

OK | CYBERARTS 13

PRIX ARS ELECTRONICA EXHIBITION

5 – 15 SEPTEMBER 2013

Press Information

Linz, September 5, 2013

The **OK “Offenes Kulturhaus” in the Upper Austrian Culture Quarter** produces and presents new currents and trends in contemporary art, which always also reflect social developments. For years, the **CyberArts Prix Ars Electronica** exhibition has been an important part of the ambitious program of changing thematic exhibitions and solo presentations. Exciting developments in media art become evident, particularly in the cooperation with the Ars Electronica Festival.

Since 1998 the OK has been the venue for presenting the winners of the Prix Ars Electronica, the international competition for digital art. Expert juries have selected the most interesting works and awarded Golden Nicas, Awards of Distinction and Honorary Mentions in seven categories.

Current trends are always reflected in the choice of jury members and in the selection for the CyberArts exhibition. They show that media art is a hotbed of critical inquiry into social and technological changes or work on actively designing our environment.

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A video on the milestones of the Prix categories (which Christine Schöpf has compiled from ORF broadcasts and archive materials), an audio file on the development of the category

“Digital Musics & Sound Art” (with excerpts from a feature by Alice Ertlbauer-Camerer for the ORF radio 2011), online access to the “Prix Map” (which shows the winners on an interactive world map), and a database with all the entries from this year show the fascinating development of twenty-seven years of the Prix Ars Electronica.

In categories like “Hybrid Art” and “Interactive Art”, new technologies’ power to change is depicted thematically and in installations: the applicability of bio-sciences on the one side (such as the award-winning life work by Joe Davis) and social and ecological engagement on the other (sail-powered drones to combat oil slicks by *Protei*) indicate the thematic scope.

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New technologies’ power is depicted thematically and installatively in the works presented: especially the net-category **Digital Communities**, which is shown for the first time in its entirety in the exhibition CyberArts 13, shows possibilities for social and community engagement. With the Golden Nica for the self-organized square in Madrid, *El Campo de Cebada*, for instance, it is evident in the overlapping of physical and virtual space how necessary both digital networking and real actions are for civil engagement. Whereas the social relevance of media and especially of the Internet are depicted in this category, the

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Interactive Art category is about art: especially the expansive works by Dmitry & Elena Kawarga and Daniel Rozin offer visitors an opportunity to interact with the artworks.

What makes this years exhibition especially fascinating is the fact that it is spreading all over the OÖ Kulturquartier. The contrast between the towers of the **HÖHENRAUSCH.3**, the international contemporary art of the **Biennale Cuvée** exhibition and the elaborate digital works of the Prix could not be more striking.

PRIX FORUM

Sat 7.9., Ursulinensaal

The Prix Forum offers the possibility to meet the winners of Prix Ars Electronica 2013 and hear them talk about their work, motives and motivations.

Ars Electronica ANIMATION FESTIVAL, 6. – 8.9., OK Deck

The works screened by the Ars Electronica Animation Festival have been selected from among the most outstanding entries to this year's Prix Ars Electronica. They display excellence with respect to both content and design, and impressively get across both how expansively the genre has grown as well as the extent to which it already pervades our everyday life—in visible form as digital animation or disguised as simulation. In addition to the entertainment industry and computer gaming sector, moving pictures from the computer have long been mainstays in art, industry and science. Accordingly diversified are the 10 programs of this year's Ars Electronica Animation Festival.

The OK NIGHT, Sat, 7.9.

is traditionally a high point of the festival week. The evening starts with the Electronic Theatre, a selection from the category Computer Animation, in the Summer Cinema in the OK Square. The award winner for "Digital Musics & Sound Art" Nicolas Bernier then performs a concert in the OK Deck (also at the opening on 5.9.). Further concerts, curated by Markus Reindl, take place in cooperation with Solaris: with Grischa Lichtenberger, an Honorary Mention, but also with local heroes (Leeux [Abby Lee Tee & Feux], Maximilian Meindl [Houztekk] and DJs in Solaris: Washer & Fino [TFS]). Responsible for the visual design of the party night: Das Gegenlicht (Backlab).

