

2015 Ars Electronica Festival

Starring at PostCity: Mercedes-Benz F 015 Luxury in Motion

Press conference on July 23, 2015 with

Alexander Mankowsky (Future design researcher, Daimler AG)

Christopher Lindinger (Director of research & innovation, Ars Electronica Futurelab)

Martina Mara (Robot psychologist, Ars Electronica Futurelab)

Gerfried Stocker (Artistic director, Ars Electronica)

For press information & images and online accreditation, click here: www.aec.at/postcity

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Mercedes-Benz at the 2015 Ars Electronica Festival

PostCity Highlight: The Mercedes-Benz F 015 Luxury in Motion

(Linz, July 23, 2015) The Ars Electronica Futurelab and Mercedes-Benz have been working together on the future of mobility for more than two years now. The focus has constantly been on human-machine interaction in humankind's future urban habitats. So it would be hard to imagine a more appropriate centerpiece than the Mercedes-Benz F 015 Luxury in Motion at the Ars Electronica Festival's confrontation with this year's theme: "POST CITY – Habitats for the 21st Century." This research vehicle gives a pretty amazing preview of what the self-driving car of the future might look like. Throughout the festival September 3-7, the F 015 Luxury in Motion will be the highlight of the Future Mobility exhibition spotlighting autonomous motoring in the shared space populated by human beings and intelligent cars. Exhibits will elaborate on the urban planning and architecture needed to facilitate these developments. The lineup also includes presentations and lectures by experts on the staff of Mercedes-Benz and the Ars Electronica Futurelab.

The F 015 Luxury in Motion

The F 015 not only represents the technical realization of autonomous driving. It also shows how self-driving cars are going to change our society as the automobile moves beyond its role as a means of transportation to become a mobile living space. And this is not only exemplified by the F 015's sleek proportions; a core concept of this research vehicle is constant exchange of information among the car, the people inside it, and the outside world. The passengers can interact with the intelligent technology they're riding in via gestures, eye-tracking or high-definition touch screens. Plus, the F 015 Luxury in Motion uses laser projections and LED displays to considerately share the streets with others going on their way.

Ars Electronica Futurelab and Mercedes-Benz: Transdisciplinary Research on Tomorrow's Spaces for Mobility

No scenario of humankind's urban future is complete without autonomous vehicles. Self-driving cars might predominate on our streets as early as 2030. That would not only make the steering wheel, gas pedal and gear shift lever things of the past; it would also put an end to fender-benders, traffic jams and searching for a parking spot. Until then, there are still a few hurdles to surmount—technical, infrastructural, legal. Perhaps the biggest challenge is for people to trust the machines. And here's where the collaboration between Mercedes-Benz and Ars Electronica Futurelab comes in. Trust presupposes smoothly functioning communication, so we've created proving grounds designed to configure such

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communication and interaction between human beings and mobile robots in a shared space. In contrast to virtual R&D environments, these so-called robotic experience spaces are particularly distinguished by their high degree of hands-on quality, and by the kinetic energy and tangible physical impact of the robots moving about them.

At Mercedes-Benz's 2014 Future Talk entitled "Robotics," some of the Ars Electronica Futurelab's LED-equipped quadcopters were deployed in such a proving ground. In an 8x8-meter, camera- & sensor-studded interaction space, the Spaxels depicted various traffic scenarios and communicated with the people in their immediate surroundings via light signals or predefined maneuvers. The human interactors, in turn, could talk to the quadcopters by means of a haptic interface called a "magic car key" or by physical gestures. In a second test environment, engineers used so-called Shared Space Bots, six specially developed terrestrial robots that make it possible to simulate situations that occur at intersections. The approaching robots not only indicate whether and where they've identified a human pedestrian; if need be, they also project a crosswalk in the form of zebra stripes right onto the street surface.

The F 015 Luxury in Motion at PostCity

The future of mobility and the shared space frequented by human beings and autonomous cars constitute one of the core thematic clusters of the PostCity exhibition being staged in conjunction with this year's festival September 3-7. The imposing premises of the Postal Service's decommissioned logistics facility in downtown Linz will be the setting for displays of artistic designs, architectural visions and scientific-technical prototypes having to do with the future of our cities. And this show's highlight, the F 015 Luxury in Motion, is emblematic of precisely this future. Festivalgoers feasting their eyes on the futuristic R&D vehicle will also be able to view the Ars Electronica Futurelab's Spaxels and Shared Space Bots.

