

Europe Day Celebrations

Pianographique at EXPO 2025 in Osaka

On the occasion of Europe Day on May 9, the European Union presented itself at the World EXPO in Osaka with a diverse cultural program. The event was opened in the National Day Hall “Ray Garden” by Ars Electronica from Linz with *Pianographique* – a concert by pianists Maki Namekawa (AT/JP) and Dennis Russell Davies (AT/US), accompanied by real-time visualizations by visual artist Cori O’Lan (AT). In the presence of distinguished guests of honor – including EU Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič, all 27 EU ambassadors, and high-ranking Japanese government representatives – the concert took the audience on an audiovisual journey through 250 years of music history and three continents. The program ranged from Dvořák, Ravel, and Mozart to Philip Glass, Hania Rani, and Joe Hisaishi, whose *Piano Sonata* even celebrated its world premiere. The musical framework was provided by the European anthem *Ode to Joy* in a four-hand piano arrangement. Following the official opening ceremonies of Europe Day, *Pianographique* was performed once again on the same day in the National Day Hall in front of a general audience. The invitation to Osaka came after concerts in New York, Tokyo, and Abu Dhabi.

Following the concerts on Europe Day, Maki Namekawa (AT/JP), Dennis Russell Davies (AT/US), and Cori O’Lan (AT) filled the Czech Pavilion with music on May 10 and 11, performing Bedřich Smetana’s famous *Ma Vlast* cycle under the title *Pianographique – The Intertwining Lands*.

Ars Electronica and Japan – a long-shared story

Since Ars Electronica’s beginnings in 1979, Japanese pioneers of media art and electronic music have shaped the festival’s program. A milestone was the spectacular open-air concert by Isao Tomita in 1984, which established Ars Electronica as a well known brand in the contemporary culture of Japan.

Since the 1990s, Ars Electronica has intensified its cooperation with Japanese universities, museums and galleries, and since 2005 it has also specifically promoted exchange with Japanese industry. Today, Ars Electronica advises Japanese companies in the areas of innovation and creativity management.