International Competition for Cyberarts
http://prixars.aec.at

PRIXARS
PRIX ARS ELECTRONICA

Computer Animation / Visual Effects
Digital Musics
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Press Information - Awards of Distinction
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PRIX ARS ELECTRONICA 2005: Awards of Distinction

Awards of Distinction in Computer Animation / Visual Effects

Award of Distinction in Computer Animation / Visual Effects
Gaelle Denis / Passion Pictures (France / Great Britain)
City Paradise

London is a really big city, and for new inhabitants who've just moved to town, it can sometimes be a little scary. Accordingly, Gaelle Denis initially draws a gray, desolate picture of the metropolis, depicting it as an intimidating presence. And so it is with Tomoko, a young Japanese girl who comes to London to learn English. At first, she doesn't like it a bit there. She hardly even leaves the house. But that changes radically when, quite by accident, she discovers a mysterious, secret underground city below London, a place that's colorful and friendly. In the wake of this experience, she meets a lot of new friends, learns English and makes one wonderful discovery after another. Gaelle Denis is 29 years old. She was born in France and moved to London in 2000 to study at the Royal College of Art.

The jury was especially impressed by the unusual concept, extraordinary style and lovely execution of the animation in Gaelle Denis' work.

Award of Distinction in Computer Animation / Visual Effects
Brad Bird / Pixar (USA)
The Incredibles
www.theincredibles.com

Pixar Studios' box-office success has helped raise the traditional elements of computer animation—character development, production design, cinematography, costumes, effects, music and overall vision—to an unprecedented new level of quality. Every single one of these elements has been perfected, and they have been combined to make "The Incredibles" a masterpiece of contemporary animation art.

Awards of Distinction in Digital Communities

Award of Distinction in Digital Communities
Free Software Foundation (USA)
http://www.fsf.org
http://www.gnu.org

The Free Software Foundation was established in 1985 as a means of organizing the worldwide community for free software. Behind this abstract description stand millions of people working on free

software projects on a voluntary basis. The top item on the organization's agenda is the effort to promote "free" software—not "gratis" but rather in the sense of the free expression of opinion, since the group regards freely available software—programs that can also be enhanced and upgraded by groups of developers working jointly—as an important pillar supporting freedom of opinion today. Patents, copyrights and intellectual property issues are the central areas of the FSF's activities. Furthermore, the Free Software Foundation is the chief patron of the GNU project. The GNU operating system is widely used today in conjunction with the linux kernel.

Award of Distinction in Digital Communities
New Global Vision / Telestreet (Italy)
http://www.ngvision.org
http://www.telestreet.it

New Global Vision and Telestreet are initiatives that are taking concerted public action against the monopoly position of the major TV stations. Citizens can create their own TV shows. Through reciprocal linkups and cooperative efforts, the two projects have jointly achieved an optimal mix of television-based and Internet-based media technologies.

Telestreet has come up with a way to establish so-called "street TV stations" on a relatively limited budget. In Italy, 250 mini-stations have already been set up in this way, each of which is operated by a staff of 10-15 persons. With the help of antennas mounted on private homes, each station can broadcast to a transmission area with a radius of about 300 meters. If several antennas are linked up into a network, the transmission area expands accordingly.

Telestreet is the first such initiative to provide easy access to the medium of television. Anyone can create, produce and broadcast program content; a video camera and a PC are the only equipment necessary.

New Global Vision is Italy's first freely accessible archive to make available independent video material beyond the realm of the giant TV stations and media conglomerates. It was created by a community of artists, Web designers, video artists, technicians and hackers who contributed their expertise and experience to this joint venture. The project was organized immediately after the events in Genoa in 2001. A large amount of video material about the demonstrators was available, but most of it was ignored by the mass media, and many independent political groups felt themselves to be victims of censorship. Thus, there was a growing need for a platform from which to make independent video material available to the general public. New Global Vision now offers amateur filmmakers the opportunity to quickly get their material seen by large audiences.

Awards of Distinction in Interactive Art

Award of Distinction in Interactive Art
Mateusz Herczka (The Netherlands)
Life Support Systems: Vanda
www.westerplatte.net

In principle, our entire lives can be reduced to information. What we do, the people we meet, our likes and dislikes, the sound of our voice—all of this is information, saved to memory in our brain, recordable by means of electronic impulses. The *Life Support Systems* installation deals with the possibility of enabling life to continue after death in a modified form: as information. The point of departure of such an effort would be to electronically record all of a creature's memories and reactions. Permanently saving all necessary information would theoretically make life extension in virtual space possible.

