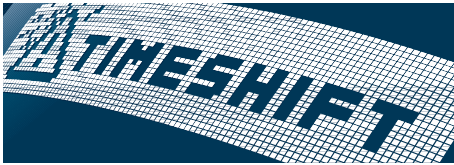# Ars Electronica 2004

Linz, September 2 - 7
www.aec.at/timeshift

TIMESHIFT -
The World in 25 Years

**Ars Electronica
2004**

Press Release - Content Extended Version
Vienna, August 17, 2004

TIMESHIFT - The World in 25 Years

"TIMESHIFT – The World in 25 Years" is the title of the festival, and transformation, upheaval and the future are its programmatic concepts.

TIMESHIFT – Past, Present and Future of Media Culture

The Timeshift Symposium, the Digital Avant-Garde and CyberArts exhibitions along with their accompanying events, the Prix Ars Electronica Forum and Digital Musics in Concert, as well as IAMAS: Progressive Media Art Education from Japan at Campus hosted by the Linz University of Art will offer insights and outlooks related to the development of media culture. Special discussion forums and numerous installations in public spaces complement the program revolving around this year's focal-point theme.

>> Detailed information on Page 3

TIMESHIFT – Pulsating Events und Performances

The whole of Linz will become a stage. Apparition, a dance performance previewing the future of that artform, An Evening in the Gardens set in an idyllic spot on the Franz-Joseph-Warte above the rooftops of Linz, interactive installations by artists from Austria and abroad, music alfresco in the Donaupark along the banks of the Danube, Linz Writes Its Future as an open space for experience set up on the city's Main Square, the epic concert evening L'Espace Temporel—the spectacular events and performances at this year's Ars Electronica Festival will cover all facets of media art.

>> Detailed information on Page 5

TIMESHIFT – Focus on Digital Commons and Digital Communities

Digital communities—aggregations of men and women linked together primarily by technological networks—are assuming increasingly important roles in a wide range of social fields. Special discussion sessions and events as well as a thematic focus within the framework of the electrolobby will seek to come to terms with this phenomenon. Featured highlight: the launch of Creative Commons Austria.

TIMESHIFT – Conferences at the Nexus of Art, Technology and Society

Why is network technology assuming ever-growing importance in connection with art, technology and society? Are there functional reciprocities linking the world of art and the economy? What impact are the new technologies having on the "traditional" free media? Language of Networks, Pixelspaces and the Radio FRO Conference will stage a series of discussions dedicated to the impact zones where research, teaching, business, art and the media meet.
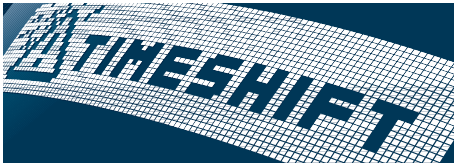
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Information on the Ars Electronica Festival: http://www.aec.at/timeshift
and the Ars Electronica Press Lounge: http://www.aec.at/press

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TIMESHIFT – Past, Present and Future of Media Culture

The Timeshift Symposium, exhibitions, discussion forums and numerous installations in public spaces present insights into the past, an assessment of the present and prospects for the future of media art and culture.

The multifaceted history of Ars Electronica is the point of departure for discussions and evaluations at the *Timeshift Symposium*. The aim is a dialog about future developments in art, technology and society. "*How do we propose to deal with the turbulent dynamics of scientific and technological change and the ethical-moral issues that will accompany it? Do we face them with more confidence now? Over the last 25 years, have we learned to assert ourselves with respect to these phenomena in a more enlightened, emancipated and critical fashion?*" asks *Gerfried Stocker,* artistic director of Ars Electronica.

Which trends have been discussed over the course of the last 25 years and which prognoses issued? Which assessments turned out to be on the money; which proved to be off the mark and why? Different generations of theoreticians, scientists and practitioners will congregate before a diverse audience of interested laymen. Their objective is not to define individual trends that will emerge in the near future but rather to form a "big picture," an overview of the way we deal with visions and prognoses in general. Here, the history of Ars Electronica is meant to serve as a tool and point of departure, and not as an object of sentimental retrospection. In each of the four panels of the *TIMESHIFT Symposium*, a young practitioner will be getting together with senior pioneers to jointly confront these issues in a way that does not turn into nostalgic reminiscence. The objective is rather to let the experiences of Ars Electronica pass in review of those unencumbered by the past.

