voestalpine Klangwolke

The Cloud in the Web

Saturday, September 1, 2012, 8:30 PM
Linz, Donaupark

(Linz, August 27, 2012) "The Cloud in the Web" is the title of the voestalpine Klangwolke that's being produced jointly by the Brucknerhaus and Ars Electronica this year. The story of the networking of our world will be told in eight episodes accompanied by music derived exclusively from sound libraries on the internet. This time around, no star artist was brought in to orchestrate the dramaturgy; in fact, the thousands of custom-made illuminated letters that will play a starring role in this brilliant production were constructed right here in Upper Austria by committed volunteers. "The Cloud in the Web" is thus a thoroughly collaborative project that takes up the original idea of the very first Linzer Klangwolke in 1979 and updates it to 2012—i.e. Year 5 of the iPhone Era, eight years after the founding of Facebook. The artistic direction of the voestalpine Klangwolke is in the capable hands of the Ars Electronica Futurelab; lead sponsor is voestalpine; media partner is the ORF – Austrian Broadcasting Company's Upper Austria Regional Studio. "The Cloud in the Web" is set for Saturday, September 1, 2012 at 8:30 PM in Linz's Donaupark. Admission is free of charge.

voestalpine Klangwolke: http://www.aec.at/klangwolke/en/
Ars Electronica Linz: http://www.aec.at/news/en/
Brucknerhaus: http://www.brucknerhaus.at/www1/en/index.php?kind=12&lng=eng
voestalpine: http://www.voestalpine.com/group/en/#lyklangwolke
ORF OÖ (in German): http://ooe.orf.at/

The History of the Networking of Our World

The voestalpine Klangwolke is an account of how global networking came to be and how it has changed the lives of human beings. Eight chapters span an arc from the discovery of electricity to the invention of the internet, mobile communications and social media. Each of these episodes deals with how technology came to progressively pervade our everyday life and the consequences this is having for humankind.

Europe – Episode 0, the backstory, reminds us that waterways like the Danube and its many tributaries are among humankind's oldest networks. And that it's of decisive importance for Europe and the world—just as it was in the past—that central networks remain open and freely accessible by all people. At this point, Klangwolke spectators are called upon to use their smartphones to take pictures of what they behold and upload them to the Klangwolke website. The point: generating the largest gigapixel image ever made.

The Pioneers – Episode 1 tells of how humankind discovered electrical power and learned to harness it. The first power plants and electricity grids were built worldwide to henceforth power the new machines in the factories, bring light to the streets and houses, and turn night into day.

The World Gets Smaller – Episode 2 is dedicated to the first successful attempts to convert news into electrical signals. It tells of the ever-more-efficient and faster methods to send messages over great distances and how telecommunications became big business.

From the Network of Computers to the Network of Human Beings – Episode 3 is an account of how the first few network nodes grew into an ever-more-tightly-woven web that came to be used by more and more people. This was the beginning of the Information Age.

A New Era of Entertainment – Episode 4 demonstrates how the new media made their way into people's everyday life—the telephone in the hall, the radio in the kitchen, and the TV in the living room.

Triumph of the Computer – Episode 5 recalls that the first computers were so big they filled entire floors of buildings, though their capabilities were laughable by contemporary standards. When NASA was getting Neil Armstrong to the Moon in 1969, the computing power they had at their disposal didn't amount to that of a typical smartphone today!

The Robots Make Their Entrance – Episode 6 tells of ever-more-efficient, ever-more-intelligent machines. This is about the new robots that perform tasks for us—so much so that more and more people began to fear they wouldn't be needed anymore. But industrial robots weren't the only ones that were sources of concern and even angst. There were other robots that began making headlines with increasing frequency: drones, the military's killing machines.

We Are the Web – Episode 7 shows the internet to be a playground and marketplace for people, a place of encounter in which everyone has a voice.

High-tech Effects and a World Premiere

A whole series of spectacular effects will accompany the story of the networking of our world. The discovery and harnessing of electrical current and the triumphant propagation of artificial illumination will be dramatically staged with impressive light effects and visualizations that will encompass all high-profile buildings and façades from the north bank of the river to the church atop Pöstlingberg and make the entire Urfahr neighborhood a stage for the voestalpine Klangwolke. The advent of telecommunications will then be symbolized by thousands of illuminated letters, and the propagation of television by large-scale projections of test patterns in living color! When Episode 6 dredges up our fear of machines, Austrian Armed Forces helicopters will suddenly appear on the horizon, hover menacingly over the crowd and vanish as quickly as they emerged. Then comes the attempt at a world premiere: the Ars Electronica Futurelab will launch a squadron of 50 LED-studded quadrocopters and dispatch them on a remote-controlled foray above the Danube. Never before has a synchronized flight of so many four-rotor drones been attempted outdoors. The quadrocopter formation symbolizes networks and communities, and thus evokes the chances and possibilities inherent in them.

A Cloud in the Web

The title of the voestalpine Klangwolke refers not only to its theme and the tale it tells; it also alludes to the fact that the production itself is strongly net-based. The Klangwolke website isn't online just to disseminate information about the project; it's part of the production itself. The photos of all the letters that were designed in the ABC Workshop in the Ars Electronica Center have been collected here in a colorful picture gallery where they form the basis of the Klangwolke's own individual font that can be used to compose and send e-mails. In addition to this Klangwolke alphabet, the website is also a storage depot for hundreds of sound bites, samples, loops and tracks—a huge audio pool that is flowing into the voestalpine Klangwolke's soundtrack.

A Klangwolke in Which Everybody Can Participate

A Klangwolke that takes the networks and communities of this day and age as its theme cannot be the work of a single artist-personality. It has to have a network character and define itself as a collaborative project in which anyone can take part—not only the experts from all over the world who are crafting the complex technical effects together with Ars Electronica Futurelab staffers, but also lots of folks who have the time and the inclination.

