

Visitors thronged to POSTCITY

## 2017 Ars Electronica Festival Will Tally 100.000 Visits

Press conference on September 11, 2017 with

Doris Lang-Mayerhofer

Linz Cultural Affairs Commissioner, Chairwoman of the Board of Ars Electronica Linz GmbH & Co KG

Martin Honzik

Director of the Ars Electronica Festival

Christine Schöpf

Artistic Co-producer of the Ars Electronica Festival

Gerfried Stocker

Artistic Co-producer of the Ars Electronica Festival

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POSTCITY bursting at the seams at the weekend

## 2017 Ars Electronica Festival Will Tally 100.000 Visits

(Linz, September 11, 2017) A piano concert by Maki Namekawa concludes the 2017 Ars Electronica Festival this evening following five intensive days featuring 600 individual events at 12 downtown Linz locations that will attract 100,000+ visits and thereby will break the record of set in 2009, Linz's European Capital of Culture year. "Of course, every year we hope that our theme and the program we put on will appeal to as many people as possible, but this year's attendance was by all means a pleasant surprise," Christine Schöpf and Gerfried Stocker, festival co-producers, noted in their wrap-up. "On Saturday in particular, festivalgoers absolutely stormed POSTCITY." The staff of festival director Martin Honzik was likewise delighted by the very positive response by attendees on site as well as commentators online. "With more than 600 individual events, there was something on this lineup for everyone," Honzik said. "I'm pretty sure that festivalgoers took away just as much inspiration and enthusiasm for the future from their encounters in POSTCITY as we have from the experience of staging this festival at this extraordinary venue and of working together with so many incredibly interesting people from all over the world."

POINT ZERO, CREATE YOUR WORLD, TURNTON DOCKLANDS, DEEP SPACE 8K, LIGHT SCALE II, CYBERARTS, FEMINIST CLIMATE CHANGE and the BIG CONCERT NIGHT were this year's big draws

Festivalgoers' biggest favorites were the works of art in the POINT ZERO exhibition in the sprawling basement of POSTCITY, and CREATE YOUR WORLD, the bustling, creative playground on the 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Level. Another highlight was the astounding attention to detail that Time's Up put into the design of TURNTON DOCKLANDS, their parallel universe installed in the LENTOS Art Museum (and that will continue its run there until October 22<sup>nd</sup>). LIGHTSCALE II, Uwe Rieger's huge audiovisual installation in Mariendom [Linz cathedral], garnered rave reviews from many festivalgoers, as did the fantastic deluge of imagery in which they were immersed in Deep Space 8K. A perennial Ars Electronica favorite is the CyberArts show in the OK Center for Contemporary Art, where LIGHT BARRIER 3<sup>rd</sup> EDITION by Mimi Son (KR) and Elliot Woods (UK) were especially well-received, as was the FEMINIST CLIMATE CHANGE: BEYOND THE BINARY exhibition from the University of California at Los Angeles. The BIG CONCERT NIGHT was sold out; Markus Poschner made his mark for the first time on this production that he entitled "Departure." It gave new meaning to the term "no assigned seating" and its interplay of the Bruckner Orchester, a jazz combo, Prix prizewinners, real-time visualizations and a diesel locomotive made for lasting audiovisual impressions.

And last but not least, there was unprecedented demand for the 27 different tours on the WE GUIDE YOU lineup—no fewer than 135 tour groups took advantage of these offerings over the past four days. Martin Honzik cites two main reasons why WE GUIDE YOU got such a great reception. "First of all, our tours cover an extremely broad substantive spectrum. They're conceived to appeal to laypeople as well as experts, and to all age groups. As a pilot project this year, we even conducted tours for two kindergarten groups. And secondly, we offer tours in no fewer than 11 languages: German, English, Arabic, Italian, Persian, Polish, Russian, Romanian, Turkish, in sign language, and for people who are learning German as a second language."

### 1,023 Artists & Scientists from 42 Countries Gathered in Linz

More than 1,000 artists and scientists from 40+ countries spent the last few days in Linz—speaking at conferences, answering questions and discussing issues, giving talks and holding workshops, performing concerts, and presenting their works of art and R&D projects. "The fact that you can meet all these experts and visionaries in person and converse with them contributes considerably to the very special atmosphere that

pervades the Ars Electronica Festival,” Gerfried Stocker said, and cited Joseph Herscher as an example. “When we proposed to him that he work together with local youngsters at the festival and build one of his amazing Rube Goldberg machines, he immediately agreed. Needless to say, this is a priceless experience for young people, to be able to carry out a project like this together with a YouTube star like Joseph.”

#### 474 Partners & Associates Worldwide

474 partners & associates contributed to the success of this year’s Ars Electronica. 375 of them are based in Austria—first and foremost, Österreichische Post AG, Sonnleitner GmbH & Co KG, ÖBB, Greiner AG, Österreich Werbung, OÖ Tourismus GmbH, Wirtschaftskammer OÖ, CONRAD Elektronik GmbH & Co KG, Hutchison Drei Austria GmbH, WACKER NEUSON Linz GmbH und MICROSOFT. Our 99 international partners include the University of California at Los Angeles, the MIT Media Lab, Hakuhodo [Japan’s second-largest ad agency], Bandai Namco Entertainment and Hyundai. “They have all made substantial contributions to producing a festival of this quality and scope,” said Gerfried Stocker, who expressed his thanks while noting a generally growing interest in Ars Electronica on the part of the private sector. “The best example is the Future Innovators Summit, which we conceived in 2014 and have continually developed ever since. We form small interdisciplinary crews, each of which includes an artist, a scientist, an entrepreneur and a social activist, who work together throughout the festival, focusing their talents on a specific topic of great future importance. The results of these multi-day workshops aren’t products that can be put on the market today, but rather future scenarios that sketch the context for the products of tomorrow.” This workshop format was conceived jointly with Hakuhodo.

#### 445 Accredited Media Outlet Representatives from 37 Countries

Ars Electronica has also been making a major impact in the media—both conventional outlets and online. 445 media outlet representatives from 37 countries were accredited to this year’s Ars Electronica Festival and reported from Linz—they include Delo, TechTime, Discovery Channel, National Geographic Canada, New Scientist, nature.com blogs, Bloomberg Business Week, ITV, TV Asahi, etnews Korea, Bayerischer Rundfunk, Deutschlandfunk, PC-Welt, c’t, Wirtschafts Woche, Sverigesradio - Swedish Broadcasting, RTV Slovenija, ARTE, ČRo - Tschechischer Rundfunk, Radio Romania, Eesti Ekspress, Pakistan Television News and DTV Algeria. Facilitating their coverage is the festival’s interview service that assisted in setting up more than 200 interviews with participating artists and scientists. Ars Electronica 2017 also got a big response in social media channels. On Facebook, Ars Electronica reached 100,000 persons (organic) over the last four days; on Twitter, the festival occupied 5<sup>th</sup> Place among the Top Ten Twitter Trends in Austria; for the first time on Instagram, moderated live stories conducted subscribers through the festival. 150,000 page views have been chalked up by the festival website since last Thursday.

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The 2017 Ars Electronica Festival: <https://www.aec.at/ai/en/>