The lineup of critical young "auditors" features:

- *Jose Carlos Mariátegui*, a young Peruvian scientist and media theorist
- *Jonah Bruckner-Cohen*, researcher at the Media Lab Europe, artist and writer
- *Alena Williams*, Columbia University, specialist in net art and classical art
- *Nadja Maurer*, specialist in code translation of trans-cultural phenomena

Speakers include:

- *Peter Weibel*, artist, theorist, former artistic director of Ars Electronica, currently head of the Center for Art and Media Technology in Karlsruhe
- *Marvin Minsky*, MIT, pioneer in robotics and artificial intelligence
- *Roger Malina*, astrophysicist and publisher of Leonardo
- *Sherry Turkle*, leading thinker in the field of computer-human interaction
- *Stewart Brand*, pioneer in the field of Web-based communities (e. g. The Well)
- Japanese "star blogger" *Joichi Ito*
- *Joan Shikegawa* from the Rockefeller Foundation
- *Esther Dyson*, journalist and former chairwoman of the ICANN Internet authority

In addition to the Timeshift Symposium, numerous special events will be dedicated to Ars Electronica and its history. At one noteworthy presentation, *Itsuo Sakane*, former head of the International Academy for Media Art and Science in Japan, will elaborate on trends and developments from the pioneering days of digital media culture.

Several exhibitions will form an arc spanning the past, present and future of media art:

Digital Avant-Garde, the anniversary exhibition that debuted to rave reviews in New York, showcases prizewinning works from the last 15 years of the Prix Ars Electronica. The exhibited works include some of the milestones of media art such as Jeffrey Shaw's "The Legible City," Christa Sommerer and Laurant Mignonneau's "Interactive Plant Growing" and Lynn Hershman's "America's Finest." This exhibition offers a one-of-a-kind look at the development of media art and of the Prix Ars Electronica as trendspotter and mirror of international media culture.

At the *Media Art Forum – Digital Avant-Garde*, artists represented in the Digital Avant-Garde / Prix Selection exhibition will present and elaborate on their work. This will be a unique opportunity for an up-close-and-personal encounter with the most prominent proponents of digital media culture.

The *Timeline* documentation analyzes the Ars Electronica network in a historical context. The linkages to participating artists, experts, collaborators, staff and cast as well as their global connections among themselves are depicted as a gigantic network graphic that provides a detailed and comprehensive overview. Timeline constitutes an innovative and fascinating representation of Ars Electronica within the context of the development of media culture over the past 25 years.
The development of digital media art is unthinkable without the contributions of analog media. On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of radio in Austria, Ars Electronica and the Austrian Broadcasting Company's Ö1 channel are taking a close look at this medium. *Re-inventing Radio* will be a live presentation—on-the-air, online and on-site—of a Long Night of Radio Art in the Ars Electronica Center and in the Radiokulturhaus in Vienna. A special symposium will also be dealing with the development of radio art.

The *CyberArts 2004* exhibition at the O.K Center for Contemporary Art will present a selection of prizewinning works from this year's Prix Ars Electronica. With a total of 3,341 submissions, the 2004 Prix once again confirmed its status as the world's premiere cyberarts competition. To complement the exhibits, the prizewinning artists will present and discuss their works at the *Prix Ars Electronica Forum*, an overview of current trends in digital art. Many other projects—"Raum R-MA/IDM-NME~XR+CP= e'MAZINEst (K)" at Kunstraum Goethestraße, for instance—as well as installations in public spaces—like "Sensory Circus" by Time's Up—will showcase state-of-the-art trends in media culture.

Whereas Digital Avant-Garde and CyberArts are dedicated to the past and present, the *Campus* exhibition will provide a glimpse into the future of artistic creativity. IAMAS, a renowned Japanese educational institution in the field of media art and technology, will present works by its students on the campus of the University of Art in Linz. This Japanese institute's unique interdisciplinary orientation and the creativity of its young students give rise to expectations of a look at the future of media art production.

