

ARS ELECTRONICA 2004

Linz, September 2 - 7
www.aec.at/timeshift



TIMESHIFT -
The World in 25 Years
Ars Electronica
2004

INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

Los Angeles, 8 August 2004

Ars Electronica <<http://www.aec.at>>, the oldest, largest, and most prominent art and technology festival in the world, today launched a web site inviting participants to make predictions about the next 25 years, year by year, and to vote on predictions already posted. The project, called the "t+25 timeline" <<http://www.aec.at/predictions>>, is part of the Festival's 25th anniversary celebration, to be held in September, in Linz, Austria. The theme of this year's festival is "TIMESHIFT - the World in Twenty-Five Years."

The t+25 timeline was announced at Siggraph 2004 in Los Angeles, an international conference on computer graphics and interactive techniques expected to attract over 25,000 attendees. The announcement, during the Siggraph Artist Round Tables, marks the launching of a beta version intended to "seed" the timeline with entries.

During the Ars Electronica Festival, 2-7 September, t+25 will exhibit as a public installation, where attendees can participate. It will remain accessible online during this time. When the Festival ends on 7 September 2004, t+25 freezes and will be available online as an archive.

t+25 is open to anyone on the Web. Registration is not required. Voting is based on a simple one vote per entry per day per computer basis.

"The t+25 timeline is a cultural experiment," says guest curator Michael Naimark, "intended to encourage imaginative articulation of future scenarios. It is also intended to be iterative and emergent, with entries and votes affecting more entries and votes. Our goal is to enable creative surprise."

"Ars Electronica has a long history of engaging the artistic community in social and cultural issues," continues Artistic Director Gerfried Stocker. "With t+25, we have opened up the creative process to anyone willing to speak about or vote on future ideas."

Though the Web is laden with predictions, prophesies, and scenarios, very few sites exist for open posting and voting. The most prominent of these sites is by the Long Bets Foundation <<http://www.longbets.org>>, where participants can post predictions as public wagers, or "accountable predictions."

"t+25" is a faster, looser version of Long Bets" says Naimark. "Theirs is situated in life. Ours is situated in art. We fully expect ours to complement theirs."

Ars Electronica 2004
TIMESHIFT - The World in Twenty-Five Years
Linz, Thu 2 - Tue 7 September
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"TIMESHIFT - The World in Twenty-Five Years" is the title of the 2004 festival for art, technology and society; transformation, upheaval and the future are its programmatic concepts. The point of departure is reflection upon the past 25 years; the aim is to identify the developments that promise to be the driving forces in art, technology and society over the next quarter century.

Will key technologies like nanotechnology lead to another technological revolution that will change our lives as fundamentally as digital media have done? What areas of social confrontation can we anticipate? Does the way we deal with new technologies change in light of our ever-increasing experience or do we still lapse into the same automatic reaction mechanisms of enthusiasm for or hostility towards innovation?

What conclusions can be drawn from the past and utilized in addressing these emerging issues? Ars Electronica has 25 years of development and experience behind it, and has amassed an enormous archive documenting its unique breadth as a discussion forum. On the basis of the experience thus gained and in keeping with its mission as an instrument of social analysis, Ars Electronica 2004 will also be dedicated to the question of whether ongoing social development-in the sense of a learning curve derived from the past and applied to the future-is possible.

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