

Ars Electronica Futurelab is making a guest appearance in the United Arab Emirates

## Drone Swarm to Be Featured at the Opening Event of the Islamic Capital of Culture

(Linz / Sharjah, March 14, 2014) The Islamic Capital of Culture in the Emirate of Sharjah is kicking off with an official opening event on March 26th. The cast of a show entitled "The Clusters of Light" includes more than 200 artists from all over the world. This will be one of the largest theatrical and musical productions ever staged. One of the participants in the extravaganza is Linz's Ars Electronica Futurelab, whose drone swarm will make three appearances in the night sky. Guests will get a total of five opportunities to marvel at the quadcopters' airborne artistry during opening ceremonies running through April 5th. The venue is the Open Majaz Island Theatre, a brand-new amphitheater set on an artificial island. Yesterday evening, Linz Deputy Mayor & Ars Electronica Chairman of the Board Bernhard Baier and Ars Electronica CFO Diethard Schwarzmair saw off the Ars Electronica Futurelab's production crew on their journey to Sharjah. "This high-profile appearance is a great opportunity for Linz's Ars Electronica Futurelab to show off its creative and innovative capabilities. I wish them all the best, and I'm looking forward to reading the rave reviews," Baier said. Diethard Schwarzmair is delighted that the drone swarm has become a product in high demand worldwide: "Our appearances in Linz, London, Bergen, Ljubljana, Brisbane and Umea launched very excited global buzz, and we're now reaping the rewards in the form of more and more major commissions."

Sharjah: 2014 Capital of Islamic Culture

The Emirate of Sharjah is part of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Its total area is 2,590 square kilometers. The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), a subsidiary body of the Islamic Conference, appointed Sharjah 2014 Capital of Islamic Culture.

Multiple & Spinifex Group Commissioned Ars Electronica

The Ars Electronica Futurelab's contribution to this world-class event was commissioned by Multiple & Spinifex Group, the head producer of the opening ceremonies. The company maintains headquarters in Beirut and Sidney and regional offices in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, UAE, Los Angeles, New York, Detroit, Melbourne, Beijing and Hong Kong. Among the major spectacles Multiple & Spinifex Group has staged are the opening ceremonies of the Summer Olympic Games in Beijing (2008), the Shanghai Expo (2010) and the Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver (2010).

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## Ars Electronica Futurelab

The Ars Electronica Futurelab is one of the five divisions of Ars Electronica Linz GmbH, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the City of Linz. It has been exploring the future at the nexus of art, technology and society since it was founded in 1996. The laboratory's staff includes experts in a wide array of fields. The way they carry out assignments is characterized, above all, by transdisciplinarity and international networking. The essence of this approach is ongoing collaboration with artists and scientists worldwide as well as the regular presence of artists-in-residence in Linz. The spectrum of services the Ars Electronica Futurelab delivers is based on expertise and skills developed over many years in such fields as radical innovation, media art, architecture, design, interactive exhibitions, virtual reality and real-time graphics.

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Sharjah: <http://www.sharjah.ae/>

Ars Electronica Futurelab: <http://www.aec.at/futurelab/en/>

Multiple & Spinifex Group: <http://www.multiplespinifex.com/>

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