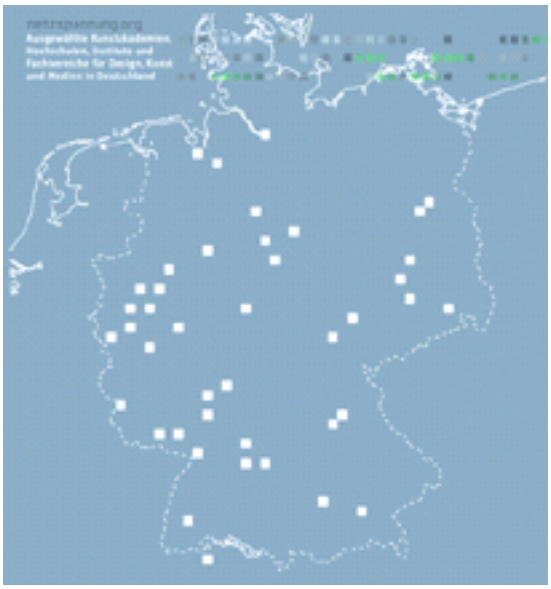


digital sparks

a cartography of innovative media projects at german-language higher education institutions

>digital sparks< is a publication and support project for the most interesting student projects each year at German-language institutions of higher education in the fields of media art and design and media information technology.

Goals

With digital sparks, netzspannung.org aims to give a structured insight into the work of young German-speaking artists in media art and design and media information technology.

digital sparks aims to show the potential that lies in the training of scientists and artists in the field of media, and the importance of training of this kind.

An annual virtual exhibition is to make the diverse students' projects accessible to the general public.

The interplay of artistic and design-related, social and technological skills is becoming increasingly significant in the development of the new media. One prerequisite for this is interdisciplinary exchange of experience. In order to promote exchange of this kind, the students' work will be placed on the Internet platform netzspannung.org into an environment that reflects current media-related issues in art and technology.

Content

The students' projects are to demonstrate how professors and their students reflect and experiment on design, the transmission of meanings and on specific approaches in the use of digital technologies.

Participation

The invitation to submit projects online to >digital sparks 2001< was aimed at professors and students at 60 different institutions of higher education in Germany and Switzerland. The focus lay on interactive, experimental work based on networks and/or showing innovative use of media technologies.

52 projects were entered. Following internal inspection, each project was evaluated by two experts. Of the 23 projects that were categorised as "very good", an independent panel of judges selected three as "excellent". All 53 project entries will be presented at cast01 in the form of a virtual exhibition on the netzspannung.org platform. The three winners will be introduced and presented with prizes.

workkshop / digital sparks 2001

After the conference, the three prizewinners will be invited to a workshop at Schloss Birlinghoven. This will give them the opportunity to develop a new concept.

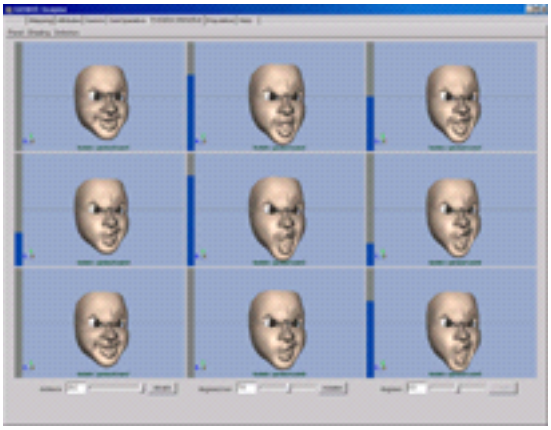
The most interesting of the three new concepts is then to be implemented with the support of the Fraunhofer Institute for Media Communication.

digital sparks 2002

In order to ensure that the projects submitted are to a greater extent in the hands of the students, from 2002 onwards any student of media art, media design or media information technology can submit a project via the “Netzkollektor” of netzspannung.org, if a supervising lecturer in higher education writes a brief statement on the project and the area of study in which it was developed.

