

■■■■■■■■■ Landscape of Memory

The archive installation's point of departure is Gerhard Dirmoser's study entitled "25 Years of Ars Electronica—An Overview as Theater of Memory." Within the framework of a multi-year study, the Linz theoretician produced a thematic cartography of all views and aspects that he considered relevant to Ars Electronica. All contributions, artists, texts and projects that appeared at Ars Electronica are represented among the approximately 8,000 listings.

The large format wall chart generated with this data simultaneously constitutes the portal to an additional information space of comparable dimensions: Ars Electronica's digital project archive, which offers a complete overview of all projects realized since 1996 in conjunction with the Ars Electronica Center. The databank design—derived from the results of a research assignment—is based on the idea of a hybrid solution. The technical realization of a platform-independent, network-compatible online databank led to the creation of a new model for historical evaluation and the accompanying documentation.

Special tools enable visitors to penetrate the analog user information interface of the wall diagram and gain access to the digital data hidden behind it. The virtual information can be called up with a modified personal digital assistant (PDA) by physically approaching the printed text element of the "Theater of Memory." This method allows for the creation of cross-references between the individual entries and makes more detailed and comprehensive information available in the form of texts and videos.

The technical basis of the interface is a series of radio frequency identification tags (RFIDs), which mark the corresponding locations on the diagram and can be read with a PDA. This technique has tremendous potential that goes far beyond the installation presented here. The boundaries of the architectural space demarcated in this way become a permeable surface and an interface to a data sphere that is not bound by the restrictions of conventional interfaces but can instead assume the spatial dimensions of the physical space. An important precursor of this installation was the SCALEX (scaleable exhibition server) IST project, to which the Ars Electronica Futurelab was one of the key contributors.

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Translated from German by Mel Greenwald

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Information on the SCALEX project
<http://www.scalex.info>

Works by Gerhard Dirmoser
<http://tristessedeluxe.blogspot.de/stories/103407/>
http://www.servus.at/kontext/ausstellungskunst/art_in_context.htm