

**P R E S S E I N F O R M A T I O N****Press Release****Ars Electronica at ARCO 2006**

**"Directions of Media Art" and "Digital Transit," two media art exhibits curated by Ars Electronica, will be the featured attractions defining Austria's presence at ARCO, one of the world's most important art expositions.**

**"Digital Transit" will run from February 7 to April 2, 2006 at MediaLabMadrid.**

**"Directions of Media Art" will be held on February 9, 2006 at ARCO Forum**

**<http://www.austria-arco.at>**

ARCO (*Feria Internacional de Arte Contemporaneo*), Madrid's international contemporary art fair, has invited Austria to be its 2006 Guest Country. In line with this year's focus on media art, Ars Electronica is collaborating with MediaLabMadrid to organize the "Digital Transit" exhibition in the Centro Cultural del Conde Duque as well as the "Directions of Digital Art" forum in conjunction with the ARCO Symposia.

**1. "Digital Transit" Exhibition**

The "Digital Transit" exhibition, a joint production of Ars Electronica Linz and MediaLabMadrid, will showcase outstanding examples of media art by Austrian and international artists associated with Ars Electronica. The exhibit's approach is to show from an artistic perspective how "the digital" has come to pervade the physical realms in which we live out our daily lives and to critically analyze this phenomenon. The subject is

mankind as reflected by his/her cultural and technological codes; genetic codes, digital codes, the codes of languages, and encoded spaces are among the individual focal-point themes. Two laboratory domains—Future Lab and Urban Lab—will present new ideas and prototypes for digital spaces and interactive performances. The Ars Electronica Archive Lounge provides a setting for the leisurely perusal of graphic material documenting the historical development of digital art and illustrating its contributions to the theory and practice of contemporary media culture.

From February 7 to April 2, 2006, there will be an extensive supplementary program of performances, workshops and screenings dealing with the area of fruitful interplay at the nexus of art, technology and society. In the “Digital Transit” exhibition, artists from Austria and Spain will focus on the interfaces of art and science as well as architecture and urban development.

With Austria as Guest Country at this year’s ARCO, there will be numerous Austrian artists in attendance. Their works will be supplemented by selected international media art projects with which Ars Electronica has been involved.

### **Installations:**

Richard Kriesche (AT), Christian Möller (D) and Sean Crowe (US), Christa Sommerer (AT) and Laurent Mignonneau (F), John Gerrard (IRL), DNA-Consult (AT), Camille Utterback (US), Romy Achituv (US), Norbert Pfaffenbichler (AT), Michael Aschauer (AT), Lotte Schreiber (AT), Dietmar Offenhuber (AT) and TAMTAM / Sam Auinger (AT) and Hannes Strobl (AT), Martin Wattenberg (US), Marek Walczak (US) and Jonathan Feinberg (US), Jussi Ängeslevä (UK) and Ross Cooper (UK), Ulf Langheinrich (DE/AT), Maia Gusberti (AT/CH), Nik Thönen (AT/CH), Sepp Deinhofer (AT), ubermorgen (AT), Vaibhav Bhawsar (IN), Justin Manor (US), Peter Kogler (AT), Friedrich Kirschner (DE/AT), Gerhard Dirmoser (AT), Zachary Lieberman (US) and the Ars Electronica Futurelab (AT).

### **Screenings:**

Casey Reas (US), Klaus Obermaier (AT), Marc Downie (US), Shelley Eshkar (US), Paul Kaiser (US), The OpenEnded Group (US), ESG extended stage group (DE), LIA (AT) and @c

/ Miguel Carvalhais & Pedro Tudela (P), Reinhold Bidner (AT) and Robert Praxmarer (AT), Erich Berger (AT), Wolfgang Temmel (AT).

“Digital Transit” is being curated by Gerfried Stocker and Manuela Pfaffenberger from Ars Electronica Linz together with Karin Ohlenschläger and Luis Rico of MediaLabMadrid.

## **2. “Directions of Digital Art” Forum**

The “Directions of Digital Art” forum being organized by Ars Electronica Artistic Director Gerfried Stocker is dedicated to the future of digital art—what are its unique and definitive characteristics and, above all, what is its potential for further development. The purview of media art has expanded tremendously in recent decades; at the same time, this art form’s modes and means of expression have brachiated out into a wide variety of genres. In light of all this, it would seem to be high time to assess this enormous diversity. Is this concatenation of genres properly to be considered an artform in its own right or is it sufficient just to adequately categorize it in an overall artistic context? And which direction will digital art’s developmental arc take in the coming years: hasty cooptation into the mainstream art establishment, maintenance of elitist claims to avant-garde status, or some intermediate course?

The speakers at this forum represent three generations of media art practitioners; they are experienced and successful artists and teachers from Europe, Asia, North & South America and Africa. All of them have their fingers on the pulse of leading-edge trends; some are even determining developments through their own artistic work.

This A-list assemblage of speakers and panelists includes Jonah Brucker-Cohen, VALIE EXPORT, Heidi Grundmann, Derrick de Kerckhove, Katja Kwastek, Jose Carlos Mariategui, Feng Mengbo, Elaine W. Ng, Geetha Narayanan, Marcus Neustetter and Christa Sommerer.

With so many experts in the field participating in this Forum, one might get the impression that the event is meant for insiders only, but it is being staged with the general public in

mind as well, and thus as a way to provide an interesting introduction to one of the most exciting and dynamic fields of contemporary art.

**"DIGITAL TRANSIT" EXHIBITION**

February 7 to April 2, 2006

MediaLabMadrid

centro cultural conde duque

c/ conde duque 9-11

2815 madrid - spain

**"DIRECTIONS OF DIGITAL ART" FORUM**

February 9, 2006, FORUM – ARCO 06

11:30 AM to 9 PM

**With queries, please contact:**

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