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16 locations:

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Press conference, 9/9/2019 with

Klaus Luger, Mayor of the City of Linz

Doris Lang-Mayerhofer, City Councillor for Cultural Affairs and Chairman of the Advisory
Board of Ars Electronica Linz

Martin Honzik, Director Ars Electronica Festival

Horst Hörtnner, Director Ars Electronica Futurelab

Gerfried Stocker, Directorate Ars Electronica

Christine Schöpf, Directorate Ars Electronica

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Meinhard Lukas, Rector Johannes Kepler Universität Linz

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(Linz, 9/9/2019) "The meeting of multiple generations of pioneers in the digital revolution was really a special moment," says Gerfried Stocker about the atmosphere at this year's Ars Electronica. "It is incredibly inspiring to see the enthusiasm for the future that all these people radiate. No matter what specific issue lit the fire in their bellies, they are all united by an irrepressible curiosity about what is to come, and by an almost reflexive speculation and deliberation about what new possibilities are opening up for us."

The largest Ars Electronica of the last forty years

Ars Electronica 2019 was in every respect a successful anniversary edition of the festival. 1,449 artists and scientists from forty-five countries participated in the program—more than ever before. It saw 548 individual events staged and 501 exhibits on display—the widest-ranging program of its kind to date. 2,951 participants booked 227 guided tours—an unprecedented demand. Events were held at sixteen locations in Linz and the surrounding area—to date, no Ars Electronica has been held at more venues. This time, 475 cooperation partners and sponsors from all over the world supported Ars Electronica—an unequivocal record in the festival's history. 461 media representatives from 38 countries were accredited. And: with a total of 110,000 visits estimated by festival end, Ars Electronica 2019 will have received a larger-than-ever response from the public.

"All this underscores the truly outstanding quality and scope of this festival," says Klaus Luger, Mayor of the City of Linz. "Experts will find themselves just as much at home here as laypersons—and every visitor will encounter an almost unmanageable multitude of lectures, presentations, workshops, exhibitions, concerts, performances, and interventions.

"Ars Electronica is simply fantastic when so many people from all walks of life and from all over the world come together in Linz to discuss the future of our digitalized world. The record number of cooperation partners shows that the 'Ars' has become the most important festival for digital culture in Europe," emphasizes Doris Lang-Mayerhofer, Cultural Councillor and Chairman of the Advisory Board of Ars Electronica on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the festival. "After the wonderful postcity era, Ars Electronica will find new ways to further strengthen the festival's significance for Linz, Europe and our future."

This year's theme has also met with great interest, says Gerfried Stocker: "Numerous speeches, discussions, talks, and presentations have made it clear that the current status of the digital revolution, which we somewhat irreverently call its 'midlife crisis,' is a cause for concern. Many people believe that not everything is going according to plan in that regard, and that there is an urgent need for action."

A thrilling opening, an illuminating history summit, an adventurous Big Concert Night, an impressive themed exhibition, an inspiring trip to St. Florian...

Ars Electronica 2019 kicked off on Thursday, September 5, with live performances featuring both humans and AI systems, thereby cutting straight to the core of this year's debate: the interaction between people and intelligent machines in the future and what it may mean for our view of the world and our self-image, for our society and our lives. The following day of the festival, Friday, September 6, the pioneers of the digital revolution sketched out the path that led us to these very questions, on the threshold of the era of artificial intelligence. The evening's Big Concert Night continued this tradition and demonstrated the impressive, values-challenging outcome that the interaction between people and intelligent machines has brought us even today. On Saturday, September 7th, the festival began the next chapter of this story: The sacred chambers of St. Florian's canon monastery became a perfect and unbelievably inspiring stage upon which to contemplate the question of why technologies like artificial intelligence can so tremendously challenge and shake up our self-image and the perception of ourselves as human beings. Highlights of this artistic and scientific discourse would surely include the organ concert by Hermann Nitsch, the conversations led by Renata Schmidtkunz with Josef Penninger, Sophie Wennerscheid, Markus Poschner, Douglas Eck and Francois Pachet, the Walking Lecture with Siegfried Zielinsky and Anthony Moore, and the closing concert in the evening. On Sunday, September 8th, the festival raised the question of the European way toward a digital society. Federal President Alexander Van der Bellen and Roberto Viola, Director General for Communication Networks, Content and Technologies of the European Commission, both visited Ars Electronica and discussed art's role as a driving force and a catalyst for the transition from automation to autonomy—a transition that remains committed to European values. Today, Monday, September 9, Ars Electronica 2019 comes to a close with two Austrian premieres. Maki Namekawa and Dennis Russell Davies along with Cori O'Lan invite you to the final concert, to be held in the Gleishalle. After that, it will be time to say farewell to POSTCITY.

