

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

John Gerard's Dark Portraits

Irish media artist John Gerrard's first one-man show is entitled "Dark Portraits." It's running until Thursday, March 1, 2007 at hilger contemporary in Vienna.

"Dark Portraits" presents selected works from John Gerrard's extensive oeuvre. It showcases virtual sculptures in addition to recent photography. The exhibition runs until March 1, 2007. The artist has developed several of his projects in cooperation with the Ars Electronica Futurelab in Linz.

The Exhibition

The current exhibition features a photographic series entitled "Dark Portraits." The subjects are children in what is initially a completely blacked-out space; during sudden flashes of electronic light, the camera captures their unsure, searching expressions. These images take a position within the tradition of Irish tragedies as they manifest the insecurity and uncertainty of human existence. The exhibition also includes works from the "Smoke Tree" series. Here, instead of life-giving oxygen, trees produce carbon, which enshrouds them in a virtual fog. "One Thousand Year Dawn (Marcel)" depicts a young man on a deserted beach watching the sunrise. In the year 3005, he leaves the scene; all that's left behind is the landscape. Several of the artist's latest works of photographic art round out the show.

Additional Information about the Exhibition:

http://www.hilger.at/387_DE

Ongoing Collaboration with Ars Electronica

John Gerrard and Ars Electronica have worked together on several occasions in recent years.

In **2003**, he spent nine months as artist-in-residence at the Ars Electronica Futurelab. The result was "Networked Portrait," which allows those partaking of it to use a touchscreen to variously modify the appearance and orientation of two 3D portraits.

This was followed up in **2004** by "Watchful Portrait Caroline," a 3D model that follows the course of the sun by day and the moon by night. John Gerrard also took part in PixelSpaces 2004. This Ars Electronica Futurelab symposium invited experts from around the world to discuss the extent to which artistic strategies could provide an impetus for development in fields beyond the confines of the art world.

In **2005**, John Gerrard developed his installation "The Ladder" in which a virtual figure stands on a ladder and peers into the real world. "The Ladder" not only engenders a virtual presence in a real space; it also manifests virtual longing for the physical.

Since **2006**, his 3D installation "Smoke Tree" has been featured at the Ars Electronica Center Linz.

Additional information about John Gerrard is available at:

<http://www.johngerrard.net/>

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