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Augmented Reality: Time travel available for the iPhone

In the future, visitors to Darmstadt's Mathildenhöhe will be able to delve into history with the aid of Augmented Reality. The application dARsein will be available for download on the iPhone from 3 June.

(Darmstadt/Rostock/Graz) The Austrian architect Joseph Maria Olbrich was an important representative of Art Nouveau and founder of Darmstadt's artists' colony. His residence on Mathildenhöhe is an art-historical center of attraction of which only a simplification was rebuilt after the war. Many of its original features can only be guessed at on historic materials. In lieu of long internet research, this knowledge will soon appear on the iPhone.

Whenever natural reality is overlaid with additional information, we talk about Augmented Reality (AR). The technology was developed by researchers of Fraunhofer IGD, the world's leading research institute for applied Visual Computing, and will identify position and view of photos taken on site and select the matching historic material in real time. "The application dARsein processes natural image features and thus recognizes three-dimensional objects, such as buildings", explains Dr. Ulrich Bockholt, head of the "Virtual and Augmented Reality" competence center at Fraunhofer IGD. "Images, texts and graphics can hence be laid over a photo taken by the cell phone in the right position."

dARsein allows visitors to Mathildenhöhe to view the original design drafts and blueprints or historic images as an overlay on today's building. Past and present become comparable. "Darmstadt Marketing aims to try the new technology in

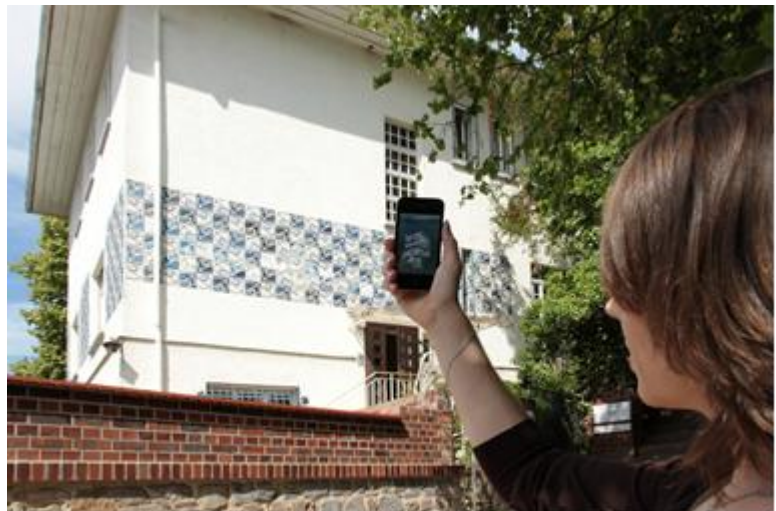
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cultural tourism”, says general manager Anja Herdel. “If there is enough interest, we plan to cover more of Darmstadt’s sights via dARsein.”

A tour of Darmstadt with the smartphone might soon become a journey through time. Interesting historic sites are simply photographed, and the visitor will instantly experience the city’s history. A taste of dARsein will be available for free at the App Store from Friday (3 June).

NOTE: There is also raw HD video material for TV stations and online media on the subject. The use is free for editorial purposes.



Picture: The smartphone application dARsein makes the original design drafts and blueprints or historic images visible as an overlay of today’s building. Past and present become comparable.
(Copyright: Fraunhofer IGD)

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The Fraunhofer IGD is the world's leading institute for applied research in Visual Computing. Visual Computing is image- and model-based information technology. It includes computer graphics, computer vision, as well as virtual and augmented reality.



Fraunhofer IGD develops prototypes and complete solutions pursuant to customer-specific requirements. The researchers at Fraunhofer IGD use, record and process images and graphics for all conceivable computer-based applications.

The research and development projects of Fraunhofer IGD directly relate to current business issues. The application spectrum of the concepts, models and practical solutions is as diverse as it is specialized. It ranges from virtual product design via medical science, transportation all the way to multi-media learning and training.



Together with its partner universities, Fraunhofer IGD researches various key technologies and cooperates with companies in many different industry sectors. In addition to the head office in Darmstadt, Fraunhofer IGD has further sites in Rostock, Graz and Singapore. It has around 180 (full-time equivalent) employees. The budget amounts to around 15 million euros.



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