presently, ScalaTion uses Scala Actors for concurrency. Future implementations will include use of continuations and Akka Actors.

ScalaTion includes several types of model components: Gate, Junction, Resource, Route, Sink, Source, Transport and WaitQueue. A model may be viewed as a directed graph with several types of nodes:

- Gate: a gate is used to control the flow of entities, they cannot pass when it is shut.
- Junction: a junction is used to connect two transports.
- Resource: a resource provides services to entities (typically resulting in some delay).
- Sink: a sink consumes entities.
- Source: a source produces entities.
- WaitQueue: a wait-queue provides a place for entities to wait, e.g., waiting for a resource to become available or a gate to open.

These nodes are linked together with directed edges (from, to) that model the flow entities from node to node. A Source node must have no incoming edges, while a Sink node must have no outgoing edges.

- Route: a route bundles multiple transports together (e.g., a two-lane, one-way street).
- Transport: a transport is used to move entities from one component node to the next.

The model graph includes coordinates for the component nodes to facilitate animation of the model. Coordinates for the component edges are calculated based on the coordinates of its from and to nodes. Small colored tokens move along edges and jump through nodes as the entities they represent flow through the system.

The BankModel may be developed as follows: The BankModel first defines the component nodes entry, tellerQ, teller, and door. Then two edge components, toTellerQ and toDoor, are defined. These six components are added to the BankModel using the addComponent method. Note, the endpoint nodes for an edge must be added before the edge itself. Finally, a inner case class called Customer is defined where the act method specifies the script for bank customers to follow. The act method specifies the behavior of concurrent entities (Scala Actors) and is analogous to the run method for Java/Scala Threads.

```
class BankModel (name: String, nArrivals: Int, iArrivalRV: Variate,
                 nUnits: Int, serviceRV: Variate, moveRV: Variate)
      extends Model (name)
{
                  = Source ("entry", this, Customer, 0, nArrivals, iArrivalRV, (100, 290))
    val entry
    val tellerQ = WaitQueue ("tellerQ", (330, 290))
                  = Resource ("teller", tellerQ, nUnits, serviceRV, (350, 285))
    val teller
                  = Sink ("door", (600, 290))
    val door
    val toTellerQ = new Transport ("toTellerQ", entry, tellerQ, moveRV)
                 = new Transport ("toDoor", teller, door, moveRV)
    val toDoor
    addComponent (entry, tellerQ, teller, door, toTellerQ, toDoor)
    case class Customer () extends SimActor ("c", this)
        def act ()
        {
            toTellerQ.move ()
            if (teller.busy) tellerQ.waitIn () else tellerQ.noWait ()
            teller.utilize ()
            teller.release ()
            toDoor.move ()
            door.leave ()
        } // act
    } // Customer
```

Note, that the bank model for event-scheduling did not include time delays and events for moving token along transports. In BankModel2, the impact of transports is reduced by (1) using the transport's jump method rather than its move method and (2) reducing the time through the transport by an order of magnitude. The jump method has the tokens jumping directly to the middle of the transport, while the move method simulates smooth motion using many small hops. Both BankModel and BankModel2 are in the apps.process package as well as CallCenterModel, ERoomModel, IntersectionModel, LoopModel MachineModel and RoadModel.

4.1 Component.scala

} // BankModel class

The Component trait provides basic common feature for simulation components. A component may function either as a node or edge. Entities/sim-actors interact with component nodes and move/jump along component edges. All components maintain sample/duration statistics (e.g., time in waiting queue) and all except Gate, Source and Sink maintain time-persistent statistics (e.g., number in waiting queue).

```
trait Component extends Identity

def initComponent (label: String, loc: Array [Double])
def initStats (label: String)
def director = _director
def setDirector (dir: Model)
```

```
def display ()
def tally (duration: Double) { _durationStat.tally (duration) }
def accumulate (value: Double, time: Double) { _persistentStat.accumulate (value, time) }
def durationStat = _durationStat
def persistentStat = _persistentStat
```

4.2 Signifiable.scala

The Signifiable trait defines standard messages sent between actors implementing process interaction simulations.

Class Methods:

trait Signifiable

4.3 SimActor.scala

The SimActor abstract class represents entities that are active in the model. The act abstract method, which specifies entity behavior, must be defined for each subclass. Each SimActor extends Scala's Actor class and may be roughly thought of as running in its own thread. The script for entities/sim-actors to follow is specified in the act method of the subclass as was done for the Customer case class in the BankModel.

Class Methods:

4.4 Source.scala

The Source class is used to periodically inject entities (SimActors) into a running simulation model (and a token into the animation). It may act as an arrival generator. A Source is both a simulation Component and a special SimActor, and therefore can run concurrently.

```
@param name
                     the name of the source
@param director
                     the director controlling the model
@param makeEntity
                     the function to make entities of a specified type
@param subtype
                     indicator of the subtype of the entities to me made
@param units
                     the number of entities to make
Oparam iArrivalTime the inter-arrival time distribution
@param at
                     the location of the source (x, y, w, h)
class Source (name: String, director: Model, makeEntity: () => SimActor, subtype: Int, units: Int,
              iArrivalTime: Variate, at: Array [Double])
      extends SimActor (name, director) with Component
def this (name: String, director: Model, makeEntity: () => SimActor, units: Int,
def display ()
def act ()
```

4.5 Sink.scala

The Sink class is used to terminate entities (SimActors) when they are finished. This class will remove the token from the animation and collect important statistics about the entity.

