

Opening & Nightline, Big Concert Night, Sonic Saturday, Music Monday, OK Night:

## Ars Electronica 2016 Presents a Full-Fledged Music Festival in cooperation with Anton Bruckner University

Press conference on July 25, 2016 featuring:

Ursula Brandstätter, chancellor of Anton Bruckner Private University

Volkmar Klien, chairman of the Department of Composition and Conducting, Anton Bruckner Private University

Dennis Russell Davies, principal conductor of the Bruckner Orchestra Linz

Gerfried Stocker, artistic director of Ars Electronica

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## Ars Electronica 2016 Presents a Full-Fledged Music Festival in cooperation with Anton Bruckner University

(Linz, July 25, 2016) Ars Electronica is one of the world's most important media art festivals, annually living up to this claim with a lineup of hundreds of speeches, presentations, exhibitions, performances and interventions produced in collaboration with associates from throughout the world. The festival has long been a major attraction among discerning music fans, who enjoy the very wide-ranging program of concerts, performances, speeches and discussions, many at venues that are out-of-the-ordinary to say the least. In addition to contributions by prominent musicians and sound artists from many countries, the Ars Electronica Festival's musical program features important musicians from Linz and Upper Austria—first and foremost, Dennis Russell Davies, principal conductor of Linz's superb Bruckner Orchestra, outstanding musicologists on the faculty of Anton Bruckner University, and Linz-native Sam Auinger, sound artist and professor of long standing at the UdK—University of the Arts Berlin.

### The 2016 Big Concert Night in the Catacombs of POSTCITY

This event has been inseparably linked with the name Dennis Russell Davies since the very first Big Concert Night in 2002, when he had just been appointed principal conductor of Linz's Bruckner Orchestra. In cooperation with Gerfried Stocker, he conceived and launched a new format dedicated to bringing together classical and electronic music and computer-generated visuals. Another key element of the Big Concert Night's concept has been to get these proceedings out of conventional concert halls and into extraordinary locations. The plan was a smash hit, and the Big Concert Night has been a highlight of the Ars Electronica Festival ever since. Its appeal and its uniqueness are attributable to the enthusiastic openness to experimentation of the conductor and his orchestra. And once again this year, this main event promises to be something special, starting with the venue itself: the *Gleishalle*, the huge railroad freight car loading/unloading dock of a decommissioned Postal Service logistics facility. A space that, not too long ago, served as an intermodal transfer point for mass quantities of mail will be the setting of this year's big musical event on the evening of September 11<sup>th</sup>.

Leading Off: Dennis Russell Davies and the Bruckner Orchestra

Amidst the industrial architecture of POSTCITY, the Bruckner Orchestra conducted by Dennis Russell Davies will begin by performing a piece for wind instruments by Upper Austrian composer Simone Zaunmair: "La Lucha" is an account of jealousy and of two

machos vying for the favor of a woman. The program continues with “Rendez-vous avec Claude,” an ensemble piece by Marc Reibel, a Linz composer, pianist, jazz musician and theater music director. This work combines the style of Claude Debussy with elements of jazz, rock and funk, and is thus a musical trip through the 1970s and ‘80s during the course of which the theme is repeatedly reinterpreted and improvised instrumental solos are interposed.

### Numbered, Weighed and Found Wanting – FM Einheit Gets the Spiral Packet Chutes Oscillating

To partake of the next performance on the program, the audience moves on to POSTCITY’s impressive 13-meter-tall spiral packet chutes. FM Einheit, a musician, composer and sound artist, will impart oscillations to this infrastructure that echo the drone, whooshing and thuds that reverberated through this huge space for so many years when, on a 24/7 basis, millions of packets arrived, were unloaded and received, sent on via thousands of meters of conveyor belts, and dispatched down the chutes to the lower-level loading ramps where they were resorted and sent on their way. FM Einheit’s sound performance stages this concatenation of logistics and mass processing as a metaphor for a society on a consumption binge. “The results of this frenzy are spewed forth by the spiral packet chutes, and spectators can number and weigh them and judge for themselves whether they’re to be found wanting.”