Ulricke Boecking

digital sparks awards 2001 – „GENIUS Bodybuilder - a tool for the avaLUTION of EVOtars“



Martin Schneider und Fabian Härle, Institut für Medientechnik der Technischen Universität-Ilmenau, - Prof. Dr. Karl-Heinz Brandenburger, Postfach 10 05 65, 98684 Ilmenau,

martin.schneider@rz.tu-ilmenau.de

GENIUS Bodybuilder is a tool for the evolutionary design of arbitrary closed surface objects in 3d space. Its main field of application is the creation of avatars and virtual characters. Genius supports both userguided interactive evolution and automatic evolution using physical and optical sensor modules. The current implementation " Genius Sculptor " is used to create individual avatars out of prototypes by shape blending and free form deformation. The next step " Genius Creator " will be concerned with the creation of arbitrary forms using embryology, L-Systems and Cellular Automata.

http://www.rz.tu-ilmenau.de/~marsu/genius/

Judges comments

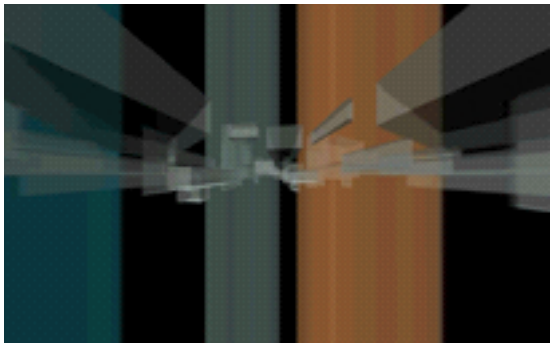
"GENIUS Bodybilder" - a tool for the avaLUTION of EVOtars,

is a plug-in for "maya" graphics software for the development of closed, random 3d surfaces on the basis of algorithms that can be influenced using evolution. Its main area of application is in the development of avatars and virtual characters. "GENIUS Bodybilder" was developed by Martin Schneider and Fabian Härle in 2001 as a seminar project at the Media Technology Institute at Ilmenau Technical University, under the supervision of Professor Dr. Karl-Heinz Brandenburger.

The pane of judges recognises "GENIUS Bodybilder" as a seminar project of astonishing maturity, as the use of evolutionary programming principles has been developed as a plug-in for a standard software, right up to finding a practical application. This software means that individual modelling is no longer necessary for the design of avatars and virtual characters.

Figures can now developed by combining and selecting "evolutionary" design parameters, such as pairing and mutation. The goal of the basic research associated with the project, to derive "basic genetic structures" for software development from existing 3d forms, is promising.

digital sparks awards 2001 – "STADTWIRKLICHKEIT"



Sascha Kempe und Michael Wolf , Fachbereich Design der Fachhochschule Köln Prof. Gui Bonsiepe, Ubierring 40, 50678 Köln,

kempe@infoterror.de

"STADTWIRKLICHKEIT" is a platform for the design of artificial worlds. The installation uses metaphors from Italo Calvino's "Invisible Cities". Visitors to the website are requested to use their imagination to design reality models.

http://www.ds.fh-koeln.de/~sascha/stadtwirklichkeit/

Judges comments

"STADTWIRKLICHKEIT" is a platform for the design of artificial worlds. The 3d animation conceived for the Internet uses metaphors from Italo Calvino's "Invisible Cities". "CITY REALITY" was implemented in the summer semester of 2001 by Sascha Kempe and Michael Wolf as a seminar project in the department for Design at Cologne *Fachhochschule* under Professor Gui Bonsiepe.

Going beyond the aesthetically successful transmission of the literary model into an interactive 3D environment, “STADTWIRKLICHKEIT” can be interpreted as a metaphor for the city. The virtual space is configured as a public space for collaborative action, where Internet users can contribute their own ideas and images of the city. The visual form of this virtual world is, however, not only the result of the additive input from users, but results from the social process of evaluating contributed input.

