

P R E S S R E L E A S E**Ars Electronica Futurelab at the European Tourism Ministers' Conference**

Mahler and Schönbrunn Palace as successful projects with great future promise in the tourism industry. Expert address by Horst Hörtner, director of the Ars Electronica Futurelab.

Vienna/Linz, March 20, 2006 (Ars Electronica). The European Tourism Ministers' Conference will bring together tourism ministers from the EU-25, the candidate countries, EFTA/EEA and West Balkan states, representatives of international and European organizations and the tourism industry to create a high-level discussion forum in which to analyze growth and employment aspects of and future prospects for tourism in Europe. This conference will be held March 20-21, 2006 in the Hofburg Congress Centre in Vienna, and is an integral part of Austria's EU Council Presidency.

In conjunction with this important conclave, Horst Hörtner, director of the Ars Electronica Futurelab, has been invited to deliver a keynote address in which he will provide insights into the latest R&D developments in the field of interactive visualization for tourism and culture.

And, as part of the conference's lineup of events, the Ars Electronica Futurelab has designed a program of interactive experiences. A large-format (5 m x 2.1 m) projection

screen will alternately display 3D visualizations from two Ars Electronica Futurelab projects: "Mahler's Resurrection Symphony" and "Schönbrunn Palace." Both efforts illustrate digital creativity's tremendous potential for the tourism industry and in cultural productions.

Mahler's Resurrection Symphony was produced on January 1, 2006 on the occasion of WDR's 50th anniversary. To kick off its golden jubilee celebration, Western Germany's public broadcasting station treated its viewers to an extraordinary cultural experience. The WDR Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Head Conductor Semyon Bychkov, renowned Austrian media artist Johannes Deutsch and the Ars Electronica Futurelab collaborated on a multimedial performance of Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 2 in C minor as an artistic expression of our time. State-of-the-art computer technology was used to produce the visuals accompanying Mahler's famed Resurrection Symphony.

To produce 3D visualizations of several rooms in Vienna's fabulous imperial residence, the Schönbrunn Palace Society decided in 2005 to take an innovative approach and turned to the Ars Electronica Futurelab to carry it out. In a pilot project, the Linz media art laboratory visualized the "Million Room" in the form of an interactive 3D simulation. In the wake of its tremendous success, additional visualizations—of the Ceremonial Hall and one of the three Pink Rooms—soon followed. Now, visitors can tour virtual Schönbrunn without ever having been to the actual imperial palace. This innovative development is now proving itself both as a marketing tool at international tourism expos and as a means of conserving priceless cultural treasures.

About the Ars Electronica Futurelab

The Futurelab is the prototype of a new kind of media art R&D laboratory in which artistic and technological innovation drives reciprocal inspiration. Each of the lab's working groups brings together a wide variety of skills; their approach to a project is characterized by interdisciplinarity and international networking. Conceiving and executing exhibitions and

artistic installations as well as collaborations with university facilities and joint ventures with partners in the private sector frame the Futurelab's broad spectrum of activities.

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