Mateusz Herczka views his "*Life Support Systems: Vanda*" project as an experiment in this direction.

The installation collects data generated by the minute shifts in electrical current produced by the metabolic processes of Vanda orchids. Then, computers running artificial intelligence software reproduce these physical states, which is tantamount to the lives of the orchids being carried on in the computer itself.

Award of Distinction in Interactive Art
Marc Downie, Shelley Eshkar, Paul Kaiser (USA)
how long does the subject linger on the edge of the volume…
http://web.media.mit.edu/~marcd/howlongstructures.html

Dancers are constantly entering into relationships—to a physical space or to other dancers. The software programmed by Marc Downie, Shelley Eshkar and Paul Kaiser registers the dancers' movements in space and portrays the relationships among them via visualizations. However, the main area of emphasis in the recording process is not so much on the reaction to the movements of the individual artist and to a much greater extent on registering and further developing the overall conception of all movements within the framework of a dance piece. Over the course of a piece, the software ultimately starts to calculate its own choreographic approaches and begins on its own to actively interact with the dancers.

Awards of Distinction in Digital Musics

Award of Distinction in Digital Musics
John Oswald / fony (CA)
plunderphonics
www.plunderphonics.com

John Oswald's work "*plunderphonics*" spans an arc between the analog and digital eras of sound. In most of his works, Oswald recomposes the tonal pieces of other musicians and transforms them into new acoustic experiences. New mixing technologies made available by the computer have provided Oswald with the possibility of realizing much more complex pieces in a much shorter time. A new CD collection released by Oswald's label fony offers an overview of the artist's work from 1969 to 1996. An additional CD contains several excerpts from more recent projects.

Award of Distinction in Digital Musics
Pan Sonic (Finland)
Kesto

The Finnish duo Pan Sonic has been active since the '80s. "*Kesto*" was inspired by the work of Irish painter Francis Bacon. Pan Sonic uses special analog sound generators and always record their songs on DAT during live performances. "*Kesto*" is a multifaceted album consisting of four CDs. Here, the spectrum of Pan Sonic's creativity ranges from noise-heavy tracks featuring intense machine sounds and violent acoustic constructions all the way to tender tones that could almost be characterized as ambient.

Awards of Distinction in Net Vision

Award of Distinction in Net Vision
Yugo Nakamura (Japan)
yugop.com

Yugo Nakamura is known for his versatile Internet projects in the art and design area. The most outstanding features of yugop.com, a website he has designed, are its high degree of originality and charm. Nakamura has influenced an entire generation of designers and artists. The award for yugop.com can thus be regarded as recognition of his entire body of work.

Award of Distinction in Net Vision
UBERMORGEN.COM; lizvlx / Hans Bernhard (Austria)
Vote-auction.net

Republican and Democratic candidates spend hundred of millions of dollars during the course of every presidential election campaign. This money is supposed to garner votes, which is why it flows into travel budgets, TV spots, print ads and other "campaign instruments." But let's face it: this is not a particularly efficient method, and is one in which the return on investment does not seem very clear-cut. Now, the organizers of *vote-auction.net* have come up with a more direct way of going about this. They set up *vote-auction.net*, an Internet platform at which campaign managers can buy voters' support auction-style. With this approach, *vote-auction.net* opens up a dynamic new market.

Awards of Distinction and Merchandise Prizes in u19 - freestyle computing

Award of Distinction in u19 - freestyle computing
5th Year Students at the Multimedia Graphic School, Vienna (Austria)
Möbel

A Prix Ars Electronica 2005 Award of Distinction goes to a group of 5th year students at the Multimedia Graphic School, Vienna. As part of a semester project, 25 students created 3D animation sequences of various different chairs. Starting with sketches or schematic drawings, the respective chair was processed, modeled, textured and finally inserted into a larger scale piece of animation in which the chairs themselves play the starring roles. They construct themselves and then, through modification and the addition of more parts, transform themselves into new objects.

Award of Distinction in u19 - freestyle computing
Creative Minds / Viktoria Buchberger, Ute Greiner, Hanna Gruber, Prisca Heim, Sara Wilnauer) /
BRG Hamerling (Austria)
MKK – Jubiläumsfun (Game / Interactive Application)

The virtual school-day: five students in the music & creativity program (Musisch-Kreativen Klassen, MKK) at Hamerling High School in Linz are recipients of an Award of Distinction from the Prix Ars Electronica this year for a computer game entitled "*MKK Jubliläumsfun*." The subject matter of this point-and-click-style adventure game is an MKK class' everyday life in school. The game's chief pro-tagonist is a young co-ed who, after passing the entrance exam, has to manage a series of tasks assigned to her. Just like in a classic adventure game, the plot narrative consists of interacting with other characters in the game environment, locating objects and answering questions.