### Maurice Ravel’s “Mother Goose” and Igor Stravinsky’s “The Rite of Spring”: Bruckner Orchestra II

Back at the *Gleishalle*, the spotlight shifts again to Dennis Russell Davies and the Bruckner Orchestra for a performance of Maurice Ravel’s “Mother Goose” and Igor Stravinsky’s “The Rite of Spring.” The music will be accompanied by abstract visuals displayed on a series of projection walls totaling 60 meters in length and arrayed behind and adjacent to the orchestra, whereby the tonal colorations of the music and the musicians themselves exert essential influence on the poetic imagery. All the orchestra members’ movements and even the shadows they cast are registered by a tracking system and translated by specially programmed software into abstract images. This complex form of visualization was developed by the Ars Electronica Futurelab.

### The Alchemy of Light – Arotin & Serghei Depict Alexander Scriabin’s Radically Futuristic Vision

Arotin & Serghei focus on the alchemy of light—or rather, the light impulses that are the components of digital images. For the 2016 Big Concert Night, they’ve developed a real-time installation and performance inspired by Alexander Scriabin’s (1872-1915) radical concept of a (fictitious) light piano and the hexachords generated by it.

Together with Russian pianist and Scriabin expert Mikhail Rudy, Arotin & Serghei create an acoustic and visual mise-en-scène for this futuristic vision.

#### Audiovisual Show by AFG

AGF is a composer, musician, sound artist, poet and curator. For the 2016 Big Concert Night, she's producing an audiovisual show in the *Gleishalle*.

#### Space as Instrument – tam tam Makes the *Gleishalle*'s Topography Audible

Next up are Sam Auinger, Linz native, sound artist and faculty member at the UdK–University of the Arts Berlin, and Hannes Strobl, a bassist and composer originally from Innsbruck. As an artists' collective named tam tam, they deal primarily with the sound of big-city architecture and urban spaces. On Big Concert Night, their focus will be on POSTCITY itself and especially on the *Gleishalle*, a 200+-meter-long, 50-meter-wide and 8-meter-high space that sustains a reverberation time for no less than 6 seconds. The topography of this space and its highly individual acoustic qualities will be made audible by tam tam. They'll use a complex loudspeaker system as a means of interrelating the architecture and the materiality of the *Gleishalle* and enabling the audience to acoustically experience colors, depths and movements within this space. Sam Auinger and Hannes Strobl make the space an instrument and vice versa.

#### New Format, New Location: Sonic Saturday at Anton Bruckner University

In November 2015, Anton Bruckner University moved to its new campus at the foot of Pöstlingberg overlooking Linz. The new computer music studios (CMS) provide this stylish new facility with outstanding technological infrastructure that makes these premises ideal for the production and presentation of electronic music. The university simultaneously initiated a new program of study in computer music and media composition, and appointed Volkmar Klien as professor in charge of it. And this launch also delivered the impetus to expand the extent of the school's collaboration with Ars Electronica—which had been initiated by Andreas Weixler, director of the CMS—and strive to make this an intensive long-term relationship. The declared aim is for the Anton Bruckner University to furnish the primary venue for projects in musical and sound art genres staged in conjunction with the Ars Electronica Festival.

Accordingly, Sonic Saturday on September 10, 2016 will feature concerts staged in the CMS's Sonic Lab and other halls in that building, which will also serve, within the framework of a symposium, as the setting for an intensive exchange of views and experiences among festivalgoers and specially invited guests representing various approaches to musical theory and practice. Then on Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, the Music Monday series already successfully established at Anton Bruckner University by Graz-based media artist and musicologist Werner Jauk will be offering an overview of and detailed insights into the works of sound art presented at the Festival.

## “Sound Arts & Music – Music & Sound Arts” – The 1<sup>st</sup> Ars Electronica Symposium at Anton Bruckner University

Anton Bruckner University's Department of Composition and Conducting is organizing “Sound Arts & Music – Music & Sound Arts,” a symposium dedicated to exploring this fascinating interrelationship. Although both art forms seem at first glance to be closely related, they are nevertheless embedded in highly dissimilar contexts, each with its own particular traditions of presentation, distribution, curation and theory formation. And it is precisely the unique, individual position that this relationship assumes which enables it to provide the ideal theme for the first Ars Electronica Symposium at the Anton Bruckner University in its role as interface between music and other genres of media arts.