This year the OK Night also offers an opportunity to enjoy the end of the evening of the "Linz Cloud of Sound" in the Höhenrausch exhibition high above the rooftops of Linz until 11:00.

Press information and photographs for download:

<http://www.ok-centrum.at/?q=content/pressearchiv>

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GOLDEN NICA DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

El Campo de Cebada / ES

[El Campo de Cebada](#)

elcampodecebada.org

El Campo de Cebada is both a physical and a virtual space, an open-source square in the center of Madrid. Until two years ago this square was a closed-down construction site. In the meantime it is managed by local residents and the city council together. Open Source tools are used to overcome traditional misunderstandings between these two parties.

AWARD OF DISTINCTION DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

Visualizing Palestine / PS

[Visualizing Palestine](#)

visualizingpalestine.org

Visualizing Palestine develops creative infographics to describe a factual rights-based narrative of Palestine / Israel. The team identifies pressing issues through first-hand experience, partnerships with grassroots organizations, advocacy groups and a network of journalists and bloggers, going through a process of story generation, highlighting the absurdities of the injustice. Next, the researchers collate extensive data, which is then aggregated by the data analysts, exposing patterns and correlations. The design team then turns the data into powerful visuals, which the communications team publishes via Visualizing Palestine's partners, the mainstream media and social media, under the Creative Commons license.

AWARD OF DISTINCTION DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

Christopher Mikkelsen, David Mikkelsen / DK

[Refugees United](#)

info.refunite.org

Refugees United is the world's first online databank that enables refugees to search for missing family members and friends. It's up to each user to decide what and how much personal information to reveal in going about this, and anyone who wants to remain anonymous is free to do so. Such individuals can nevertheless be (re)located on the basis of details known only by their next of kin or close friends. As a non-profit organization, Refugees United's platform can be used free of charge.

HONORARY MENTION INTERACTIVE ART

Olivier Bau / FR, Yuri Suzuki / JP, Ivan Poupyrev / RU

[Ishin-Den-Shin](#)

ishin-den-shin.com

The installation *Ishin-Den-Shin* (Japanese idiom which denotes the concept of interpersonal communication through unspoken mutual understanding) addresses physicality and intimacy in digital audio communication. It consists of a microphone that can record sounds and transmit them through touch. The sound, once recorded, is transformed into an inaudible oscillating electrical field that is injected into a person's body through the microphone that they hold in hand. The recorded sound becomes audible only when sliding one's fingers on someone's ear, either living or artificial.

Human bodies become both recording and broadcasting mediums for intimate, physical, sound communication.

HONORARY MENTION INTERACTIVE ART

Dmitry & Elena Kawarga / RU

Down with Wrestlers with Systems and Mental Nonadapters!

kawarga.ru

Using a run-simulator, visitors start up “a social mechanism” that moves a multitude of small figures all of the same type. The users are active causes and onlookers at the same time. This raises the question, is society absorbing each of us? Or do we ourselves form this enslaving mechanism? If you speak the “DaDa” manifesto into a microphone some figures fall off, liberated from the structure. One conveyor has a micro video camera, which shows a space inside a black box on a monitor—there is another reality in this box.

From the project „Da-Da Moscow: Rewriting Worlds”, with the robotic studio by Moscow Polytechnic Museum.

GOLDEN NICA INTERACTIVE ART

Michel Décosterd, André Décosterd / CH

Pendulum Choir

codact.ch

The project Pendulum Choir by the brothers Michel and André Décosterd is a performance, a music composition, and a human-computer dynamic installation at the same time. A choir of nine singers is supported by hydraulic platforms that move autonomously. As they operate, the position and inclination of the singers’ bodies change. The aim of this symbiotic relationship between the singers and the mechanical structure is to explore the role that movement could have in the human voice, building a “living organ.”