Farewell to POSTCITY...

"In 2015 we used POSTCITY as a venue for the first time, and we are to this day enthusiastic about this brilliant space. POSTCITY has opened up completely new possibilities for us and sparked an evolution in the festival. At the same time, its unique architecture, its gigantic halls, its deep and branching catacombs, and its expansive roofscapes have profoundly marked the festival's atmosphere," says Martin Honzik, Director of the Ars Electronica Festival. "Never before has a location had so large an influence on the curation of the festival program," continues Gerfried Stocker. "I would like to thank POST AG, in particular Dr. Franz, for their outstanding cooperation and openness and for the unflagging trust they placed in us."

...and full speed ahead to Johannes Kepler University

The course for 2020 has already been laid. "We are pleased to announce that the next Ars Electronica Festival will take place from September 10th through the 14th on the campus of Johannes Kepler University," says Gerfried Stocker. "The local conditions are perfect, and our thematic proximity also serves to recommend our arrangement. Furthermore, I think that holding Ars Electronica at the JKU makes a strong statement and a good story for Linz as a location." Rector Meinhard Lukas agrees: "Linz never gets more urban and international than during Ars Electronica. The festival is an electrifying magnet for artists and scientists from all over the world. The JKU associates Ars Electronica with courage, pioneering spirit, and innovative strength. And so it is only logical that both institutions should move even closer together. Next year, the Republic's most important festival will take place on its most beautiful and exciting campus. Our joy is great!"

Open call for artist's residency at the Edinburgh Futures Institute

However, there is still much to be accomplished before Ars Electronica 2020. One example is the recently launched open call from the "European ARTificial Intelligence Lab," which offers artists the opportunity to spend several weeks researching at the Edinburgh Futures Institute of the University of Edinburgh, one of Europe's leading institutions in the fields of data science, AI training, research, and innovation, as well as at the Ars Electronica Futurelab. The artistic outcomes from these two research stays will be presented at the Ars Electronica Festival 2020 in Linz. Applications will be accepted until October 29.

Human (un)limited: Ars Electronica in Beijing, Seoul, and Moscow

In collaboration with Hyundai, Ars Electronica will continue its artistic reflection on "Human Limitations and Limitations of Humanity" that it began at the festival in Linz. In November 2019, Hyundai Motorstudios in Beijing, Seoul, and Moscow will host exhibitions featuring artistic positions from the West, China, South Korea, and Russia.

Forty Years of Art, Technology, Society: Ars Electronica in Shenzhen

Forty years of Ars Electronica are synonymous with forty years of digitalization that have changed our world and our lives from the ground up. Since 1979, Ars Electronica has seen this not as a technological development but rather a social one. This approach has been codified in the phrase "Art, Technology, and Society" since the very first festival, and at the beginning of 2020 it will also represent the jumping-off point for a joint exhibition project by Ars Electronica and CAFA Beijing. Under the banner "40 Years of Humanizing Technologies: Art – Society – Technology," a major exhibition will be presented at the Design Society Shenzhen November 2, 2019 - February 17, 2020.