



P R E S S R E L E A S E

GOODBYE PRIVACY

The 2007 Ars Electronica Festival

Featured Speakers:

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Press Conference
Wednesday 11 April 2007, 10:00
Sky Media Loft
Hauptstraße 2
A-4040 Linz



GOODBYE PRIVACY

(Linz, April 11, 2007) A new culture of everyday life is now upon us, bracketed by the angst-inducing scenarios of seamless surveillance and the zest we bring to staging our public personas via digital media. One in which everything seems to be public and nothing's private anymore. Panopticon or consummate individual liberty? At symposia, exhibitions, performances and interventions, the 2007 Ars Electronica Festival will delve into what the public and private spheres have come to mean and the interrelationship that now exists between them. Date: September 5-11. Location: throughout the City of Linz.

Feature yourself or you're out of the running

Being present wherever you want to be, whenever you want to be there; being able to reach anyone and being accessible by all. What were yesterday the yearnings projected onto new technologies have now materialized into the reality of our time. In the meantime, everyone has become simultaneously a transmitter and a receiver, and can get linked up to everyone else in an ever more tightly woven, world-encompassing web. With the aid of our avatars, blogs and taggings, we assume digital form(s) and adopt more or less imaginative second identities. Assisting us in our efforts to be omnipresent are our cyber-twins, the programmed clones that correspond to our personality profiles and take our places in chatrooms during absences made necessary by having to work and sleep. Showcasing ones customized persona, staging ones own image is the order of the day. Feature yourself or its GAME OVER, dude! Once the countervailing scenario juxtaposed to the formula-driven,

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homogenized public sphere of the mass media, individualization and personalization à la Second Life, My Space, Flickr and youtube have become mainstream. Emerging along with them at a rapid clip are completely new sectors of the public sphere featuring brand new rules of play. Traditional recipes for success have only limited applicability in this Brave New World. Being attractive isn't enough. Originality and uniqueness are what it takes to attain virtual stardom, and what this encourages or even absolutely demands is exhibitionism that's incessantly expanding the limits that define what constitutes taking things too far. Accompanying this staging of the self for consumption by a mass audience is the emergence of a new culture of everyday life in which seemingly everything is public and nothing is private anymore. A new dimension of civil liberty seems to have become reality.

Big Brother is watching you

And the same holds true for the nightmare of flawless surveillance. Whether in real spaces or digital domains, the network of cameras, biometric sensors, RFIDs, log files and trojans is becoming ever more tightly woven. Video surveillance is shifting the dimensions of the public sphere: in British pilot projects, it's no longer limited to just observing and recording; now, should the situation warrant it, there's even a possibility of urgently requesting individuals to get their comportment into compliance with regulations. Immense databases and highly developed algorithms automatically interlinking and evaluating all our electronic traces consummate this new quality of surveillance. But it's not just the depth of field and high resolution of this digital reconnaissance that's significant; it's also the fact that access to the technologies and the compiled data is increasingly shifting out of the

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purview of public authorities and into the hands of commercial and individual interests. Revenue-enhancing information is a valuable commodity that comes with a correspondingly high price tag. But it's not merely technology, information and communication that are omnipresent. It's we ourselves. At all times and anywhere. Classifiable via the detailed and comprehensive personality profiles that we leave behind as the traces of our outings in digital domains.

The 2007 Ars Electronica Festival

GOODBYE PRIVACY will limn the current and future standing of the public and private spheres and the relationship between those two realms. What sorts of new strategies can be developed to create a private sphere in the transparent world of digital media? What do we have at our disposal to counter the intrusions of increasingly efficient control and surveillance technologies, and how can we prevent the loss of individual control over our digital personas? How can we shatter the pre-configured virtual public spheres of the entertainment industry and genuinely configure new ones ourselves? How can we bring the entire cultural diversity of our societies to bear in these recently emerged and currently emerging social and public realms, and how can the new cultural paradigms of Web 2.0 communities be made to generate social dynamics that can also display relevance in the real world?

GOODBYE PRIVACY invites artists, network nomads, theoreticians, technologists and legal scholars to formulate responses to these and other questions. In Ars Electronica's inimitable fashion, elaborations in the form of symposia, exhibits, performances and

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interventions will proliferate beyond the confines of classic conference halls and exhibition spaces, and spread across the whole city. And onward into the virtual world of Second Life. Kicking things off will be the Austrian Judges Conference on September 4-5. Participants will scrutinize the fundamental rights now prevailing in the digital world, the tense interrelationship between the protection of confidential data and the private sphere on one hand and the freedoms of information and communication on the other. The conference will take an interdisciplinary, international approach. Ina Zwerger of the ORF's radio station Ö1 and artist/author Armin Medosch will curate the symposium. This year's guest institution of higher learning in the field of media art and culture is HyperWerk, the Basel University of Art and Design's Institute for Postindustrial Design. HyperWerk sees something very new taking shape: high-tech is increasingly finding its way back to tangible objects in the wake of an abstraction phase dominated by the computer screen and the mouse. In concrete terms, this means "neo-analog design" that gives form to this digital tangibility. HyperWerk is a node of acar2, a network of colleges, crafts initiatives and enterprises that's setting up an academy exploring the future of crafts.

In 2007, Ars Electronica is once again working together with a network of local associations and institutions involved in the arts and culture. The ORF – Austrian Broadcasting Company's Upper Austria Regional Studio and Ö1 have also made a major commitment to this undertaking.

Online Accreditation

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Successful Collaboration with Hatje Cantz

Ars Electronica is continuing its long-term professional relationship with internationally respected art book publisher Hatje Cantz. "Ars Electronica's mission and content ideally complement our publishing program. The internationality of the festival dovetails beautifully with Hatje Cantz's distributive possibilities of achieving a global presence with high-quality catalogs," said Annette Kulenkampff, publisher and CEO.

In recent years, Hatje Cantz has developed into a special-interest publishing house producing exhibition catalogs and art books of superb quality for a very discriminating readership. Hatje Cantz is one of the "top names in the catalog field" (Buchmarkt 11/06) and is regarded as one of "the foremost publishers of art books" (Kunstzeitung 10/06). In addition to architecture, photography and the art of many historical epochs, a strong commitment to contemporary art is a tradition of long standing. Hatje Cantz publications have accompanied exhibitions at the world's most important museums including New York's MoMA, the Guggenheim, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Albertina in Vienna, the Royal Academy in London, the State Museums of Berlin and the Bavarian State Painting Collections. Hatje Cantz's "Ars Electronica" and "CyberArts," the publications that have documented the activities of the Festival, the Museum of the Future, the FutureLab and the Prix each year since 2001, are among the standard works in the field of media art and in the discourse focusing on mankind's technological culture. They constitute a unique record of the entire Ars Electronica project, and offer a cross-section of the symposia, artists talks, discussion forums, workshops, concerts, performances and exhibitions that define what Ars Electronica is.

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