

"The idea behind the festival, which is now considered the most important in the field of digital art internationally, can be summed up in a tagline that is very familiar this year: Stay at home and meet online. In this case, there are 120 locations or "gardens" around the world - from Antarctica to Jerusalem - where artists or research institutes organize their own projects." (dpa - Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung / 7.9.2020)

"After more than two decades of promoting the benefits of a digitalized society and a networked community, the world of electronic art was forced to put its intellectual approach into practice. With Covid, it is impossible to organize a festival in the usual way, which is why Ars Electronica, the world's most important festival dedicated to bringing art, technology, science and society together, has given the festival a new form this year. (El Pais/ 9/6/2020 / translated from Spanish)

"The Ars Electronica Festival takes place every year in Linz, Austria, as a global festival of media art where culture, art and science/technology overlap. This year, 41 years after its inception, the Corona virus has made it possible for it to be held online for the first time. (...) Of the 120 gardens worldwide, the TOKYO GARDEN will be a place for research into the present and history of Japanese media art." (Wired Japan / 10.9.2020 / translated from Japanese)

„Mind-reading dress changes shape and colour through your brainwaves: Dutch designer Anouk Wipprecht has created a dress that changes its shape based on the wearer's brain activity. The clothing itself is made from a lightweight nylon material, with the interface between the brain and the dress made by the Institute for Integrated Circuits at Johannes Kepler University Linz and neurotechnology company G.tec. (...) The dress is shown at the Ars Electronica festival in Austria.“ (The Independent / 10.9.2020)

„One of the world's leading media arts festivals, Ars Electronica is holding its 2020 edition, themed In Kepler's Gardens: A global journey mapping the 'new' world, both online and as a physical event. Twelve virtual reality works by Taiwanese artists are represented online in this year's Ars Electronica Festival.“ (Taipei Times / 11.9.2020)

„The Korea National University of Arts (KNUA) kicked off the Ars Electronica Garden Seoul Festival to present diverse ideas on how society would transform after the COVID-19 pandemic. The festival is part of the 2020 Ars Electronica Festival, the international new media art festival held annually in Linz, Austria, every September.“ (Korea Herald / 11.9.2020)

„The collaboration (...) reveals, how emerging technologies will enable new modes of art and interaction. The virtual world will host a new exhibition during this week's Ars Electronica festival.“ (Forbes.com / 8.9.2020)

"Be Water by Hong Kongers was awarded a Golden Nica at the Prix Ars Electronica. In view of the fact that all demonstrators in Hong Kong share in the trophy's success, the organizers had the brilliant idea that all Hong Kong residents could download the data free of charge and print out the Golden Nica in 3D". (Epoch Times / 9/11/2010 / translated from Chinese)

"During the Ars Electronica Festival, the AIR Art Residence will open its doors for the first time—the first gallery workshop in St. Petersburg for collaboration between artists and scientists. It will be an offline platform where viewers will have the opportunity to see live projects by several artists from St. Petersburg. (stpdnevnik / 7.9.2020 / translated from Russian)

"The Appropriate Response installation is something special. In a normal Ars Electronica festival it would perhaps be just another curiosity. But this year it is doubly special: the installation's quotations play with the theme of artificial intelligence with a lightness that does good after the melancholy Corona months. And it is good to see a physical installation and an artist. (Bayerischer Rundfunk / 9/11/2020)

Corona safe and sold out:

Ars Electronica 2020 was a huge success

(Linz, 14.9.2020) It was very different. But it was a huge success. The first hybrid Ars Electronica in the era of Corona. "It wasn't easy, but it was absolutely the right decision to let the festival take place," Gerfried Stocker said in a first review. On site, everything went smoothly - the security concept worked, and the requirements were understood and accepted by the audience. And it was virtually sold out, the first "Kepler's Garden" on the beautiful campus of the Johannes Kepler University Linz. "We offered 3,490 tickets and we issued them all," Gerfried Stocker is pleased to report. "It's really great that even in times of a pandemic there are obviously many people who are happy about cultural offerings and take advantage of them in a responsible way." The Festival Mile in the city center with the OK in Upper Austria's Kulturquartier (1,664 visitors), the University of the Arts (1,284 visitors) and the Ars Electronica Center (2,223 visitors) was well attended and registered 5,171 visitors. Last but not least, the physical presence of 668 artists in Linz was also very gratifying because it's no longer a matter of course to bring so many people together for an event.

As far as the online presence of the first truly hybrid Ars Electronica is concerned, the interim results are also very positive. "We've streamed a continuous program on four YouTube channels over the past five days without any noteworthy technical problems. As expected, the first echo came from the social media and is very gratifying. The reaction on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram: The fact that Ars Electronica took place this year had an international signal effect; the fact that its hybrid program was so comprehensive and multi-faceted came as a surprise. As far as the views of the streamed videos are concerned, the past few days were just the kick-off." It was clear that our talks, lectures and conferences would not be consumed during the day, while people were working, but rather when they had the necessary time and quiet to do so. That's why hundreds of videos will be edited, tagged and added in the coming weeks, in a moderated mix of Ars Electronica Blog and Mediathek. In addition, a documentary shot before and during the festival will be presented to accompany artists during their preparations and performances and shed light on what the much-cited "new reality" means for them and their work.

