



P R E S S I N F O R M A T I O N

CLIMAX - STATEMENTS: Gerfried Stocker

The Art of Tomorrow

The art of tomorrow is the art of the media. This art is just as much visual image as music and performance; hardware-handicraft and software-concept in equal measure. What once could have been subsumed under the heading of media art has since branched out into a multiplicity of new artistic genres, symbiotic forms whose definitions are rather more oriented on scientific and technical disciplines, on interface development and information architecture or on net culture and the lifestyle of gaming communities than on the isms of the artistic discourse.

This development is being carried forward by individuals whose identity is often bounded by the parameters of artist, engineer, social worker and experience designer, and who act out of a clear understanding of its technological as well as its associated social and cultural aspects: coders and hackers, open sourcers and circuit benders who acquire mastery over technological components, ignore rules found in user's manuals, deploy devices and systems in ways unintended by those who market them, and participate, with this analytical and critical processing, in the design of the way our world is now—art as a test-drive of the future.

Ars Electronica and NTMFA - Networking the Media Art

This major exhibition in Taiwan and the collaborative projects associated with it are providing Ars Electronica with its first significant presence in Asia, the region that will most certainly be imparting essential impetus to the ongoing development of our media-based Information Society.

For Ars Electronica, this good news is especially welcome since the number of Asian artists and theoreticians who have been participating in our annual Festival

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and submitting works to Prix Ars Electronica has been increasing significantly in recent years and, for our part, we've been doing all we can to nurture this process of exchange.

Asia's creative output is enormous and is definitely making a powerful impact on the media culture that is developing on a global level. Taiwan in particular is among the emerging hotbeds of this global media culture. The intensive investment in technological research and production combined with major initiatives in the field of education—both in the area of engineering as well as in design—are giving rise to a dynamism that is increasingly manifesting itself in the country's artistic potential. An economy based on technology and creativity creates a number of different preconditions favorable to the emergence of a fruitful biotope conducive to artistic work. What's more, it nurtures an attitude of critical reflection that, in turn, constitutes an indispensable element of necessary social transformations.

The Ars Electronica exhibition at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts is not only emblematic of interest in digital media art; as a key facet of the successful cooperative relationship between Linz and Taichong, it also underscores the significance of international networking as a force promoting global cultural integration.

Ars Electronica's 25th Anniversary Exhibition at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts

For 25 years now, Ars Electronica has been tracking and nurturing the digital revolution, analyzing the social and cultural effects of digital media and communications technologies from critical as well as utopian, artistic and scientific perspectives, thinking them through and inferring potential developments. During this span of 25 years, Ars Electronica has also served as a logbook recording the development of new art forms and new artistic practices as well as the accompanying transcendence of boundaries to science and technology. The enormous archive that has taken shape as a result constitutes powerful testimony to the manifold currents and trends to which the interplay and friction between art and technology have given rise, and also documents Ars Electronica's unique breadth as a discussion forum providing a staging ground for confrontation and dialogue, for provocation and bridge-building. The Prix Ars Electronica, the Ars Electronica Center and the Ars Electronica Futurelab are the consistent extensions with which we have continually expanded the radius of our activities. This is the course on which Ars Electronica embarked in 1979 and on which it has been joined by communities of cyberartists and digerati dispersed throughout the world. It has been like an annual expedition that blazes trails into new and barely chartered territories, gathering samples and artifacts as it continues on its journey through time, encountering milestones and signposts indubitably pointing the way as well as transient phenomena and experiments of

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uncertain outcome. Thus, bearing witness to contemporary developments and accumulating authentic experience have proven to be reliable methods for compiling a cartographic record of our media culture.

Ars Electronica's exhibition at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts showcases outstanding examples of media art that have been presented at Ars Electronica over the course of the last two and a half decades. Awaiting visitors is a one-of-a-kind show in which the artistic projects on display as well as the documentations and screenings that accompany them provide profound insights into the development that media art has undergone up to now, and also offer a preview of the enormous potential of this artform.

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