Ars Electronica 2004
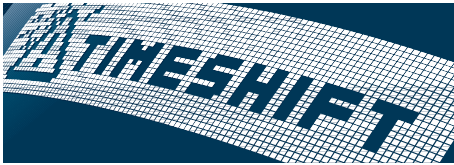
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TIMESHIFT – Pulsating Events und Performances

The whole of Linz becomes a stage. Futuristic dance performances, epic concert evenings, interactive installations and workshops of the future – the spectacular events and performances at this year's Ars Electronica Festival will cover all facets of media art.

Ars Electronica's events will be hosted by venues all over town—from the Franz-Josefs-Warte to the Ars Electronica Quarter, from the Brucknerhaus to the Posthof. For the first time, the opening gala will be combined with the Prix Ars Electronica awards ceremony in a single spectacular event at the Brucknerhaus.

At the premiere performance of *Apparition* by prizewinning composer and media artist Klaus Obermaier, new technologies will enable the dancers to interact with their environment and to influence it. With this work, Klaus Obermaier once again faces what is currently one of the most exciting challenges posed by digital media art—to perfect the utilization of technology in the art of dance, the most complex form of human expression.

On the Main Square, *Linz Writes Its Future* will set up a series of installations providing a peek into the future. Have you ever participated in a futurist think-tank? Sent an e-mail into the future? Or evaluated prognoses for the development of Linz—in, let's say, 10, 15 or 25 years—to assesses their chances of actually coming true? Ars Electronica makes it possible, and much more to boot. The future becomes tangible as Linz's Main Square turns into a time machine!

Special highlight: the Franz-Josefs-Warte as picturesque venue for sound streams, sound installations and performances during a *chill-in evening*. The Donaupark along the banks of the Danube become a realm of relaxation saturated by *Freiluft Musik – Music Alfresco. Vita Pulsante* in the Ars Electronica Quarter offers a rich program of interactive installations, projections and a lineup of DJs delivering music into the morning hours.

Numerous installations in public spaces—for example, *Sensory Circus* by the Linz group Time's Up in the Ars Electronica Quarter and *Push/Pull* by Edwin van der Heide and Marnix de Nijs at Lentos— turn Linz into a spatial setting for media culture. Game freaks will get their money's worth at *Game Night Deluxe*—a whole night of gaming on a gigantic 3-D panorama screen that will delight viewers and players alike. *Digital Musics in Concert* will present the prizewinning projects in the 2004 Prix Ars Electronica's Digital Musics category.

L'Espace Temporel will serve up a concert evening on a grand scale with a program ranging from orchestral music, digital sound synthesis, live electronics and remix. It will feature music by György Ligeti, Christian Fennesz, Philip Glass and Steve Reich performed by a diverse assortment of artists including Linz's Bruckner Orchestra and Rupert Huber, and underscored by visuals and graphic imagery by Martin Wattenberg, Jon Wozencroft et al. This will be an epic concert presenting a broad spectrum of contemporary music.

The *Klangwolke* by Peter Wolf promises music, visualizations, fireworks, projections.

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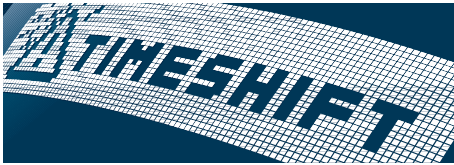
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TIMESHIFT – Focus on Digital Commons and Digital Communities

In the wake of the tremendous success of the Prix Ars Electronica's new Digital Communities category, TIMESHIFT focuses the spotlight of attention on the digital commons and digital communities.

Digital communities, whose members are often completely geographically isolated from one another and link up only by means of technological networks, are assuming increasingly important roles in such diverse areas as political articulation, recreational activities and artistic creativity. This leading-edge phenomenon will be one of the major themes of Ars Electronica 2004.

In order to acknowledge the ever-increasing significance of virtual or digital communities, the Prix Ars Electronica launched a new "Digital Communities" category in 2004 to single out for recognition projects that are utilizing modern technologies to implement a vision of open, democratic structures. The tremendous success of this new category—410 submissions in its very first year—confirmed both the judgment of its initiators as well as, yet again, the function of the Prix Ars Electronica as trendspotter and the world's leading cyberarts competition. The phenomenon of digital communities will also be one of the festival's essential focal-point themes.

