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MSc Interactive Digital Media

Thesis Title: From Sound Art to Virtual/Augmented/Mixed Reality: the expansion of immersion and agency through 3D and interactive sound in digital media.

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### **Abstract**

This paper is intended to explore the overlapping concepts of sound art with virtual reality, focusing especially on immersion and agency. Contemporary art in the 60s, and particularly sound artists, engaged in a reconfiguration about traditional understanding about art, its exhibition spaces, and the relationship between artist and audience. Through this questioning, it explored changes in space through sound translocation and spatialization, as well as with interaction. This interactive, two-way communicative relation between artist and audience enabled people to shift from a passive absorbing state to a more creative active one. The artist and the audience are co-creators; they are in a same level position.

Virtual Reality, with the use of 3D audio and interaction, also immerse people in environments that break dichotomies between artists and audience, art and person, and place the people within the piece of art. The feeling of immersion in VR is strengthen with interaction, which enables people to alter the content of the virtual world, hence creating a solider feeling of immersion through a convincing sense of agency. Digital technology offers new possibilities to engage humans in creative endeavors that no longer depend on location or moment. The mobility and computing power of new technologies have taken one more step to the front, the ideas that were once conceived within contemporary art.

The development of this work is based on a background research on sound art and VR and a synthesis and analysis of concepts. These concepts are then evidenced in case studies of recent virtual reality projects.