Keynotes, Lectures and Presentations by Staff Experts from Mercedes-Benz and the Ars Electronica Futurelab

Mercedes-Benz isn't only dispatching the F 015 Luxury in Motion to Linz for Ars Electronica. They're also bringing in top-echelon experts who'll be giving fascinating speeches and presentations in conjunction with the Symposium and the Future Innovator Summit right in the PostCity venue as well as at Deep Space in the Ars Electronica Center:

Alexander Mankowsky – Futurologist on the staff of Daimler

Alexander Mankowsky was born in 1957 in Berlin, and studied sociology, philosophy and psychology at Freie Universität Berlin. Following graduation, he spent four years as a case worker with kids and young people. He then returned to school, this time studying at a university set up by Daimler to focus on artificial intelligence. After completing his training as

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a knowledge engineer, Alexander Mankowsky went to work at Daimler's R&D facility in Berlin in 1989. His work as a futurologist currently focuses on design.

Holger Hutzenlaub – Director of Mercedes-Benz Advanced Design Deutschland

Holger Hutzenlaub has been director of Mercedes-Benz Advanced Design Studios in Germany since 2013. He and his staff develop strategic vehicle concepts, generate future studies, create show cars and thereby creatively influence Mercedes' series design and the company's future formal language. Two of his highest-profile creations have been the Mercedes AMG GT Vision Gran Turismo (2013) and the self-driving R&D vehicle F 015 Luxury in Motion (2015). Prior to this assignment, Holger Hutzenlaub spent 2009-12 in Tokyo as general manager of the Mercedes-Benz Advanced Design Center Japan, where he and his staff worked intensively in the area of future mobility as well as on elaborating advanced design concepts in the creative context of a megacity.

Vera Schmidt – Director of Mercedes-Benz Advanced Digital Design

Vera Schmidt took on the job of setting up and managing the new Advanced Digital Design department in Sindelfingen, Stuttgart in June 2015. This cross-functional team conceives and designs the digital vehicles of tomorrow. In going about their development and visualization tasks, they collaborate with partner teams in the fields of interior design, HMI and engineering automotive user experiences specialized in configuring the tripartite interaction among human beings, machines and the environment for future Mercedes-Benz cars, concept and R&D vehicles and other digital application having to do with automotive transportation.

In 2011, Vera Schmidt began work at Mercedes-Benz Research & Development North America in Sunnyvale in the heart of Silicon Valley. As the first female manager in Advanced UX Design, she was part of the team that set up the Advanced User Experience Design Studios with its focus on innovative concepts, visionary features and aesthetic interface design. One of the highest-profile results of this work has been the F 015's digital content with complex innovative scenarios that consummate the transformation of the vehicle into an effectively communicating intelligent robot.

Vera Schmidt grew up in several different countries. In 2004, she completed her studies in communication design at the Würzburg University of Applied Sciences and then got experience as a designer in New York. As a Fulbright Scholar, she earned her Master of Arts degree at Savannah College of Art and Design in 2006. She began her career at Mercedes-Benz Design in 2008 as an interface designer. Her list of accomplishments includes the first digital instrument cluster full display for the S-Class, as well as the head unit of the Concept A-Class.

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POST CITY – Habitats for the 21st Century

“POST CITY – Habitats for the 21st Century” is the theme of Ars Electronica 2015. The festival is an inquiry into how cities of the future will have to be configured when there are more robots than people working in factories, everything is intelligently interlinked, autos drive autonomously and drones deliver the mail. And what does this mean for future megacities—above all, those on seaboard—when climate change really does shift into high gear? The rethinking of urban living spaces has already begun—all over the world, people are coming up with exciting ideas for new architectures and forms of social organization that are able to keep up with the changes the next few decades will bring. Dovetailing art, technology and society in the inimitable way Ars Electronica has done ever since 1979, experts from all over the world will be convening at an extraordinary think tank in Linz September 3-7, 2015. In going about this, the Festival is focusing on four thematic clusters in order to consider, from both local and global perspectives, how developments—those already in progress and prognosticated shifts—will be changing how our cities look and function: Future Mobility – The city as transportation hub; Future Work – The city as workplace and marketplace; Future Citizens – The city as community; and Future Resilience – The city as stronghold.

2015 Ars Electronica Festival: <http://www.aec.at/postcity/en/>

Mercedes-Benz F 015 Luxury in Motion: <https://www.mercedes-benz.com/de/mercedes-benz/innovation/autonomes-fahren/>; www.mercedes-future-mobility.com

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