The *electrolobby* in particular will provide a platform for lectures and discussions about digital communities. What began as an "experimental array" for the presentation of "unexhibitable" forms of digital art has long since mutated into a convivial get-together and a popular fixture at Ars Electronica each year. And with the *electrolobby Kitchen*, this "festival within a festival" has spawned its own discourse domain in which artists put their positions and works up for discussion and subject what's been going on at the Festival to critical analysis.

Featured highlight: the launch of *Creative Commons* Austria. An important force in the formation of digital communities is the possibility of artistic collaboration. Here, copyright in its traditional form is often a hindrance since its strict construction frequently acts to prevent artists from working together. Creative Commons is an organization that has long been working on facilitating the process of artistic cooperation through an alternative copyright, and it makes important legal framework conditions available in pursuit of this end. In recognition of its efforts, Creative Commons was awarded the 2004 Golden Nica in the Prix Ars Electronica's Net Vision category. In conjunction with Ars Electronica 2004, Creative Commons will initiate its activities in Austria, and *Lawrence Lessig*, one

of the leading thinkers at Creative Commons, will attend the festival.

Digital communities have also assumed a key role in the process of erecting or expanding infrastructure in African, Latin American and Asian countries. *The World Starts With Me*, a project that received one of the two Golden Nicas in the Prix Ars Electronica's Digital Communities category, as well as "smart X tension," the recipient of one of that category's Awards of Distinction, define their mission as utilizing modern technologies to bridge the gap between poor and rich countries. On the occasion of the festival, *Mulonga.net* will erect a sound-bridge between Linz and Zimbabwe.

At the Prix Ars Electronica Forum, *Howard Rheingold*, the expert in the field of digital communities, will join together with *Wikipedia* founder *Jimmy Wales*, experts from Creative Commons, and other digital community practitioners to elaborate on the phenomenon of digital communities in the Internet.

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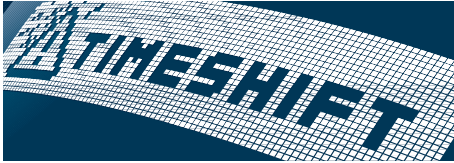
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TIMESHIFT – Conferences at the Nexus of Art, Technology and Society

Why is network technology assuming ever-growing importance? Are there functional reciprocities linking the world of art and the economy? What impact are the new technologies having on the "traditional" free media? Exciting topics at the interface of art, technology and society?

Even prior to the opening of Ars Electronica 2004, the *Language of Networks* conference will be providing insights into the latest network theories and network visualizations, and shedding light on potential applications in such diverse areas as science, the economy and art. Network technologies are playing an ever-more-prominent role in all of these fields. Experts and practitioners representing a broad spectrum of disciplines will be discussing background factors and future prospects of this trend.

Can media art also be a source of creative impetus in other areas such as business and science? Certain industrial applications that have emerged as spin-offs of approaches taken by media artists seem to suggest this. But what role ought artists to assume in this connection? How do they define their activities within this field of tension defined by necessary interrelationships with and equally necessary distance from the propagators of business ventures and R&D? This year's *Pixelspaces* will deal with this issue.

The *Radio FRO Conference* is dedicated to the latest communications tools and the impact their development is having on the free media scene. The fusion of "traditional" FM technology and new Web-based applications have raised a number of interesting prospects for free radio—cost savings in the production process, facilitated swapping with partner media, and expanded offerings through the possibilities of streaming and radio-on-demand. Nevertheless, these media are able to reach many target groups only by means of FM technology since social fringe groups' access to Web-based and PC-based technologies is still limited. What is the ideal blend here between "old" and "new" technologies and what concrete steps can free media take to exploit them?
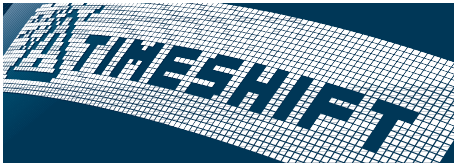
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TIMESHIFT – Symposium

