

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

Launched: Prix Ars Electronica 2008

The 2008 Prix Ars Electronica is underway. Creatives worldwide can begin submitting their entries. The deadline is March 7, 2008. An international jury will deliberate April 17-20, 2008. Winners will be honored with six Golden Nicas, an award from the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute Media.Art.Research and prize money totaling 115,000 euros. Lead sponsors of the 2008 Prix Ars Electronica are voestalpine and LIWEST.

Seven Categories

The competition's seven categories mirror the diversity of creativity in the media arts. This is made especially clear by the Hybrid Art category that premiered last year: intentionally open-ended, Hybrid Art focuses on efforts to achieve crossover at the nexus of art and science, remixes and mash-ups of different genres and forms of artistic expression. The other 2008 Prix Ars Electronica categories are COMPUTER ANIMATION / FILM / VFX, INTERACTIVE ART, DIGITAL MUSICS, DIGITAL COMMUNITIES, u19 – freestyle computing and the Media.Art.Research Award. Details about the individual categories and

entry rules are available at www.aec.at/prix. Submit questions via e-mail to info@prixars.aec.at.

World's highest endowed media art competition

Since 1987, the Prix Ars Electronica has been the most important international showcase of excellence for digital media at the interface of art, technology and society. Equally wide-ranging is the spectrum of participants—from world-renowned artists (Karlheinz Stockhausen, Lynn Herschman, Toshio Iwai / Ryuichi Sakamoto, Chris Cunningham / Aphex Twin) and Oscar-winners (John Lasseter, Chris Landreth) to young people blazing new trails in creativity (Graffiti Research Lab). Thanks to the name this competition has made for itself around the world, the fact that it's held annually and the large number of submissions it attracts—37,542 since 1987—the Prix Ars Electronica Archive can now provide detailed insights into the development of media art, its openness, diversity and significant trends. Participation in the 2007 competition set a record: 3,374 submissions from 63 countries. With prize money of 115,000 euros, the Prix Ars Electronica is the world's highest endowed competition in the media arts.

Organizers and Sponsors

The Prix Ars Electronica is organized by the Ars Electronica Center Linz and the ORF – Austrian Broadcasting Company's Upper Austria Regional Studio. Cooperating partners are the Brucknerhaus and the O.K Center for Contemporary Art. The Prix Ars Electronica is supported by the City of Linz and the Province of Upper Austria. Lead sponsors are voestalpine and LIWEST.

Additional sponsors are KulturKontakt Austria, Pöstlingberg Schössl, Casinos Austria and Sony DADC.

The Categories in Detail

COMPUTER ANIMATION / FILM / VFX

A component of the Prix Ars Electronica since Day 1, this category provides a forum for independent artistic and scientific works as well as commercial high-end productions in the film, advertising and entertainment industries. Prime considerations are a work's artistic originality and technical quality.

INTERACTIVE ART

From installations to performances to Internet projects—the scope of the Interactive Art category is enormous. Central importance is attributed to the artistic quality of the design and development of the interaction; moreover, judges are looking for a harmonious dialog between the content level on one hand and the principles of interaction and the interfaces used to get that content across on the other. Sociopolitical relevance is also taken into account.

DIGITAL MUSICS

All sorts of digital sound productions can be submitted to the Digital Musics category, regardless of the work's genre or the medium utilized. Primary attention is paid to its aesthetics, originality, conceptual level, the innovativeness of its expression as well as the form and quality of the presentation.

HYBRID ART

Efforts to cross borders between art and science, remixes and mash-ups of different genres and forms of artistic expression characterize the essence of much work being done today in digital art. Transdisciplinary approaches are inherent in such artworks and do much to explain their leading-edge appeal; at the same time, this makes it nearly impossible to classify or categorize them, which is why Hybrid Art was set up as an extremely broadly-conceived Prix category in its own right.

DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

The Digital Communities category acknowledges the wide-ranging social impact of the Internet as well as leading-edge developments in the areas of social software, ubiquitous computing, mobile communications and wireless networks. Its mission is to honor bold and inspired innovation fostering human coexistence, efforts to bridge the geographic as well as the gender-based Digital Divide, to solve issues of cultural diversity, to promote freedom of artistic expression as well as to propagate outstanding social software. The Digital Communities category spotlights the political and artistic potential of digital and network-linked systems; accordingly, its purview is a broad spectrum of projects, artworks, programs, initiatives and phenomena in which social and artistic innovation is taking place in what amounts to real time.

u19 – freestyle computing

In 1998, Ars Electronica launched Austria's largest computer competition for young people. The range of potential entries encompasses anything designed or executed by computer: animated films, graphics, drawings, sounds, games, software or hardware applications, and websites.

Media.Art.Research Award

In conjunction with the Prix Ars Electronica, the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute honors outstanding theoretical works on the subject of media art. For one thing, this is meant to formally acknowledge research currently being done in art history and media studies, but an equally important aim is to further the ongoing discourse about scholarly methods, hypotheses and standards. It is above all media art's pluralism—its quality of resisting any once-and-for-all categorization—that necessitates an intensive scientific encounter with and analysis of it. This is precisely why the Media.Art.Research Award is continuing to support the scholarly process of coming to terms with forms of media art that have not yet gotten established in art museums and/or in the commercial art world. The 2007 theme was net-based art; this year, the focus will be on interactive artforms.

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