

# Prix Ars Electronica Cyberarts 2000

Following the Ars Electronica Festival's building phase from 1979 to 1986, two aspects have characterized the years of its second decade after 1987.

First of all, there is the focus on an annual theme, whereby the festival for art, technology and society has continually concentrated its attention on relevant current issues that have had an impact on digital media culture, and thus conducted an ongoing discourse to elaborate on the artistic, technological and, ultimately, social consequences of these developments.

And, secondly, there is the Prix Ars Electronica, the cyberarts competition initiated in 1987 by the Austrian Broadcasting Company that was conceived as an open platform made available to artists and scientists representing a broad spectrum of disciplines, and which is what amounts to the Festival program's pedestal to honor artistic efforts of consummate quality and topicality.

And thus each Festival manages to dovetail theme-related analysis and theory with an overview of the state-of-the-art in a variety of different fields of digital media design. Especially at a time when the digital media are increasingly dominated by start-ups and e-business, an important role has come to be attached to the Prix Ars Electronica's endeavor to make a cultural statement and focus on substantial issues. Each year, it highlights visionary thinking, alternative approaches, and models of digital media design that go far beyond industrial norms, and features these works jointly in a prestigious international showcase.

Prix Ars Electronica 2000 will bring together on this shared platform superb works of art including *Vectorial Elevation*, the light installation controlled via Internet that was a millennium project of the Mexican artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, the novels of Neal Stephenson, one of the guiding intellectual forces of the Internet, research projects from university R&D facilities, pioneering musical productions assembled for the millennium project *20' to 2000* by the German artist and designer Carsten Nicolai, as well as works from the labs of graphic artists and Hollywood production studios.

In the survey of these works of art representing a digital media culture that is gradually taking shape—works that seem so completely different at first glance—highly divergent positions are very often formulated which not only provoke the lively discussion of specific issues related to what is currently going on in media art, but also advance these discourses over the course of the years and, regarded from a future perspective, might culminate in a shared point of view.

Since it was founded in 1987, the Prix Ars Electronica has brought together established names from the art scene and the world of science as well as young artists for whom the Prix Ars Electronica and the presentation of their work at the Festival has been a stepping-stone to international acclaim.

Furthermore, prize money totaling 1,2 million US Dollar has been awarded since 1987 in an effort to confer recognition upon the cyberarts in a pecuniary sense as well. For this reason, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our sponsors and patrons whose ongoing financial commitment makes the Prix Ars Electronica possible.