



● Herbert W. Franke VISIONARY

30.03.–12.06.22

Francisco Carolinum Linz

On the occasion of the 95th birthday of the media art pioneer Herbert W. Franke, the Upper Austrian Landes-Kultur GmbH is honoring his life and extraordinary work with an exhibition.

Franke is a pioneer in many worlds, a border crosser between art and science who achieved breakthroughs early on in numerous disciplines. As one of the first computer artists, he experimented with generative photography in 1952, but as early as 1954 he started using an analogue computer and then, from the 1960s onwards, the first mainframe computers for his abstract “algorithmic” art based on mathematical principles. In 1979 he co-founded Ars Electronica and in the 2000s he was a mastermind of the metaverse.

Franke’s writing career as well as his visual art work began in the late 1940s, deep underground in the caves of Europe. He was the first to explore numerous large caves in the Dachstein massif and remained internationally active into old age. As a theoretical physicist, he dealt with questions of cybernetics and with processes of perception, which led to his rational theory of art. In addition to numerous specialist and non-fiction books, he has also written award-winning science fiction stories and novels.

Both Franke's lifetime pursuits and extensive oeuvre draw equally on the rationality of the researcher and the creativity of the artist. The exhibition *Herbert W. Franke – Visionary* is dedicated to this extraordinary bridging of the worlds of art and science and the enormous power of the imagination – from art to science fiction literature, from the beauty of mathematics to cave exploration.

Structured into four themed rooms, the exhibition presents Franke's works from the 1940s to the present day:

- Stalagmites and chain forms
Mathematics' continuity principle in nature and art

- Cacti, Fibonacci number sequences and dragon curves, rotations/projections
Fractal principles and information aesthetics

- Math Art: image rather than formula
The visual aesthetics of mathematics

- From models of the world to metaverse
Cellular machines, fantastical worlds, and the Z-Galaxy

A media space showcases digital impressions of his work while an archive room documents a selection of Franke's publications and articles.

The OÖ Landes-Kultur GmbH is planning a multi-part publication on Herbert W. Franke's life's work.

curators: Susanne Päch und Genoveva Rückert

exhibition-design: MOOI Design

Herbert W. Franke,

born 1927 in Vienna/Austria, lives and works in Puppling near Munic/DE.

art-meets-science.info

Herbert W. Franke studied physics, mathematics, chemistry, and philosophy at the University of Vienna, and graduated in theoretical physics in 1951. He then moved to Germany and after five years in industry he became self-employed as a publisher and artist. He was occupied with electronic graphics and experimental photography from 1956, and subsequently has been working in computer art since 1969. From 1979 co-founder of Ars Electronica Festival in Linz. Franke has shown his more than fifty work series at over 200 exhibitions until now, including at the Venice Biennale. As passionate mediator, he taught computer art at the University of Munich (1973–1998) and at the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich (1984–1998). More than fifty book publications on art, science, and science fiction, over 200 short stories and additionally 150 newspaper articles and scientific publications.

EXHIBITION **Herbert W. Franke VISIONARY**
March 30 – June 12, 2022

OPENING **Thu, March 29, 2022, 7 pm**, Francisco Carolinum Linz

TALK & **Herbert W. Franke, Visionary**
Thu, March 29, 2022, 5 pm

Artists tell how Herbert W. Franke's work influenced them and what he anticipated many years ago. They relate to the first generation of media art, report on how they work today, compare and thus clarify the differences between then and now ...

speakers: Susanne Päch / DE, journalist, Co-Curatorin of the exhibition//
Genoveva Rückert / AT, curator OÖLKG und Co-curator of the exhibition
Kevin Abosch / IR, artist // Rafael Rozendaal / NL/BR, artist // Georg Bak
/CH // Christa Sommerer / AT, artist, professor Interface Cultures, Art
University Linz // host: Anika Meier / DE, art scientist, author, curator,
dealing with digital art and art in social media

Live Stream:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_OcyE08zR1IIODmevbV23A

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Press information and photographs for download:

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