Ars Electronica in Kepler's Garden for the First Time

"Our first guest performance on the campus of the Johannes Kepler University Linz had to be a bit reserved due to Corona, but I still think that the visit here was very appealing. Around 3,500 visitors strolled through "Kepler's Garden" between Friday and Sunday noon in perfect late summer weather, enjoying the lush greenery, modern architecture and inspiring projects between art and science that lined all

With queries, please contact

Christopher Sonnleitner
Tel: +43.732.7272-38
christopher.sonnleitner@ars.electronica.art
ars.electronica.art/press

paths here. 700 people took part in the 74 guided tours. "A big thank you to our visitors once again," said Martin Honzik, Managing Director of the festival. "There was not a single case in which our security team had to intervene because someone refused to wear a mask or remain at a distance." Incidentally, Corona was not an issue for the 396 users who got to know "Kepler's Garden" during a total of 22 online tours.

Meinhard Lukas, Rector of the Johannes Kepler University Linz, was also impressed by the first Ars Electronica on campus: "I think all those who have been strolling around the campus in the past few days are no longer asking themselves whether this thing with Ars Electronica and the Johannes Kepler University Linz will work out, but rather why it took us so long to get here." He considers this new combination of art and science to be breaking new ground for Linz. "The planned Technical University must also be committed to this fusion of scientific research and technological innovation with artistic creativity and reflection. This opens up a huge opportunity to create an internationally significant hub in Linz that is dedicated to what is being hotly debated everywhere in view of new technologies like AI: How do we manage to turn technological innovation into social innovation, how do we manage to add the urgently needed socio-political and democratic dimension to technological development?"

Ars Electronica in the City Center Again

"It was an experiment for everyone: our students, our teachers, the artists involved, for the whole team. Thanks to a collective effort, our wild garden has grown in every conceivable way and in all directions," Brigitte Hütter, Rector of the University of Art and Design Linz, sums up the past days. "In the spirit of our motto 'THE WILD STATE', we had called for unconditional confrontation with the new and strange and to allow any opinion, any access." In view of current events, it was above all this emphatic commitment that was urgently needed as a socially relevant sign, Hütter emphasized: "The freedom of art, science and thought must not be shaken for a second. As a university, we promote it anew every day and a global discourse at eye level and with tolerance. With Ars Electronica 2020, which spans the globe like never before, Linz has anchored itself in consciousness as a cosmopolitan city."

"Despite adverse circumstances, Ars Electronica has once again succeeded in setting new standards this year. With the CyberArts in the Upper Austrian Cultural Quarter, we've succeeded in producing a physical exhibition of the 2020 Prix Ars Electronica Prizewinners in defiance of the pandemic and thus once again combining real and virtual space," says Martin Sturm, Director of the Upper Austrian Cultural Quarter, pointing out that the CyberArts show will be on view until September 15, 2020.

With queries, please contact

Christopher Sonnleitner
Tel: +43.732.7272-38
christopher.sonnleitner@ars.electronica.art
ars.electronica.art/press

Streams, Hubs, Posts, Stories, Tweets - Ars Electronica on the Net

"It sounds strange, but up to now Ars Electronica has been a fairly analog festival," says Gerfried Stocker. Well, starting this year it's different. Corona and the constraints and restrictions it entails made it necessary to develop a hybrid festival concept that was enthusiastically received by artists, museums, universities, labs, galleries, companies and associations around the globe. "Our idea was as simple as it was convincing," says Martin Honzik. "If the world can't come to Ars Electronica in Linz, Ars Electronica is going out into the world. The fact that the Linz Platform for Art, Technology and Society has been living networking and cooperation for decades paid off." We were able to get 160 network partners around the globe excited about participating in Ars Electronica 2020 and offering on-site programs for local audiences," says Veronika Liebl, Director of European Cooperation, looking back on weeks of intensive networking. "We've woven all of these program offerings into an online program that's too vast for one person to comprehend. Over the past five days, we have streamed more than 994 videos in parallel on four channels," Martin Honzik continues. "Of course, we all hoped that this would happen without technical problems, but frankly we didn't expect it." So far, the videos streamed during the festival have been viewed more than 56,837 times.

Large institutions and individual artists used social media above all to express their enthusiasm for "being there," and to promote their programs in the context of Ars Electronica. The hashtags #arselectronica and #arselectronica20 on Twitter and Instagram were used more than 4,000 times in the past five days alone. As the festival's central online directory, the festival website recorded nearly 300,000 page views during the same period.

In the Mozilla Hubs designed for the festival - which incidentally remain open and accessible - 2337 users have been counted so far.

Democracy and Ecology

Throughout all the talks and presentations, two things became clear: Firstly, that for many, real change seems more than overdue. Secondly, that the vast majority of people - from youngsters to renowned artists and scientists - are particularly concerned about democracy, freedom and participation, as well as the ecological emergency.

Festival 2020 is over, let's think about Festival 2021

"This year, we conducted one of the greatest experiments in the history of Ars Electronica, first out of necessity and then with great enthusiasm. Analyzing this in detail will keep us busy for the next few weeks," says Gerfried Stocker, Ars Electronica's Artistic Director. "But there's already no disputing that we've laid down

With queries, please contact

Christopher Sonnleitner
Tel: +43.732.7272-38
christopher.sonnleitner@ars.electronica.art
ars.electronica.art/press

a learning curve that's quite respectable." The first guest performance on campus already has people asking for more. "I'd like to take this opportunity to invite you to the next Ars Electronica, which will take place from September 8 to 12, 2021, on the magnificent campus of the Johannes Kepler University Linz and also online. That much is certain."

Ars Electronica Festival: <https://ars.electronica.art/keplersgardens/>

Johannes Kepler Universität Linz: <https://www.jku.at/>

Follow us on:      

With queries, please contact

Christopher Sonnleitner
Tel: +43.732.7272-38
christopher.sonnleitner@ars.electronica.art
ars.electronica.art/press