When the concept of "city development" has been implemented, which at the time when the panel of judges met had not yet taken place, the result will be a collaborative hyper-fiction on the subject of the city, which will take place in a public space and will take shape as a result of social processes and be subject to permanent changes. The judges were impressed by the multiple layers of the navigable and conceptual space.

digital sparks awards 2001 – „DIALTONE - teleinteractive net audio installation“

Tamas Szakal, Fachbereich Medienkunst der Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst Leipzig Prof. Helmut Mark, Wächterstr. 11, 04107 Leipzig,

tone@contour.net

DIALTONE is a net audio installation that makes recordings on both the physical and the virtual space of the Internet and attempts to open up this hybrid space to sounds using simple telecommunication instruments (telephones and answering machines).

http://dial.tone.hu

Judges comments

DIALTONE - teleinteractive net audio installation is a net audio installation that makes recordings in physical space and on the Internet and attempts to open up this hybrid space for sounds using simple telecommunication instruments such as telephones, answering machines and the Internet.

DIALTONE is a seminar project that was developed in the year 2000 in the Media Art department at the *Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst Leipzig* under Professor Helmut Mark.

DIALTONE by Tamas Szakal impressed the judges by means of a simple yet intelligent link between everyday communications equipment and an interactive electronic "sound sculpture". Without any guidelines, participants supply acoustic contributions via telephone and answering machine to a sound mixing control desk, which links up remote locations into a single sound space using a streaming camera. Unlike in the 70s, however, the participative input only offers the material for sampling. Chance and the low sound quality of the equipment results a sound experience that at times verges on the unreasonable.

A further reason for awarding a prize to this project, was to point to the relevance of sound for media art work.

Committee

Jury chairs

- Monika Fleischmann, FhG. IMK,
- Dr. Wilfried Matanovic bmb+f, Bonn

Jury

- Bernhard Foos / SWR TV, Internationaler Medienkunstpreis, Baden-Baden
- Prof. Dr. Dr. Lydia Hartl / Kulturreferentin der Stadt München
- Prof. Dr. Joachim-Felix Leonhard / Generalsekretär Goethe Institut, München
- Dr. Sabine Rollberg / ARTE- Beauftragte, WDR Fernsehdirektion, Köln
- Prof. Hans Peter Schwarz / Rektor, Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst Zürich
- Regina Wyrwoll / Generalsekretärin, Stiftung Kunst und Kultur NRW, Essen

Reviewer

- Prof. Dr. Bernd Freisleben / Universität, Gesamthochschule Siegen, Angewandte Informatik/ Medieninformatik
- Prof. Dr. Heinrich Müller / Universität Dortmund, Fachbereich Informatik / Medieninformatik
- Prof. Tanja Diezmann / Hochschule Anhalt, Fachbereich Design, Dessau / Mediengestaltung
- Dr. Andreas Broeckmann / Festival Transmediale, Berlin/ Mediengestaltung & Medienkunst
- Alfred Rotert / Europäisches Media Arts Festival - EMAF, Osnabrück / Mediengestaltung & Medienkunst
- Gerfried Stocker / AEC, Ars Electronica Center Linz / Mediengestaltung, & Medienkunst
- Prof. Eku Wand / Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Braunschweig / Mediengestaltung & Animation
- Anna Anders / Kunsthochschule für Medien, Köln / Medienkunst
- Joachim Blank / Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst, Leipzig / Medienkunst
- Thea Brejzek / Universität Wien, Regisseurin / Medienkunst
- Christin Lahr / Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln, Fachbereich Medienkunst / Medienkunst
- Prof. KP Ludwig John / Fachhochschule Augsburg, Fachbereich Gestaltung / Medienkunst
- Prof. Maria Vedder / Hochschule der Künste Berlin / Medienkunst

Consultive staff:

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- Wolfgang Strauss, FhG. IMK

Project Management:

- Ulrike Boecking