GOLDEN NICA HYBRID ART

Koen Vanmechelen / BE

The Cosmopolitan Chicken Projekt

koenvanmechelen.com

CyberArts presents the latest generation in an artistic crossbreeding project: the “Mechelse Styrian” chicken. Koen Vanmechelen’s ultimate goal is the creation of a cosmopolitan Chicken carrying the genes of all the planet’s chicken breeds. The starting point for all these species was once the red junglefowl, which was spread all over the world and made an indigenous breed by humans, shaped to reflect the typical cultural characteristics of its community. By crossbreeding Vanmechelen breaks up the usual monocultures. The “Mechelse Styrian” chicken is much more than a mere domesticated animal, it represents the globalization of our world and symbolizes the permanent intermixture of ethnic groups and cultures.

AWARD OF DISTINCTION HYBRID ART

Phil Ross / US

[Mycotecture](#)

philross.org

Since the 1990s Ross is working on sculptures that consist entirely of living fungi. To make them, small pieces of mushroom tissue are introduced into a cellulose-based medium such as sawdust, which the living organisms eagerly devour and also use as a framework on which to grow. Within a week, this solidifies into a mass of interlocking cells. Like plaster or cement, mushrooms can be cast into almost any shape. The notion of constructing architecture from entirely biodegradable, non-toxic, fireproof, water- and mold-resistant materials is what propels Ross in his research.

HONORARY MENTION HYBRID ART

Louis-Philippe Demers / CA / SG

[The Blind Robot](#)

processing-plant.com

The Blind Robot has the complex task of touching people softly, something achieved by hardly any contemporary robots. The visitors are invited to sit in the front of this machine and engage in a non-verbal dialogue with it. The robot delicately explores the body - mostly the face and upper body - of the visitor in a manner that recalls what blind people do to recognize a person or an object. The Blind Robot creates an empathic situation and a positive predisposition to the engagement. The machine then produces a visual rendering of what its fingertips have "seen".

AWARD OF DISTINCTION HYBRID ART

Tania Candiani / MX

[Five Variations of Phonic Circumstances and a Pause](#)

Organ / Pianos / Sound Stories

taniacandiani.com

vimeo.com/63364803

Five "poetic actions in regard to machines" draw with great sensitivity how technologies of all times have dictated relationships between orality and literacy, and created subsequent relationships of power. Each machine translates and interprets sound events - noises, orality, narrations, murmurs, music... - by changing them from one phonic register to another and transmuting them into text and code. Each work is part of a discourse surrounding the culture of listening: the audible, acoustic technologies, the gesticulation of narration, the audible texture of the voice.

HONORARY MENTION INTERACTIVE ART

Daniel Rozin / US

[Angles Mirror](#)

vimeopro.com/bitforms/rozin/video/61823984

Since the late 1990s, Rozin's constructions have investigated the psychological and optical cues inherent in image building. The *Angles Mirror*-Series explore a system of linear rotation that indicates the direction of an object's contour. An image recorded by a camera is transferred to the numerous angles in Mirror, so that the image of the person or object in front of it is "mirrored". A

nuanced contour results, as the viewer shifts back and forth, altering the way the structure of space is perceived.

GOLDEN NICA DIGITAL MUSICS & SOUND ART

Nicolas Bernier / CA

frequencies (a)

nicolasbernier.com

Nicolas Bernier's sound performance *frequencies (a)* resonates with the perfect interplay of a conventional medium, digital sounds and light. The entire setup is thus reminiscent of a scientific laboratory—one in which Nicolas Bernier mixes the ingredients of his sound experiment. Depending on which sequences he sends via computer to the valves, they impart precisely timed strikes to the tuning forks. The result is a vibrating tonal tapestry. Synchronized with a pulsating light installation it becomes a minimalist sound/light composition.

Live-Concerts Sept. 5, 7.00 p.m. und Sept. 7, 9.30 p.m., OK Deck

AWARD OF DISTINCTION DIGITAL MUSICS & SOUND ART

SjQ++ / JP

SjQ++

sjq.jp/sjqpp

SjQ++ is an audiovisual project that was launched in 2012 in Kyoto / JP. The interaction of six musicians is visualized and, depending of each one's respective sound, projected onto the group's bodies or a screen behind them. The relationships between the individual players are made visible through the musical and visual dialogue between the musicians and the projections. In addition, it uses animated visuals to make each musician cooperate / compete. Control of the interaction flow produces a dynamic performance.

