

Richard Kriesche – Featured Artist 2010

REPAIR – ready to pull the lifeline

Ars Electronica 2010

Festival for Art, Technology and Society

Thursday, September 2 to Saturday, September 11, Tabakfabrik Linz

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(Linz, September 1, 2010) Richard Kriesche (AT) is the featured artist at Ars Electronica 2010. A media artist and theoretician, exhibition designer, curator of artistic and scientific exhibitions, teacher as well as gallery proprietor, journalist and cultural affairs advisor to government agencies, he is one of Austria's most productive and influential artists. This year, Ars Electronica is honoring Richard Kriesche's extensive work in accordance with his own wishes: instead of a retrospective exhibition, we are staging his latest work, "blood and tears," in cooperation with voestalpine and Knapp Logistik September 2-11, 2010 at voestalpine's Stahlwelt venue. And on September 4, 2010 at 7 PM, voestalpine and Ars Electronica cordially invite you to also attend "Featured Artist – Talk" with Richard Kriesche at Tabakfabrik Linz (Building 2, Ground Floor).

Richard Kriesche (AT)

Richard Kriesche was born in Vienna in 1940. He has lived and worked in Graz for decades. Richard Kriesche first trained as a graphic artist and painter at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and also studied art history at the University of Vienna. He joined the faculty of the Federal Higher Technical Institute Graz in 1963, the same year he founded The Pool art association. He has served as co-publisher of Pflirsich, an art journal, since 1969. In 1973, he founded the Poolerie media gallery. In 1977, Richard Kriesche took over as director of experimental art at the Audiovisual Center Graz. His teaching activities have included stints at the Vienna University of Technology (1988-91), the Offenbach (Germany) Academy of Art and Design (1991) and the École Supérieure des Beaux Arts Paris (1995-96). 1996-97, he served as assistant director of the Science & Research Commission and director of the Cultural Commission of the Austrian Province of Styria. In 1997, he was an expert on the staff of the Council of Europe, and has been an advisor to the European Commission since 1999. Since 2005, he has been the chief executive of his own media enterprise, Kulturdata.

Richard Kriesche's works have been exhibited at some of the world's foremost museums: Biennale di Venezia, Venedig, 1968, 1986, 1995 (Honorable Mention); documenta 6, Kassel, 1977; documenta 8, Kassel, 1987; Ars Electronica, Linz, 1989, 1994, 2003; Musée d'art moderne, Paris; Centre George Pompidou, Paris; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Media Lab; Washington Project for the Arts; Kunsthaus Zürich; Kunsthalle Baden-Baden; Museum of Modern Art, Oxford; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; Neue Galerie Graz; trigon 73, Graz; ARTSAT - MIR, 1991 (the Soviet space program's first art experiment)

blood and tears – The Conclusion of a Trilogy

Ars Electronica and voestalpine jointly present "blood and tears," the latest work by Richard Kriesche and the final installment of the trilogy "ästhetik des capitals" (2006-07), "capital & code" (2008) and "blood and tears" (2010). This cycle of works for the Marl Sculpture Museum commenced in 2006-07 in the form of a critical confrontation with the facts & circumstances prevailing on the art market and their financial-economic mechanisms. For "capital & code" at Kunsthaus Graz in 2008, Kriesche

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installed a high-tech system of movable projectors that covered the interior space with graphics depicting the latest quotes from the stock exchange. The world of the financial markets (that just happened to be collapsing at the time) was thus shifted into the Kunstraum and its functional mechanisms subjected to a critical discussion. A similar system is being used in “blood and tears,” but this time the focus is on whether social and cultural values are in a bull or bear market. Thus, Richard Kriesche concludes his trilogy by scrutinizing ethics and morality in an economic context and a business setting.

blood and tears (2010)

First, real google search queries are scanned for terms like “art,” “capital,” “human rights” and “climate change,” and the frequency of each one’s occurrence is depicted by visualization software as a “price chart” similar to those used by securities speculators. The results are graphics we’re familiar with from the business section of the newspaper and thus a type of symbol of the globalized financial economy. Just like shares traded on exchanges, the socio-cultural values charted in “blood and tears” are subject to incessant fluctuations determined by their relevance in search queries actually submitted to google. And just like on the stock exchange, the image depicted here—the chart—becomes purely a conduit of information. In this sense, “blood and tears” is emblematic of that techno-based, socio-politically oriented media art that, according to Friedrich Kittler (DE), no longer produces enduring works but rather develops scenarios that are just as variable as the internet content engendered by these times and this society.

Voestalpine presents a project at the nexus of art, technology and society

As Richard Kriesche sees it, media art is a cultural and socio-political project, one that addresses and reflects current social standards: technologies that we use on a daily basis; topics of urgent concern to society as a whole; and spaces in which our social life is played out. As such, it has little to do with the classical venues for displaying art: the exhibition spaces, museums and galleries. Quite the contrary—most of them, according to Richard Kriesche, no longer comply with social standards and are thus obsolete as far as media art is concerned. In other words, the artistic venues that were once the settings of the social avant-garde have now fallen behind the pace of social development. Accordingly, it’s no coincidence that Richard Kriesche is presenting “blood and tears” in voestalpine’s Stahlwelt.

voestalpine Stahlwelt–The World of Steel

voestalpine is a multinational corporation that includes a wide array of specialized and flexible divisions that produce, process and develop high-quality steel products. The company operates approximately 360 production and distribution locations in more than 60 countries.

The voestalpine Stahlwelt–The World of Steel is a place of encounter where visitors get a captivating multimedia briefing on an important material and one of the leading companies supplying it to the world. Its unique concept combines architecture and exhibits into a one-of-a-kind setting for acquiring information and enjoying an unforgettable experience—total immersion in the fascinating world of voestalpine.

Now, in the spirit of The World of Steel as a place of encounter, voestalpine has invited artist Richard Kriesche to present his work at the venue’s event space and to use it as a setting in which to question the value attributed to our socio-cultural values. This is indeed a clear affirmation of corporate social

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responsibility and an open invitation to get involved in a discussion about developments transpiring in our globalized world.

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Yann Arthus Bertrand described our plight in no uncertain terms: there's no time left for pessimism. And indeed, dire warnings about impending climate change, financial crisis and the erosion of civil society are yesterday's news. All these calamities have already come to pass. What we have to do now is proceed as quickly and consistently as possible in the direction we have known all too long that we have to move in—towards renewable forms of energy, sustainable regulation of the global financial market, reorganization of the way we work, and much more ...

“REPAIR – ready to pull the lifeline” is the theme of this year's Ars Electronica Festival, a conclave September 2-11 of pioneers from all over the world who have already gotten to work on such alternative scenarios for the future. They're visionaries in the arts, sciences and business who have begun to do their part to fix what's broken, and who aim to make us aware of the fact that we already possess the knowledge, techniques and tools to get the job done. Their message: what we lack is not the means but rather the will and the necessary sociopolitical consensus. Readiness, willingness and ability to implement such a consensus are what REPAIR stands for. This focus will be on models for the future that go beyond growth-based progress and the belief that this will assure prosperity for us all. REPAIR calls upon us to rethink things and to take a different approach.

voestalpine: <http://www.voestalpine.com/ag/en.html>

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