Class Methods:

4.6 Transport.scala

The Transport class provides a pathway between two other component nodes. The Components in a Model conceptually form a graph in which the edges are Transport objects and the nodes are other Component objects. An edge may be either a Transport or Route.

```
the name of the transport
@param name
@param from
                 the first/starting component
@param to
                 the second/ending component
@param motion
                 the speed/trip-time to move down the transport
@param isSpeed
                 whether speed or trip-time is used for motion
@param bend
                 the bend or curvature of the transport (0 => line)
@param shift1
                 the x-y shift for the transport's first endpoint (from-side)
@param shift2
                 the x-y shift for the transport's second endpoint (to-side)
class Transport (name: String, val from: Component, val to: Component,
```

4.7 Resource.scala

The Resource class provides services to entities (SimActors). The service provided by a resource typically delays the entity by an amount of time corresponding to its service time. The Resource may or may not have an associated waiting queue.

Class Methods:

```
the name of the resource
@param name
@param line
                    the line/queue where entities wait
@param units
                    the number of service units (e.g., bank tellers)
Oparam serviceTime the service time distribution
@param at
                    the location of the resource (x, y, w, h)
class Resource (name: String, line: WaitQueue, private var units: Int, serviceTime: Variate,
                at: Array [Double])
      extends Component
def this (name: String, line: WaitQueue, units: Int, serviceTime: Variate,
          xy: Tuple2 [Double, Double])
def changeUnits (dUnits: Int)
def display ()
def busy = inUse == units
def utilize ()
def utilize (duration: Double)
def release ()
```

4.8 WaitQueue.scala

The WaitQueue class is a wrapper for Scala's Queue class, which supports FCSC Queues. It adds monitoring capabilities and optional capacity restrictions. If the queue is full, entities (SimActors) attempting to enter the queue are barred. At the model level, such entities may be (1) held in place, (2) take an alternate route, or (3) be lost (e.g., dropped call/packet). An entity on a WaitQueue is suspended for an indefinite wait. The actions of some other concurrent entity will cause the suspended entity to be resumed (e.g., when a bank customer finishes service and releases a teller).

```
@param name the name of the wait-queue
@param at the location of the wait-queue (x, y, w, h)
@param cap the capacity of the queue (defaults to unbounded)
```

4.9 Junction.scala

The Junction class provides a connector between two transports/routes. Since Lines and QCurves have limitation (e.g., hard to make a loop back), a junction may be needed.

Class Methods:

4.10 Gate.scala

The Gate class models the operation of gates that can open and shut. When a gate is open, entities can flow through and when shut, they cannot. When shut, the entities may wait in a queue or go elsewhere. A gate can model a traffic light (green \implies open, red \implies shut).

```
@param name
                 the name of the gate
Oparam director the model/container for this gate
@pram line
                 the queue holding entities waiting for this gate to open
@param units
                number of units/phases of operation
@param onTime
                distribution of time that gate will be open
@param offTime
                distribution of time that gate will be closed
@param at
                 the location of the Gate (x, y, w, h)
@param shut0
                 Boolean indicating if the gate is opened or closed
                 the maximum number of entities that will be released when the gate is opened
@param cap
class Gate (name: String, director: Model, line: WaitQueue, units: Int, onTime: Variate, offTime: Variate,
            at: Array [Double], shut0: Boolean, cap: Int = 10)
      extends SimActor (name, director) with Component
```

4.11 Route.scala

The Route class provides a multi-lane pathway between two other node components. The Components in a Model conceptually form a graph in which the edges are Transports/Routes and the nodes are other components. A route is a composite component that bundles several transports.

Class Methods:

```
the name of the route
@param name
@param k
                 the number of lanes/transports in the route
@param from
                 the starting component
@param to
                 the ending component
@param motion
                 the speed/trip-time to move down the transports in the route
@param isSpeed
                 whether speed or trip-time is used for motion
@param angle
                 angle in radians of direction (0 => east, Pi/2 => north, Pi => west, 3Pi/2 => south)
@param bend
                 the bend or curvature of the route (0 => line)
class Route (name: String, k: Int, from: Component, to: Component,
             motion: Variate, isSpeed: Boolean = false,
             angle: Double = 0.0, bend: Double = 0.0)
      extends Component
override def at: Array [Double] = lane(0).at
def display ()
```

4.12 Model.scala

The Model class maintains a list of components making up the model and controls the flow of entities (SimActors) through the model, following the process-interaction world-view. It maintains a time-ordered priority queue to activate/re-activate each of the entities. Each entity (SimActor) is implemented as a Scala Actor and may be roughly thought of as running in its own thread.