### medium sonorum – Immersive Worlds of Sound in Two Concert Halls

Thanks to its multi-channel loudspeaker system, the CMS at the Department of Composition and Conducting provides an audience with the possibility of being immersed in an impressive acoustic world. In order to offer ideal auditory circumstances to as many concertgoers as possible, curators Andreas Weixler, Se-Lien Chuang and Volkmar Klien have taken drastic measures: the first and second halves of the concert will each be performed twice, simultaneously, and in different concert halls. During the intermission, the audience will make a move between the CMS Sonic Lab and the Small Hall with its imposing organ, and can thus experience both tonal spaces. The program features works by composers and musicians from England, Italy, Japan and Austria.

### Music Monday: For the First Time at Anton Bruckner University

It's become sort of a tradition to make the last day of Ars Electronica Music Monday, an entire day devoted to music and sounds. Speeches, presentations, performances, workshops and concerts provide insights into the sound projects and installations that were staged during the festival. For the first time this year, Music Monday is being held at Anton Bruckner University, where the prime venue will be the Sonic Lab. This year's curator is Graz-based media artist and musicologist Werner Jauk.

### Festival Opening & Nightline, Deep Space 8K, OK Night, etc.

In addition to the Big Concert Night, Sonic Saturday and Music Monday, there are lots more goodies in store for music aficionados at this year's Ars Electronica Festival.

Deep Space 8K will host several audiovisual presentations and concerts. SOUNDS LIKE UNIVERSE is a journey through the cosmos with an itinerary arranged by Soundfactory EXTENDED (AT). raum.null (AT) and Mussurunga (AT) will articulate the “Chant of the Proto-Alchemists,” an inquiry into a universal ur-language. “Scalar Fields” by Akira Wakita (JP) and Tetsuya Komuro (JP) is an audiovisual presentation

that makes visible and audible the “storm” of air pressure unleashed when you stamp your foot. Didi Bruckmayr (AT), Dagmar Dachauer (AT) and Viktor Delev (MK) are doing “See what you made me do,” abstract monochrome visuals and sounds that react in real time to the movements and voices of two dancers. Wrapping things up is XCEED’s (HK) “RadianceScape,” an audiovisual piece that lets spectators see and hear radiation data from the 2011 Fukushima nuclear catastrophe.

Further highlights for musically inclined night owls are the Festival Opening at POSTCITY on Thursday evening, September 8, 2016, and Nightline at the same location the next evening, September 9<sup>th</sup>. The Opening features a stellar lineup of international musicians and sound artists including Sam Auinger, FM Einheit, Ei Wada, Silk and Daito Manabe, as well as a mix of live music and DJ sessions curated by Vienna-based Salon 2000. And last but not least, a date that music enthusiasts should definitely note in their calendars: OK Night on Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, when the OK Deck morphs into a stage for the musicians of Modular Music Days that will play out—mostly on the modular synthesizer—during this festival at the OK Center for Contemporary Art. OK Night 2016 is being curated by Markus Reindl; the visual design is the work of Jakob Wiesmayer/dasgegenlicht.

## RADICAL ATOMS – and the alchemists of our time

... and what’s now emerging on the horizon in the wake of self-driving cars and the Internet of Things. The featured protagonists at the 2016 Ars Electronica Festival are modern-day alchemists. The spotlight’s on a new generation of artists, hackers, do-it-yourself 3-D printers, genetic engineers and artificial intelligence researchers who are on the verge of transforming our world. Ars Electronica is showcasing some of the trailblazing breakthroughs that are leading up to this in a one-of-a-kind mix of formats and settings. The prime location of this year’s festival lineup will once again be POST CITY, the former Austrian Postal Service logistics facility at Linz’s main train station. Additional venues are the Ars Electronica Center, the OK Center for Contemporary Art, CENTRAL cinema, Linz Art University, the LENTOS Art Museum and the new Anton Bruckner University.