Introduction: Immersive technologies such as VR and binaural audio promise greater levels of audience engagement whereby one may lose oneself in an experience through a sense of presence or achieve higher levels of subject identification via an “empathy machine” – this project aims to devise how these claims may be tested while developing novel storytelling techniques.

Objectives of Stage 1: Consolidate test materials in terms of creating content for a tangible prototype focusing on fieldwork necessary and reflect on optimal processes for developing acquisition protocols. This involves extending work on initial tests into post production of new material in order to develop proof of concept stage.

Research, outline and liaise with potential industry links relevant to the implementation and development of the project with particular reference to broadcast R and D and games testing.

Liaise with HE sector academic researchers with regard to possibilities of building a toolkit for assessing psychological and perceptual dimensions of the audience.

Construct demonstration package to include documentation of project development to date orientated around presenting the project to future partners/funders.

Immersive Documentary: To develop an experimental and immersive documentary that explores the impact of sound.

Keywords: acoustic ecology, cymatics, tone, sound design, frequency, auditory illusions.

Field work in progress to be comprised of interviews and illustrative video material.

The documentary narrative will be constructed around a number of screens and use surround sound.

Methodologies for testing effectiveness: Currently investigating evaluation of presence and empathy using a combination of physiological methods and evaluative questionnaires – drawing particularly on current research into testing VR and games technologies.

Future Objectives:

External funding project application such as Wellcome Trust who invite bids for projects that explore psychology and the body.

The prototype will provide the basis for exhibiting the work within the contexts of arts, trade/ broadcast and academic conferences.

Paper presentation focusing on media art, broadcast technology and psychology to be developed with future research partners.

Immersive Video Environments: Investigating the Impact of “Wraparounaround” Media

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Illustrations (L to R)
1. The Interactive Forest (2010) – Previous work by Julian Konczak incorporating screen triptychs within a cube and bespoke 8 point surround sound developed in collaboration with Andrew Horsburgh and Natalia Kulabuchova.

2. Napoleon (1927) Abel Gance – Silent film considered revolutionary in it’s implementation of new film technologies and noted for it’s use of the triptych.

3. Example of the visualisation of sound in matter and the application of cymatic techniques – pattern formed in water.


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