

HILUS - An Austrian platform for art and new technology.

The HILUS intermedia project research group investigates the line between theory and practice through communication technology. It develops resources, creates events, and implements strategies to bring creative projects and ideas together. With open access and by informal exchanges of information, it seeks to respond to current issues through its programs and events, and to connect local concerns with the international online community.

Located in Vienna, the capitol city of Austria, HILUS is a production and research platform for art and new technology which specialises in networking and information processing. It is an independent formation of artists, theoreticians, curators, and information & hardware technicians. It operates as a communicative interface for the exploration of new information and media formats. In its programs and events, it seeks to elaborate on the inter-dependent theoretical and practical artistic strategies of digital technique.

HILUS is a flexible, modular system that extends or contracts in relation to project needs. It initiates, designs, realizes and documents projects and events in temporary associations and configurations. It is an environment for efficient working practices, organized as an autonomous information and distribution network. Whenever possible, HILUS collaborates with specialists and remote organizations.

In addition to artistic endeavors, the HILUS infrastructure contains a pool of equipment (video and computer), and various custom services at moderate prices, for artists and art organizations. The Archive of multimedia works is open by appointment, and viewing or browsing of materials and Internet resources is encouraged.

HILUS people create projects, concepts, and collaborations. They include Alf Altendorf, Thomas Brandstetter, Gabi Gerbasits, Jana Heiss, Kathy Rae Huffman, Max Kossatz, Regina Lercher, Christine Meierhofer, Gebhard Sengmüller, Herwig Turk, and Eva Wohlgemuth.

HILUS - CURRENT PROJECTS

Info-Cocktail:

At the end of each month (beginning July 1996), HILUS opens the door to the office to host an evening cocktail (Theme drinks from 6-10 pm) and guided tours on selected Info-Topics. It is not only a social meeting place for media specialists, but a relaxing environment for learning and exchanging information. The Info-Topics are explored via the Internet, and the Information system Kunst+NT: CD ROM, Video (documentaries, artists work, TV programs) and various print resources (books, catalogues, journals, newspapers, and alternative zines) in the HILUS archive. Live, on-line communication in chats, MOOS, and via CU-SeeMe connections bring experts from around the world to the Vienna participants. Each Info-Cocktail event is programmed in collaboration with a partner organization.

Info-Cocktail coordination and concept: Kathy Rae Huffman and Thomas Brandstetter.

Program:

July 31: Digest of Diana, the project premiere of a web site by Hanna Schimek and Eva Wohlgemuth, in collaboration with Chrono Popp, based on original quotes by Lady

Diana. Presented in collaboration with The Thing, Vienna.

August 30: BAD GRRRLS, a surf of Cyber-phem web sites and media works, as well as screenings and special presentations. In collaboration with Brasilica, Vienna.

September 27: HYPERTEXT HYSTERIA, a night of linking frenzy, with connections to Hypertext maniacs around the world. An event intended to restructure your thinking and understanding of hypertext.

October 31: PHRESH PHACES, a surprise screening of promising new talent, featuring emerging artists living and working in places we all dream about, Los Angeles, Glasgow, Dublin, London, Amsterdam, Ljubljana; for starters.

November 29: OBLIVION SEEKERS, a voyage into the realms of memory and the void of forgetting. Organized in collaboration with the working group „vergessen.“

„vergessen“

HILUS initiated and coordinates a project concept about vergessen (forgetting) as a cultural-survival technique. A working group has been meeting to discuss the social, theoretical, and practical aspects of forgetting since the beginning of 1996. The project will be „in progress“ as long as necessary, or until we forget about it, and will be manifest in a number of programs, events and situations.

Project concept and coordination: Herwig Turk.

Word Processing - discussion group modules:

Word Processing is a flexible formation of interested persons who try to develop their own approach to theoretical texts. The participants are mainly students of philosophy, sociology, art and technique. This guarantees a diversity of viewpoints as well as presumptions. Difficulties in communication are therefor treated as problems which have to be solved, a constructive part of the concept. The meetings take place at the HILUS office, whose infrastructure allows for further research. At the moment, two modules exist, both groups are open and flexible, texts to be read are submitted and discussed by all participants.

1. Media Theory: starting with Jean Baudrillard's „Requiem for the Media“ the group tries to develop a critical way of reading the concept of so called „subversive“ media theory. A text of Diederichsen, on the fundamental characteristics of subversion concepts, continues this program. The next text proposed is by Umberto Eco.

2. A Thousand Plateaus: together with the film theoretician Vraath Ohner, texts from the book by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari are read and discussed. We started with the introduction „Rhizomes“. The next Plateau to be discussed is the chapter on the nomadic war machine.