The Klangwolke ABC – Up to almost the last minute, anyone can drop in to the Ars Electronica Center's ABC Workshop, construct and individually decorate their own letter, and then equip it with LEDs, a battery and a receiver. Both the use of the workshop as well as the materials for the letters are free of charge. The only cash involved is a refundable €5 deposit for the receiver. The alternative is to purchase a ready-made letter at one of the shops specially set up for this purpose in the Ars Electronica Center, on Hauptplatz, in the Lentos or the

Brucknerhaus. Then, in Donaupark, all the letters will be "connected" to the Klangwolke and illuminated to the rhythm of the music. Individual letters will coalesce into words, sentences and messages—just like the ones we send around the world every day as SMSs, e-mails, tweets and Facebook postings.

The Soundcloudminiatures – Another possibility to participate in the voestalpine Klangwolke is with so-called soundcloudminiatures—one-minute fragments ranging from sound collages to elaborately composed tracks. Throughout the summer, it's been possible to record and mix them and then upload them to the voestalpine Klangwolke website, whereby the ideal infrastructure is available free of charge at the Ars Electronica Center's SoundLab. These soundcloudminiatures will star in their own show in Donaupark on the Sunday following the voestalpine Klangwolke.

Klangwolke A Whole Weekend Long

This is the first time that there will also be lineup of accompanying event leading up to and following Linz's September spectacle. Kicking things off is the Klangwolke ABC Parade. The Sunday "Picnic in the Cloud" will showcase the soundcloudminiatures.

On Saturday: The Klangwolke ABC Parade

The parade of letters steps off at 5 PM from the Maindeck of the Ars Electronica Center. Led by voestalpine's brass band, the colorful column will march through downtown Linz, finally arriving at 6 at the Mobile Ö1 Atelier on the Main Square, where dance groups will present their assorted letter choreographies.

On Sunday: The Picnic in the Cloud

The voestalpine Klangwolke will come to a truly resounding conclusion Sunday, September 2 beginning at 10 AM. Everyone's invited to bring a picnic basket and blanket to Donaupark and enjoy selected soundcloudminiatures played on the Klangwolke's 250,000-watt sound system. As intermezzi: the technical highlights of the previous evening's festivities, up-close-and-personal. Marco Palewicz (AT), Chris Bruckmayr (AT), Maximilian Walch and Michael Kaczorowski (AT) will play this lineup of live remixes on through the afternoon, until radio station FM4 chimes in with an evening program.

Network Partners in Upper Austria and Worldwide

Without the commitment and cooperation of many, many partners in Austria and abroad, the voestalpine Klangwolke would be impossible to stage. These associates are about as diverse as can be! Rowers from Linz and vicinity, media artists from Tokyo, firefighters from throughout Upper Austria, quadrocopters engineers from Munich, et al. But precisely these interesting encounters are consummate expressions of the Klangwolke's uniqueness and potential. There is hardly another artistic & cultural event that possesses this charismatic ability to generate such enthusiasm and willingness to lend a hand on the part of such a broad spectrum of institutions, sectors, clubs and associations.

Lead Sponsor voestalpine

voestalpine is a global high-tech player with 300 subsidiaries in 60 countries, numerous partners and associates including scientific institutions worldwide with whom the company is involved in 150 R&D joint ventures, and of course customers all over the world. Thus, the company is itself a network that utilizes the new information technologies to communicate globally. Furthermore, voestalpine's long-term orientation on research & development constitutes an additional substantive connection to the theme of this year's Klangwolke, which the company is enthusiastically supporting as exclusive lead sponsor. Thus, the corporation regards this sponsoring commitment as actually a form of collaboration and, accordingly, has gotten intensively involved in numerous activities that are part of the voestalpine Klangwolke production effort. Internally, the in-house magazine has been disseminating patterns for the illuminated letters, and there have been specially organized workshops where employees can construct them. Plus, a special section of the Donaupark will enable staff members to experience the big show together as a group. On two occasions, SoundWalks took in the soundscape of voestalpine's Linz plant to prepare soundcloudminiatures. There's a showcase to inform visitors to the voestalpine Stahlwelt museum and all those attending the next shareholders' meeting about the upcoming event. The Linz apprentice workshop pitched in on construction of the Ribbon Dancers; kids at the plant kindergarten built letters and will take part in the parade on the big day. A special highlight is voestalpine's very own three-meter-tall letter that will play a role in the spectacle on September 1 in the Donaupark and is now on display on Linz's Main Square.

Media Partner ORF Upper Austria

The ORF – Austrian Broadcasting Company's Upper Austria Regional Studio was present at the birth of the Linzer Klangwolke in 1979 and has been totally committed to it ever since. The broad-based support of the ORF's three divisions—radio, TV and the internet—is crucial to active participation by people of all ages and in all walks of life in Upper Austria.

Every year, the ORF's Linz studio offers impressive proof that it is Upper Austria's foremost media outlet with the penetration and power to get lots of people in this region enthused about a shared cultural experience. This year, the ORF has delivered ongoing reportage about the "Cloud in the Web" and updates about the many volunteers whose activities and involvement play such an essential role in this year's production. On September 1, 2012, the ORF will provide start-to-finish coverage totally focused on this amazing extravaganza. The Radio Oberösterreich on-air personalities will accompany the Klangwolke throughout the day on the station's entire lineup of shows: Guten Morgen Oberösterreich, Arcimboldo, Nummer 1 and Servus Oberösterreich. TV news crews will be on the story beginning in the afternoon and, of course, all the way through the big event.

Beginning at 7:04 PM, ORF will broadcast the Klangwolke live on the radio. This special program will be hosted by Gernot Hörmann.

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