

Delphi Digital

Margot Pilz / Roland Scheidl

The exciting thing about the project "DELPHI DIGITAL" is its diversity and ambiguity on different levels.

It represents a network between people, and not only one-sided access to information, but rather multiple path communication. Visitors to the Ars Electronica can simply tune into discussions by means of a keyboard and an international computer network, for example to discussions about environmental problems, regional and/or world politics, amongst other things.

A video clip shows loops of moon, sun and earth pictures acoustically accompanied by sounds from the sun and from our planet (endless tape).

The sculpture will be made from smoke-grey coloured acrylic plastic. Digital picture alienations (MP) will be inserted between two six-millimetre thick acrylic plastic plates.

The tent-like shape of the object depicts a code for departure and movement (nomadism).

The rationality of information technology is a temporal sign of the present, the magic refers to spiritual values and traditions.

The insular supplying of solar energy to the oracle emphasizes the possibilities of self-sufficient energy communication systems.

Delphoi (Greek, Lat. DELPHI). The most significant oracle place in Greece with a cult of Apollo who made prophecies here through PYTHIA. This place lies some 600 m high in wild majestic mountain isolation and which impressed people just as the nearby spring wonder KASTALIA. The shrine of Apollo whose cult superseded an old cult of the earthly mother, GAIA, stands over a prehistoric settlement; in historic time there was also a settlement beside the place of worship. The holy place was bound to a crevice: Pythia sat on a tripod above the crevice and spoke wisdoms which a council of priests translated into verse. (Kroner Dictionary of Antiquity)

"DELPHI DIGITAL"

"Delphi Digital" sounds strange as a delphi-type oracle is just about the last thing that can be broken down in the infatuating simplicity of zero and one". Nevertheless, the term oracle has been well selected for this project. Oracles produce an uneasy feeling and generally mean nothing good. And you will not be able to perceive much good about this installation either. The lady artist and the technical man who met at the "Between Zero and One" exhibition organized by Scheidl in 1988 at the Technical University in Vienna, have developed a type of sweatbox for environmentally conscious people. Just as the Natave Indian subjects himself to the cleaning ritual in the steaming tent to open up his senses to strange voices, the visitors to Ars Electronica should connect up to information flows from alternative networks using a personal computer situated in a perspective tent. What they will receive are the latest catastrophe reports from international environmentalist groups. Scheidl regards this project as being a kind of pilot experiment for a future multimedia system where almost everyone can participate. His dream is that of a telematic age. "Telematic means breaking away from spatial structures and time conceptions, the information can be recalled anywhere and at any time, as he writes in his essay "Electronically Communicated Discourse" where he discloses the possibilities and problems of computer communicated communications. The definition of telematic is almost the same as the Native Indian one of the Big Spirit (or rabbit) whose information also goes beyond a space-time continuum and which is open to those in the know. In terms of content, both information theories are just as similar and serve a consensual cohabitation of people among people and nature.

"Delphi Digital" is a tent, the outside of which is adorned by a computer image of Margot Pilz, into which a number of small monitor displays have been inserted. On the inside, by means of computer, you have global information networks at your finger tips. By doing so, Pilz and Scheidl comply with the conceptions of the prophet of our media age, Vilém Flusser, and counteract them at the same time. Or how can we understand that in the "most intelligent way of accommodating people" – the tent, numerous "stupid monitor displays" have been installed?

