

P R E S S R E L A S E

Ars Electronica and MRG Fadingerstraße at the EU's Youth Conference

The Ars Electronica Center is working together with MRG Fadingerstraße, a Linz high school with a strong media program, on an innovative project that takes students on an excursion from the real city into a virtual one and then onward into united Europe. The results will be presented at "Generation siX," the European youth conference being held May 3-5 in Linz.

Linz, May 3, 2006 (Ars Electronica). A highly dedicated team of teachers and students at MRG Fadingerstraße have put a lot of work into a project designed to enable young people from different age groups to undertake an intensive encounter with the future of education on a regional level. The Ars Electronica Center's contributions to this effort are two applications developed by the Ars Electronica Futurelab: WikiMap Linz and WikiMap Europe, which together constitute an ideal scenario for making young people's ideas visible. The final product will be a practical demonstration of the manifold possibilities for international and regional exchange offered by an Internet-based interactive media platform.

Between January and April 2006, students combed the city in search of current and future “knowledge realms.” Part of this was interviewing numerous opinion leaders in cultural fields, politics, science and the media to get their take on “knowledge realms of the future.” But the young researchers also checked out informal “knowledge realms” like public squares and places that are conducive to conversation—an informal variety of information exchange.

All of the resulting interviews and photos have become elements of WikiMap Linz’s “virtual metropolis.” The students will present their project at “**generation siX**”, the youth conference being held in early May at the Design Center Linz in conjunction with Austria’s EU Council Presidency. Parallel to the Linz project, participants from 12 European countries are developing a catalog of questions dealing with the future of education and culture in Europe, which will be depicted in WikiMap Europe.

In this way, regional points of view encounter one another on the European level and real cityscapes are juxtaposed to their virtual counterparts. In the spirit of learning and taking a proactive approach to shaping the world of tomorrow, these students are bringing tremendous commitment to their participation in the European discussion of “The Future of Education and Culture.”

During the “Come together:generation siX” conference being held May 3-5 at the Design Center Linz, the Ars Electronica Center will be offering workshops as well as guided tours for the 400 attendees. Info is available online at <http://www.abc-network.org/de/>.

WikiMap Linz: www.hotspotlinz.at/wikimap

WikiMap Europe: www.aec.at/wikimapeurope-generationsix

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