



80+1

A Journey Around the World

Ars Electronica, voestalpine and Linz09 will be taking a trip around our planet in 2009.

“All that a man is capable of imagining today will someday be made a reality by other men.” Jules Verne would presumably not be particularly astounded by the global travel possibilities available to mankind nowadays. In 1872, the father of science fiction sent an English gentleman named Phileas Fogg on his world-famous journey “Around the World in 80 Days.” In 2009, Ars Electronica and voestalpine will be dispatching the City of Linz on a trip around the world, though this one will be a virtual adventure via the fiber optic cables and satellite hook-ups of our globalized Information Society. Over the course of these 80 days, we’ll be visiting 20 locations around the world where the future is being invented and mastered as well as thwarted and destroyed right now.

Each of these locations is being assigned a particular theme: for instance, climate change, terror and genetic engineering. Journalistic, artistic and scientific means will be deployed to elaborate on the essential problems of our future and to get an updated picture of our globalized, networked world. These findings and insights will then be transmitted via information technologies to Linz, where a panorama screen will be set up on the Main Square to serve as a “window on the world” enabling people here to encounter and communicate with their counterparts worldwide. At certain times, interpreters will be on hand to assist the dialogue. And the Main Square will also be serving as a setting for discussions, artistic projects and a gala feast. Another main node of this network will be the new and expanded Ars Electronica Center: base station and “expedition vehicle” of this ‘round-the-world journey, and location of the mapping & knowledge room in which all information flows and dispatches converge and are visualized using state-of-the-art hardware and software. One mouse click will be all it takes for anyone to set forth on his/her own individual itinerary. Finally, on the 81st day, Ars Electronica and voestalpine will be hosting a global conference that will definitely be one of the absolute highlights of the 2009 Ars Electronica Festival.

“... The world is big enough.” “It was once,” said Phileas Fogg in a low tone. “What do you mean by ‘once’? Has the world grown smaller?” “Certainly,” returned Gauthier Ralph. “I agree with Mr. Fogg. The world has grown smaller, since a man can now go round it ten times more quickly than a hundred years ago.” “You have a strange way, Mr. Ralph, of proving that the world has grown smaller. So, because you can go round it in three months...” “In eighty days,” interrupted Phileas Fogg.

(Jules Verne: Around the World in Eighty Days)



When: June 18 to September 6, 2009

Where: Ars Electronica Center and Linz's Main Square (Hauptplatz)

Idea / Concept: Ars Electronica Linz, voestalpine AG and Linz09

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