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ART+COM

Who, What, and Why of ART+COM Studios

ART+COM Studios is an internationally acclaimed art and design collective based in Berlin, Germany, founded in 1988 by a group of artists, designers, architects, and computer scientists. The studio is renowned for creating groundbreaking media installations and spatial experiences that combine art, communication, science, and technology. From its inception, ART+COM's mission has been to explore the artistic and communicative potential of emerging digital media technologies. The founders originally came together under the sponsorship of the German government with the goal of investigating how computers could be used not just for productivity, but for cultural expression and public engagement. Over the decades, ART+COM has evolved into a multidisciplinary team consisting of media artists, designers, software developers, engineers, and researchers, all working collaboratively to produce experiences that challenge conventional distinctions between the digital and the physical. Their works are often interactive and immersive, aiming to make abstract concepts visible and tangible for audiences through sensory engagement. The studio's approach is grounded in experimentation and exploration, drawing equally from artistic intuition and scientific inquiry. ART+COM has completed high-profile commissions for museums, public

spaces, cultural institutions, and corporate clients across the world. These projects often take the form of kinetic sculptures, data-driven visualizations, interactive displays, and audiovisual installations that reveal hidden connections between the viewer, the environment, and the underlying systems of information. What makes ART+COM particularly notable is its commitment to creating experiences that not only entertain but also educate and provoke thought. Their work is often strongly rooted in context, designed to reflect the identity and function of the spaces in which they are installed. Their ability to merge aesthetics with complex content makes ART+COM an important player in the field of media art and design, breaking boundaries and determining how technology can improve human understanding and perception.

Description and Discussion of "Grasp Pendulum"

One of ART+COM Studios' most compelling works is Grasp Pendulum, a kinetic media sculpture developed for the medical technology company Ottobock. Installed in the company's Science Center in Berlin, Grasp Pendulum is both a visual landmark and an artistic expression of Ottobock's core mission—understanding and enhancing human motion through technology. The sculpture is entirely exposed on the public side, suspended right behind a transparent glass façade. From the street, passersby are encouraged to engage with the installation aesthetically as well as conceptually. The sculpture is essentially a form suspended in a pendulum-like choreography movement, illuminated with color-changing light, accompanied by a custom soundscape. Its movement is not random; instead, it is a carefully programmed sequence that mimics the rhythm and coordination of a human hand grasping. This poetic representation links

the visual and sonic dimensions of the sculpture to the themes of motion, rehabilitation, and human-technology interaction. The work is a striking example of ART+COM's strength in translating complex concepts into emotionally resonant experiences. While the sculpture is mechanical and digital in nature, it evokes organic grace and fluidity, drawing attention to the beauty of everyday gestures we often take for granted. In doing so, Grasp Pendulum not only functions as a branding element for Ottobock, but also as a piece of public art that communicates the company's values in an abstract yet accessible way. It transforms the clinical and technological into the poetic and experiential, which is a hallmark of ART+COM's design philosophy. By incorporating interactivity, aesthetic beauty, and conceptual depth, the piece exemplifies how media art can serve multiple roles—artistic, communicative, and spatial—while still remaining open-ended and thought-provoking. Ultimately, Grasp Pendulum reflects ART+COM's commitment to humanizing technology and creating bridges between people and systems through the language of art. Features a choreography of light and music, creating a poetic experience for viewers. The installation exemplifies ART+COM's expertise in merging technology and art to create immersive environments that engage audiences on multiple sensory levels.

Bibliography

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