Concept and coordination: Thomas Brandstetter.

Informationssystem Kunst+NT:

An interface in the area of art with new technologies conceptualized as a gateway between artists, curators, theoreticians, cultural officials, and the corresponding public. The components of

the INFORMATIONSYSTEM ART+NT are: An ARCHIVE (library, videotek, CD-ROM collection, other new forms) on and about art and new technology and a DATABASE about Austrian media art (in development).

Austrian art classes and tours of curators visiting Vienna are often scheduled to meet at HILUS, for viewing video, CD ROM and for discussions about the development of media art in Austria and on the international scene. Teachers collaborate with HILUS members to develop their course structure and to fully exploit the resources at hand in the Archiv.

Concept and implementation: Anna Steininger

HILUS DATABASE

HILUS developed two tools for decentralised information transfer:

The Information System Database, make available all the materials in the HILUS archive via the WWW. It is planned as one knot in a network of databases and archives that will bring together an overview about art production created with new technologies.

The OC-database is drafted as a information/ data/ presentation pool on artists, groups and labels in Austria to upload data online through a simple user-guide. Information about their activities and/or current / finished projects as well as a limited number of image- and soundfiles are available. The database automatically generates a corresponding standardized "presentation page" which can also link to existing homepages or relevant websites.

The formal arrangement for uploading lies thus with the "importer", and only the database and its input and queryforms were created to accord uniformity of information. At the present state and in connection with "Open Circuit" the database aims not so much at historical documentation but at actuality. It intends to be a (preliminary) presentation- and information "space" - a simple and clear reference system for current productions and initiatives in the field of an art combined with "new" technologies.

The equipment-pool OC/Pool offers a simple and effective hire service of constantly needed equipment (for immediate presentations, projects etc.). Through a simple input masque, type --as well as rental terms and costs-- can be submitted. Listed equipment can not only be searched for effectively, but a (first) overview of available technical materials is created and the needed equipment can be requested/ booked in advance, or reserved online.

HILUS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

e-farschule (e-driving school)

HILUS offers workshops for electronic telecommunication, and html programming with a focus on cultural activity on the Net. Artists and technicians from Vienna, and international guests, lead the sessions, bringing practical experience as well as their navigation skills on topics of relevance to the participants.

HILUS PAST PROJECTS -1992-1996

KÜNSTLERPECH (July 19 - September 15, 1996)

As part of the exhibition JUNGE SZENE '96, in the Secession, Vienna, HILUS was one of 17 Austrian artists groups asked to present a work. For this program, HILUS created "KÜNSTLERPECH", reflecting the situation of art production and sponsorship. A Bubblejet-Plot of an Image from the Donald Duck-Story „Künstlerpech“ (© 1995 The Walt Disney Company), Size: 477x317 cm, comprised of 240 A4 size pages. Our participation was sponsored by Compaq and Hewlett Packard.

WORD UP (March 1996)

The annual festival „Literatur im Maerz“ (Literature in March), held for the first time in the Museumquartier. For four days, it featured rap and contemporary interpretations of spoken poetry from around the world. For this program, Kathy Rae Huffman curated a selection of 12 artists CD-ROMs from the HILUS-ARCHIVE that explored different forms of literary metaphors and poetic structures.

NEXT 5 MINUTES (January 1996)

HILUS presented the HILUS platform, the OpenCircuit-WWW Database and the informationsystem Art+NT at the Next 5 Minutes Conference in Rotterdam, which was organised by V2_Organisatie. We also made plans for long-term collaboration with Next5Minutes Archive Amsterdam, V2.East (WWW Database) and „very cyber indeed“ magazine, Ljubiana.

BENUeTZERFREUNDLICH (December 1995)

User Friendly, a program at the Literaturhaus Wien, was made in collaboration with Literatur + Medien. The program included -"woerter brauchen keine seiten," a video by Kurt Hentschlaeger and Christine Boehler, on literature in the electronic and public space. (A 1995, 30 min), video and lecture by Kathy Rae Huffman on television and internet technology - Television of the Future featuring Yorb World - An Electronic Network" (USA), "Sim Tv3" (Japan), "W.E.B. World Receiver" (NL). Alf Altendorf made a presentation on the "OC/OpenCircuit" Databasesystem of austrian media art (by HILUS), and the "Lichtzeile" by Literatur + Medien was announced. Intertainment featured Swound Design by SugarB & Les New Petits.

THE SPRING PROJECT (April 6 - May 7, 1994)

HILUS designed a multi-media database of the 14 contributions to the exhibition THE SPRING PROJECT, held in the Atelier im Augarten (a pavillion which belongs to the Austrian Gallery/Belvedere). The exhibition was organised by Doris Guth and Matthias Michalka. A catalogue is available.

