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## Ars Electronica 2025: AI, Ecology and the State of the ART(ist)

In the 47th edition of the major innovation and new media festival, Austrian waltzes, bio-technology, AI, society and ecology projects invite the thousands of expected visitors to follow the path of a fugitive cine-artist, reconstruct memories through AI and feel sorry for a robot-dog, among others.

Linz, Austria celebrates as Ars Electronica 2025 opens doors on the 3rd of September. The [opening ceremony](#) will take place on the 3rd of September at St. Mary's Cathedral where “waltzes, toccatas, and partitas—performed by outstanding ensembles like the Bruckner Orchester Linz, the vocal group Company of Music, and organist Wolfgang Kreuzhuber—will fill Austria's largest church with movement and sound” - from 19:30, admission free. Loyal to its initial vision from 1979, the festival of 2025 keeps scrutinizing potential futures on the nexus of [art, technology and society](#).

This year's [Prix Ars Electronica](#), the world's most established competition for media art, received 3,987 submissions from 98 nations. Among the [winners of Golden Nicas 2025](#), the project [Synthetic Memories](#) by Domestic Data Streamers won the Ars Electronica Award for Digital Humanity. As described by the artists, Synthetic Memories is a heritage preservation initiative that recreates and preserves personal memories at risk of being lost or never visually documented. It converts spoken and written descriptions into visual images using generative AI, helping individuals—especially those experiencing memory loss due to ageing, displacement, or neurological diseases—reconnect with their past and maintain identity.

[Café Kuba](#) by David Shongo (image in the header), was the winner among 506 submissions from 76 countries for the [State of ART\(ist\)](#) prize, awarding the work of world artists confronted with war, political persecution, environmental disasters, social inequality, or restrictions on freedom of expression. The artist invents a “fugitive cinema”, as viewers follow the trail of a coffee cart that turns into a hidden recording device to capture on film instability, war, and resource exploitation in the ongoing conflict in the metropolis of Kinshasa, in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In the [Trial Against Humanity](#) the world rests on the verge of collapse and the Artificial Intelligence Omnitron proposes a radical solution: to eradicate the species responsible for the chaos—humans. The artists of Det Norske Teatret (NO) in this interactive performance invite the audience to question and defend themselves against Omnitron’s accusations (click image to enlarge).

With [Dynamics of a Dog on a Leash](#), the Japanese artist Takayuki Todo (JP) wonders about the audience’s reaction over a chained robot dog who thrashes, struggles, and collapses, evoking a pitiful beast. “Though artificial, its movements trigger empathy and blur the line between machine and life. In a future with robots, will we feel more—or stop feeling altogether?” (click image to enlarge).



Youth lead the way in the Main Prize for Graphic Novel of the [Media Literacy Award 2025: Grand Prize](#) went to the teaching project [Faust goes AI](#) and BG Bludenz, led by Jürgen Schacherl. At the heart of the project was the question “how can Goethe’s world-famous tragedy be told in a way that resonates with today’s youth – not by simplifying it, but by reinterpreting it? The award winning idea was to transform the key scenes into a graphic novel by the students using ChatGPT for analysis, storyboarding, and dialogue writing.

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Find more [here](#)

Image 1 -Featuring Café Kuba by David Shongo - Photo: Photo: David Shongo - Ars Electronica.

Image 2 -Featuring The Trial Against Humanity by Det Norske Teatret - Photo: Det Norske Teatret - Ars Electronica.

Image 3 - Featuring Dynamics of a Dog on a Leash, by Takayuki Todo (JP) - Photo: Takuma Yamazaki - Ars Electronica.