Merchandise Prize u19 - freestyle computing for creative artists under 10 years of age
David Haslinger (Austria)
The Lord of the Rings – A Scanned Story

Prix insiders are already familiar with 9-year-old David Haslinger from last year's competition in which he was singled out for recognition for his short film "Es war einmal ein Mann" (There once was a man...). This youngster from Linz has chalked up another prize this year—"The Lord of the Rings – A Scanned Story" has been awarded a merchandise prize. The plot of J.R.R. Tolkien's novel was recreated using images of action figures scanned into a computer, with which the material was processed into a short animated film. David's enthusiastic approach to Tolkien's epic really comes across in this work, for which the filmmaker also created his own audio, sound effects and music. The background imagery was found with the Google search engine and in magazines.

Merchandise Prize u19 - freestyle computing for creative artists under 15 years of age
Sonja Vrisk (Austria)
Pegasus X7/222/12

"I get my best ideas when I'm around horses," 12-year-old Sonja Vrisk from Klagenfurt maintains. The old computer in her bedroom was no long what you would call state-of-the-art, so she took drill and soldering iron in hand to recycle its components into a work of art of a very special breed. The outcome has been dubbed Pegasus X7/22/12 and is a futuristic, LED-and-mood-barometer-equipped descendant of the winged steed of Greek mythology. Another cute feature: ears made from the computer's cooling fan.

Winner of [the next idea] Art and Technology Grant

[the next idea] Art and Technology Grant
Martin Mairinger (Austria)
USED Clothing

Clothes are an expression of an individual's identity. The way a person dresses is almost always directly connected to his/her lifestyle, worldview and self-image. "OK, then why not use clothing even more intensely as a medium?" mused Martin Mairinger. And the Linz native proceeded to create "*USED Clothing*," a concept for furnishing clothes with additional information.

A radio frequency identification (RFID) chip to which the wearer can save information about himself/herself is sewn into each garment. When the item of clothing—for instance, a jacket, pair of pants or T-shirt—is sold at a special second-hand shop, the buyer can access this information online and find out about the garment's past.

The interests and personal philosophy of individuals with a preference for the same type of clothing often resemble one another. Accordingly, the second-hand interface node just might yield interesting hookups. The project's long-term concept envisions the establishment of a community of registered users who take advantage of the second-hand shop's offerings not only to acquire clothing but also to establish social contacts within the network of human beings connected to the shop.

Special Jury Prize in the Interactive Art Category

Theo Jansen
Strandbeest
www.strandbeest.com

Theo Jansen is already "breeding" the seventh generation of his multi-legged walking critters designed to roam the Dutch coastline. His multifarious constructions—or perhaps "life forms" would be a more appropriate characterization—range from tiny creatures to immense yet surprisingly nimble behemoths that blend high-tech engineering and biological principles. They all have one thing in common: They move about on multiple sets of legs, and all of their movements are fed by gusts of wind, whereby Theo Jansen's creations can also be said to represent a vision for futuristic, alternative forms of locomotion. In any case, one of his newest creatures already comes equipped with a saddle.

The Dutch artist has been constructing his hybrid forms at the interface of nature and technology for about 14 years. Jansen has constantly enhanced and upgraded his creatures in a process that he refers to as "evolution."

Special Jury Prize in the Digital Communities Category

BitTorrent
www.bittorrent.com

Many artists make their works available online for users to download free of charge. Nevertheless, anyone who offers such creative products—music, computer games and the like—in this way pays fees to do so to his/her Internet service provider. And the more popular the product is and, thus, the more people who download it, the more expensive this becomes for the producer. Ultimately, if the product turns into a smash success that attracts enormous user interest, the inundation of hits on the site has even been known to cause the server to crash.

BitTorrent developed a file-sharing protocol that enables creative artists to make their works available online in an economical way. The way it works is that anyone who has downloaded a file free of charge from BitTorrent subsequently makes it available on his/her own computer for other users to download. Thus, the data transfer costs are shared, and the more popular a work is, the more computers there are to download it from. This is an ingeniously simple principle that yields a collaborative way to help artists continue to make their works available in the true spirit of the "free software" idea.

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