DATENDANDY (February 1994)

An event created in collaboration with Literatur+Medien, Literaturhaus, and Artfan in the Literaturhaus, Wien. It featured the performance DATENDANDY by Agentur Bilwet, and also a presentation of The Thing by Helmut Mark, a presentation of the CD-ROM „BlindRom“ by Mediamatic Amsterdam, the films of Ernst Schmidt jr., shown by Linda Bilda, „Subgeschichte“, a lecture by Ariane Müller, a lecture/show by Paschutan Buzari, Joseph Strau und Stefan Dilleuth and a concert by „Die Guten“.

TV-VT [television - videotape] (October 1994)

The multimedia evening featured a performance by Marc Ries/A and Vraath Ohner/A, a screening by Tatiana Didenko/Silence #9 (Russian State Television Moscow), and a screening/lecture by Kathy Rae Huffman/USA in the Literaturhaus Wien. For this evening, we were asked to present lectures, screenings and events to confront the different aspects of TV as an influence on art, private and public life and politics. A collaboration with Literatur+Medien and Literaturhaus.

E-XHIBITION (1992 - present)

This is an exhibition in the virtual HILUS/UNITn room, which exists in the MediaMOO of the M.I.T. (Massachusetts Institute of Technologie). It is accessible via Internet, where the visitors can be active participants by putting in texts and communicating with other visitors. In this exhibition, artists -whose work primary involves text- are invited to design specific works for this room. The intention is to confront a situation where the technical resources are limited: the material is the text. A project by HILUS and Literatur+Medien.

UNITn (January 17 - April 15, 1992)

In cooperation with 11 groups and individual artists, an open space for art and new technology was established for three months at the WUK in Vienna. During this time, there were 27 presentations, screenings, performances, conferences and network events. From this resulted the published documentation REFLEXIONEN, the UNITn Video, and the long term cooperation with different international and national groups and individuals. International participants included Heather Barton, Rolf Schöber, Louis Bec, Maciej Walczak, David Blair, Mike Stubbs, Peter Weiss, Kathy Rae Huffman, Sigfried Zielinski, VanGogh TV/Ponton Media, Büro Bert, Kit Blake, and others. Cooperating groups in Austria included Station Rose, Granular Synthesis, Eikon, HILUS, Kunstlabor, Literatur und Medien, Medien.Kunst.Passagen., Medienwerkstatt, Pyramedia, Projektgruppe Medienkünstlerinnen im Gespräch, Triton, ZeroNET/Steirische Kulturinitiative, ZSI-ARBE Kultur und Technik, Ursula Hentschläger, Marc Mer, Mathias Fuchs, Patrick Maun, and others.

KETTENANIMATION (CHAIN ANIMATION) (1992)

Within one year, 45 artists collaboratively produced a 21 minute computer animation. Each of the participants had one week's time to create their animation, which started with the last frame of the previous animator, and likewise, s/he passed on only their last frame to the next artist. Everybody had to use the same type of computer: the Amiga. The handing-over of the disc every week was documented on Polaroid-photos, which are printed on the cover of the VHS-tape. The completed animations were taped on video to create a whole work, because at the time there was no computer that could play a 21 -minute computer-animation. Finally every artist produced sound for his/her animation, which was mixed and edited for the videotape.

Artists: Herwig Turk, Lukas Kircher, Martina Chmelarz, Enrique Garcia Roldan, Martin Kusch, Arye Wachsmuth, Leo Larcher, Tristan Thönnissen, Max Kossatz, Boris Ban, Christoph Nebel, José Iranzo, Tuncay Boztepe, Gundi Berghold, Patrick Maun, Eduard Mang, rich.art.92, Martin Koch, Violet Suk, Hannes Maier, Christine Meierhofer, Rembert Rayon, Jan Lauth, Christine Gloggeniesser, Silvia Eckermann, Mathias Fuchs, Martin Motycka, Erwin Meisel, Muki Pakesch, Helmut Mark, Markus Lang, Kurt Lang, Lydia Lindner, Kurt Hentschläger, Zelko Wiener, Ruth Schnell, Wolfgang Neipl, Rosa von Suess, Ulf Langheinrich, Konrad Becker, Martyn Berger, Kunstlabor Franz Xaver, You Never Know, Leo Schatzl, Simon Wachsmuth, Matta Wagnest.

Concept and organisation: Christine Meierhofer

OPEN CIRCUIT (1992)

The first project organized by HILUS brought together, for the first time, 36 Austrian groups who were invited to a three day long round-table discussion. This venture was created to establish better communication and coordination of the different Austrian media initiatives .

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