

Aren't we all a little Cyborg?

From pacemakers to better eye-sight via laser-operations, from an improved self on social media to chipped employees, from board computers to hearing implants to prostheses – one doesn't have to be the Terminator to realize that little by little, we are all evolving into human-machines. Regardless of whether it is about providing the supposed sick or the alleged healthy with features they did not have before – shouldn't we all be allowed to modify our bodies the way we want to? Or has capitalism finally succeeded in terms of self-optimization on all levels of being? To which extent are we in control of technology, and when does it start controlling us?

These questions are not confined to the realm of science fiction, but rather they have been troubling us in real life for almost 100 years now. In the 1920s, biologist Julian Huxley first developed a complete transhumanistic ideology, which was supposed to contribute to the ultimate triumph over the human's fragile state through technology and progress. It shouldn't remain unmentioned that Huxley was an advocate of eugenics, which shows another dark side of this development. Then again, radical transhumanists predict nothing less than digital immortality. In the future, this would mean that we could be able to disperse the unity between body and soul and digitalize our abilities and our personalities. A backup of the self.

After the first successful round of the digital spring in 2016, the biennial media art festival 2018 deals with the posthuman future of the human and the increasing merging with machines. The discursive as well as artistic program investigates and presents the opportunities as well as risks, which transhumanism holds for society.

At the end of November, the jury (Cornelia Anhaus, festival management digital spring | Séamus Kealy, director Salzburger Kunstverein | Martin Murer, Senior Scientist, Center for Human-Computer Interaction, University of Salzburg | Marius Schebella, chairman subnet & Researcher MultiMediaArt, FH Salzburg) chose ten plus one projects from 34 international submissions, which are concerned with the developments and consequences of these future prospects. For the very first time, the open call included the possibility of a grant for media art from the province of Salzburg, which the jury awarded to the duo APNOA (Sebastian Drack and Tobias Feldmeier).

With this year's motto, the festival team and the artists encourage you over a compact period of six days to overcome your own limits and broaden your senses, not only mentally but also physically, in a smart as well as humorous, innovative as well as impressive, poetic and aesthetic way.

Load up your mind and the rest will follow – welcome to the second digital spring in Salzburg!

Cornelia Anhaus,
management digital spring festival



DIGITAL SPRING

MEDIA ART FESTIVAL

15.-18.3.2018

<https://www.argekultur.at/projekte/2018/digitalspring/>