

Information Material for the  
Press Tour

**John Maeda**

***Nature***

Thursday, 31 August 2006, 9.30 a.m., Lentos

*Ars Electronica 2006*

**Speakers:**

Vice-Mayor and Cultural Speaker Dr. Erich Watzl

Lentos Curator Stella Rollig

AEC Director Gerfried Stocker

John Maeda, Artist

**Opening:** Thursday, 31 August 2006, 1.30 p.m.

**Exhibition:** 1 - 25 September 2006

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**Opening hours during Ars Electronica 2006:**

Fri 1st – Tues 5th Sept 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.,

from Weds 6<sup>th</sup> Sept daily except Tues 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., Thurs 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.

[www.lentos.at](http://www.lentos.at)

## ***John Maeda – Nature***

### ***Lentos: Partner of the Ars Electronica since 2004***

For the third time the basement of the Lentos Museum of Modern Art in Linz is one of the venues for the renowned Ars Electronica Festival.

With John Maeda – *Nature* Lentos presents a graphic designer, artist and computer scientist of international renown who teaches at the MIT Media Laboratory (Cambridge/USA). The *Nature* series shown at Lentos consists of seven “motion paintings” representing abstract forms evocative of those found in nature.

*Nature* by John Maeda is open during the Ars Electronica until Tues 5th September, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

### ***Nature***

*Seven motion paintings by John Maeda that depict the unnatural space of the computer's mind.*

The *Nature* series consists of seven “motion paintings” representing abstract forms evocative of those found in nature. Between three to six minutes in length, each “painting” is made up of several short sequences depicting intensely coloured abstract shapes and patterns that constantly move, expand and evolve. Culling metaphors from nature – moon, fire, wind, rain – John Maeda offers us a glimpse of digital space in the spirit of landscape painting.

These digital landscapes are generated by a new software technology that the artist created in order to “paint in space and time.” Inspired by the dynamic spirit of Abstract Expressionism, the artist designed this technology so that he could “paint” animated images on the computer in a simple gestural manner. Following a long line of abstract painters such as Paul Klee, Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman, Maeda employs subtle changes of form, colour and pattern. Through the hypnotic beauty and sensuality of these images, the artist aspires to bring us closer to the computer and lead us to a deeper understanding of its inner nature.

### ***John Maeda***

Maeda was born in 1966 in Seattle as the son of Japanese immigrants. Today he enjoys worldwide renown as a graphic designer and media artist and is also professor of informatics at the Media Lab of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge/ Massachusetts, where he founded the Aesthetics + Computation Group. He is currently co-director of the Physical Language Workshops and the SIMPLICITY consortium.

Among computer scientists he is regarded as a pioneer and is also a spokesman of simplicity in the digital age. Maeda has won countless awards and is, according to *Esquire* magazine, one of most important figures of the 21st century.

### ***10 laws of simplicity***

As an example of simplicity Maeda describes the functions of a Swiss army knife: "Only the implement you want to use is exposed, all the other blades and functions are hidden." At the same time Maeda aims to make appliances and electronic media more user-friendly and to enable users to have easier access to them and greater understanding of them.

He has written several books on his philosophy of "humanizing technology" and his perspective on the digital arts. This coming autumn sees the publication of a book that takes a closer look at Maeda's "10 laws of simplicity" and deciphers them. Maeda has declared that his aim is not only to increase understanding of the inner nature of the computer but above all to make electronic media accessible to all sections of the population.

Maeda has exhibited his work at major shows in Paris, London, New York, and Tokyo. John Maeda is also the curator of this year's Ars Symposium in the Brucknerhaus. (LINK: [www.maedastudio.com](http://www.maedastudio.com))

### **Opening hours**

Lentos Museum of Modern Art Linz is open during the Ars Electronica from Fri 1<sup>st</sup> until Tues 5<sup>th</sup> Sept from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. From 6<sup>th</sup> Sept opening hours revert to 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. daily except Tues; Thurs 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

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