This year's Ars Electronica symposium will include four rounds of discussions dealing with "TIMESHIFT – The World in 25 Years." These sessions will run the gamut from enthusiasm to criticism, from the personal to the futuristic. In order to achieve a blend of rich experiences and fresh points of view, each panel consists of several recognized pioneers—all of whom are renowned experts in their field and have made significant contributions to areas involving art, technology and society—and a young commentator. The commentators are young artists and researchers whose job is to supply a historical overview of their respective aspect of the theme put together from a wide array of manuscripts, pictures and videos from 25 years of Ars Electronica. The multifaceted history of this quarter century is meant to give rise to a dialog about the future. Our mission in this undertaking is to utilize history as an instrument to take a look forward, not as a way to avoid facing the future.

TIMESHIFT Symposium I – PROGRESS

The first session, PROGRESS, deals with the promise of science and technology. Participants will address the dreams, hopes and wishes that progress might be able to bring to fruition.

Roger Malina, astronomer and publisher of the Leonardo Journal, has been invited to serve as generalist. "Progress Revisited" based on the Ars Electronica Archive will be presented by *José-Carlos Mariátegui*, a young scientist and media theorist from Peru. *Peter Weibel*, director of the ZKM, will be speaking in his capacity as artist and meta-artist about art and progress. *Esther Dyson*, writer, high-tech entrepreneur and former chairwoman of ICANN (Internet Corporation For Assigned Names and Numbers) who was active in Russia for several years, will discuss technology and progress in her speech. Ismail Serageldin will also participate as a specialist.

TIMESHIFT Symposium II – DISRUPTION

In the second forum, DISRUPTION, everything revolves around errors, coincidences, accidents and rejection. The point is to show how intentions really are relative and how countervailing forces can gain the upper hand in an imperfect world in which everything does not always run according to plan.

This session's generalist is *Joichi Ito*, an early nurturer of the Internet, activist and entrepreneur from Japan. *Jonah-Brucker Cohen*, researcher at the Media Lab Europe and doctoral candidate at Trinity

College, Dublin as well as a well-known artist and writer, will present the "youthful standpoint." *Krzysztof Wodiczko*, a Polish artist known for his large-scale interventions in public spaces and currently director of the new Center for Advanced Visual Studies at MIT, will take up the theme of art and disruption.

TIMESHIFT Symposium III – SPIRIT

The third session, SPIRIT, treats beauty, passion and inner drive. Here, participants take leave of things global and turn within to consider the self. Panelists will shed light on matters related to well-being, pleasure, family and mortality.

The generalist in this group is *Geetha Narayanan*, the founder and head of the Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology in Bangalore and a member of ThinkCycle, an international initiative that fosters cooperative undertakings with disadvantaged communities. "Spirit Revisited" will be presented by *Alena Williams*, a doctoral candidate at Columbia University's Department of Art History who has a background in classical art and net art, and is currently a guest lecturer in Berlin. *Sherry Turkle*, a psychologist who has turned her attention to computer culture and the founder and head of the MIT Initiative on Technology and Self, will reflect on spirit and society. *Marvin Minsky* will also speak.

TIMESHIFT Symposium IV – TOPIA

The final session, TOPIA, is devoted exclusively to the world in 25 years. The participants have put together highly complex, creative and daring scenarios dealing with several artistically, technologically and socially relevant themes.

Leading off this panel will be Austrian computer scientist *Gerhard Dirmoser*, who will present his unique and ambitious word diagram, a project based on information theory (though prepared by hand) that represents a selection from the documentation of the Ars Electronica Festivals of the last 25 years. *Nadja Maurer*, a student of comparative cultural studies at the University of Hamburg who is working on code translation of trans-cultural phenomena and media communications structures, will present "Topia Revisited." *Joan Shigekawa*, associate director for arts and humanities at the Rockefeller Foundation, will elaborate on recent broad-based community studies having to do with art and culture. Finally, *Stewart Brand*, the founder of Whole Earth as well as the co-founder and president of the LongNow Foundation, will thematicize long-term thinking. *Derrick De Kerckhove* is another expert who will be delivering an address.

You'll find detailed information about the symposium participants on the enclosed CD-ROM.

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