



PIXELSPACES

Pixelspaces is an annual conference that the Ars Electronica Futurelab has been staging since 2001. It includes a symposium and exhibition that deal with various current issues in the area of digital culture. As the conclave of a transdisciplinary community of freelance (media) artists, staffers at up-and-coming as well as established media labs and institutions, and scientists in a broad spectrum of disciplines, *Pixelspaces* is a setting for communication about and exhibition of current research approaches in the artistic-scientific and technological confrontation with socially relevant issues.

The programmatic point of departure of *Pixelspaces* was

delivered by the increasingly complex interconnections among experimental fields and concrete tasks being carried out in the fields of computer gaming, architecture and virtual/augmented reality. Before this background and as part of an overall effort to address the latest currents in these fields, the conference has focused on, negotiated and even provoked new efforts to transcend boundaries between different artistic and scientific disciplines. Accordingly, non-institutionalized individual manifestations of interdisciplinarity have not only provided the themes of the annual *Pixelspaces* conferences; the trend as a whole has also occupied the focus of attention.

2001: PIXELSPACES

The first *Pixelspaces* conference featured theoretical papers and illustrative works by various proponents of virtual reality that dealt with new approaches to the development of hardware and software applications. Parallel to this, the *Pixel + Space* project examined facts & circumstances of relevance to architects and visualization engineers as they go about engendering real and virtual experiential spaces.

2002: TRANSPLANTED INTERACTIONS

The symposium focused on the design of interactive environments that are methodologically relevant in architecture, game development and augmented reality. This methodology is based in the broadest sense on interaction as conceptual objective. The point of departure of the thematic confrontation with respect to practices these fields have in common were possibilities and especially instances of the interweaving of the three areas as evidenced by examples of exhibition architecture.

2003: DAMPF—SENSORY ENVIRONMENTS—IMMATERIAL INTERFACES

The point of departure was provided by convergence tendencies exhibited by the classic arts and avant-garde media art. On the basis of current projects and concepts, corresponding artistic and technical methods of accomplishing this process of convergence were investigated. Thus, conference participants looked into the extent to which institutions in traditional fields of the arts such as music and dance theater (can) display readiness to take media-aesthetic implications into account. The Kultur 2000 project *Dance and Media Performance Fusions* set up a direct relationship between theory formation, practical testing and real performance.

2004: TRANSFER

Media artists and representatives of art & media labs from around the world discussed the question of the extent to which artistically intended strategies can impart impetus to extra-artistic areas when it comes to developing new interaction concepts and putting new technologies to use.

2005: HERTZBLUT

The conference dealt with the provocative relationship between emotions and computer technology, and focused attention on forms of dealing with emotions in the context of human-machine interaction. Findings in the field of neurobiology and research into emotions as well as experience yielded by project-based applications provided approaches to issues from two directions: the extent to which machines are capable of understanding emotions, reflecting them or processing forms of human emotions; and the extent to which machines themselves can develop forms of emotional intelligence.

2006: GOBLIN CITY

Pixelspaces 2006 investigated which traces digitization was leaving on the cityscape—in other words, how characteristics of media are being imparted to architecture, and how enhancements like telematic furnishings and location-based services can turn buildings' interiors into expanded spheres of communication. Conference participants presented projects and approaches at the nexus of media, art and the public sphere.

2007: ONFIELD

In 2007, *Pixelspaces* discussed functions currently being performed online for the formation of virtual communities, and possible ways of transferring them into the physical sphere of everyday life. Connected to this was the question of the consequences for perception and use of this space as a publicly accessible and usable storehouse of multi-medial information fragments and information levels. The expansion of “being online” into “onfield community” was treated on the basis of a variety of approaches—from micro-blogging to GPS-based games, from strategies of collective intelligence to public interfaces.

2008: PIXEL-SPACES

International R&D facilities and labs that engage in teaching and work at the interface of artistic-creative media production and technological research discussed innovation effects that result from temporary assignment formats. The discussion is based on the hypothesis that the temporary integration of freelance creatives into an enterprise's workforce can establish a new rhizome-like enterprise culture that can yield successful strategies in opening up innovative market segments and niche markets.

2009: DO-IT-TOGETHER!

The conference is dedicated to the art of new and not-yet-institutionalized interdisciplinary crossovers, and scrutinizes resulting poetic forms of expression. “Do-it-Together!” focuses on art and science before the backdrop of converging technologies as well as other disciplines such as Green technologies. The new Ars Electronica Center will be the physical setting for a new conference format: a nomadic symposium taking place along the topography of the facility's exhibitions and installations.