AWARD OF DISTINCTION DIGITAL MUSICS & SOUND ART

Chris Carlson / US

Borderlands Granular

borderlands-granular.com

Borderlands Granular is a new musical instrument that lets iPad and desktop computer users explore, play and transform sounds via an innovative interface for granular synthesis. The samples aren't played back in conventional fashion, but rather in small fragments of sound, so-called "grains". These grains can be superimposed on one another, and their volume, speed and pitch can be modified when they're played back. The intuitive user interface allows the user to engage with the creative process in a very playful way.

HONORARY MENTION HYBRID ART

Thomas Feuerstein / AT

PANCREAS

thomasfeuerstein.net

Biotechnological implementation: Thomas Seppi, Department of Radiotherapy and Radiooncology, Medical University of Innsbruck /AT

Courtesy Galerie Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman, Innsbruck - Wien / AT

CyberArts presents the model-like setup of *PANCREAS*, a processive sculpture that uses biotechnologies in order to translate language and books into matter and flesh. It transforms books (Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*) into sugar that feeds human brain cells. The books' paper is shredded, soaked in water, and pressed into an artificial intestine (a fermenter); in which bacteria break the cellulose down into glucose. After filtering and purifying, the glucose, as a universal fuel of life, is fed to the cells growing inside a glass tank (a brain in a vat).

AWARD OF DISTINCTION INTERACTIVE ART

rAndom International / GB

Rain Room

random-international.com

Rain Room is a 100 m² room in which water is constantly pouring from the ceiling. When visitors enter the room, the water avoids their movements, thus animating them to play with the room. While the project incorporates important technical breakthroughs, the formal elegance of the Rain Room and its playful character connect it with classic pieces in the history of interaction, making it a truly timeless piece of art that transcend the technologies it uses to operate.

AWARD OF DISTINCTION INTERACTIVE ART

Masaki Fujihata /JP

Voices of Aliveness

voicesofaliveness.net

Voices of Aliveness invites people to ride a bicycle on a special path called the "shouting circuit" prepared exclusively for this project and asks them to shout out loud. The bicycles are equipped with a GPS recorder and a video camera. As participants ride the bicycle, traces of their path and shouts are transformed in cyberspace. The collected data from each participant are compiled to form a tower-like "time tunnel"—a cyber tunnel of collected shouting. The project humorously questions how we can convey our actions as collective memory to the Internet. The participants' shouts are the key to connecting technology and memory.

HONORARY MENTION INTERACTIVE ART

Hernán Kerlleñevich, Mene Savasta Alsina / AR

AHORA. A song in the Hypertemporal Surface

cargocollective.com/operadora/ahora

Concept, design and realization: Mene Savasta Alsina, Hernán Kerlleñevich

Sound materials: OPERADORA (Mene Savasta Alsina, Hernán Kerlleñevich and Santiago Martínez);

Realization of sensing system: Pablo E. Riera

Ahora is an interactive song composed and installed in the Hypertemporal Surface, an environment developed for time-to-space mapping. The piece has four sound layers whose durations are anchored to spatial coordinates, unfolded around the loudspeakers, as shown by the drawings in the floor. *Ahora* proposes a reflection about the idea of many times coexisting and interacting simultaneously to create a singular moment.

SPECIAL

PRIX Ars Electronica Collide@CERN Residency Award

Bill Fontana

Acoustic Time Travel

Bill Fontana, this year's winner of the **PRIX Ars Electronica Collide@CERN Residency Award** realizes his project *Acoustic Time Travel* in the course of his residency at CERN. The artist discovers the world of CERN through sound, which he records and combines to new, so called sound sculptures. At the OK HÖHENRAUSCH he presents a part of his work in progress as an 8 channel sound installation.