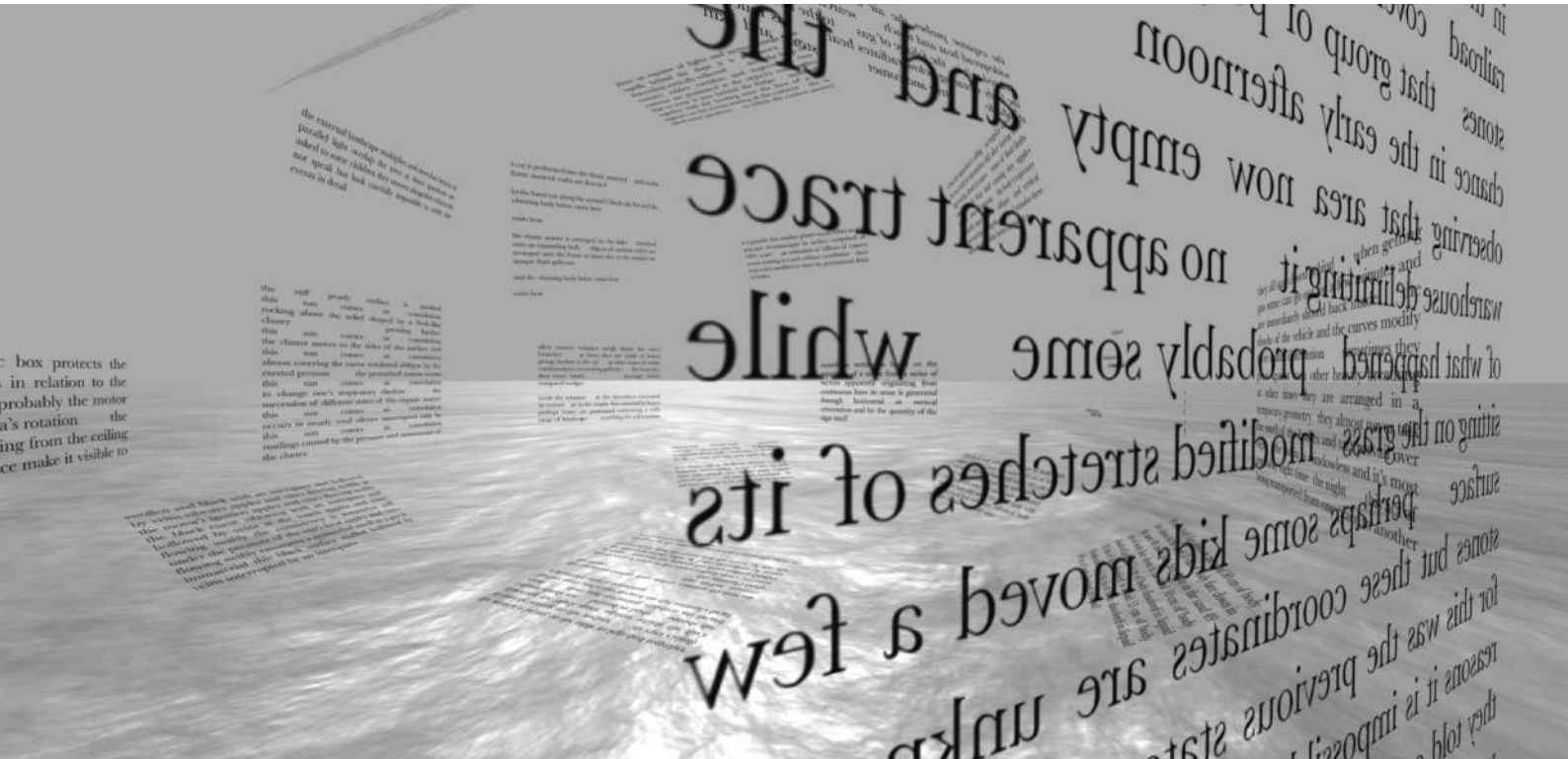


READING ENVIRONMENTS



Screenshot from *Expanded Poetry #1*, online VR environment on Mozilla Hubs, 2021, for the eponymous exhibition curated by Chus Martinez at der TANK, Basel.

Poetry-based Immersive Environments in VR/MR

« L'homme poursuit noir sur blanc »
Stéphane Mallarmé

Since 2016 Alessandro De Francesco has been developing virtual reality (VR) and mixed reality (MR) immersive textual environments, in a ground-breaking exploration of the relations between poetry and space.

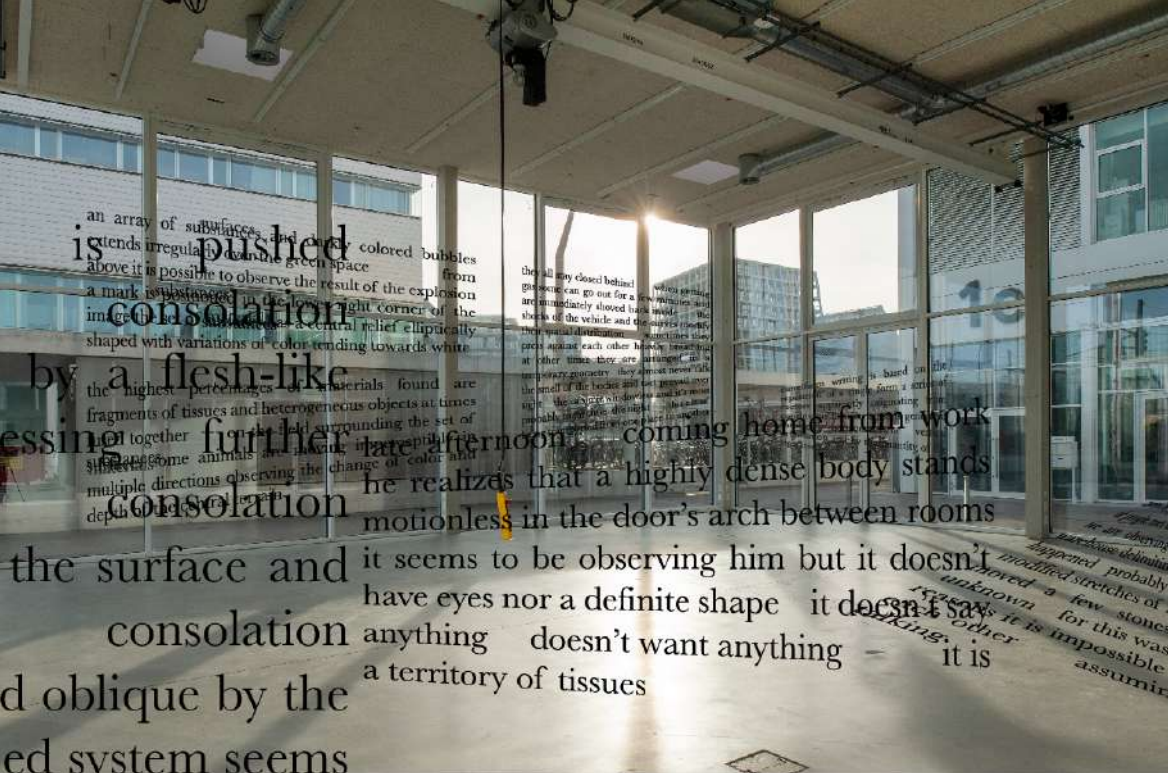
Five major works were realised so far: *Cosmologie portative* for the eponymous solo show at Celador art space in Brussels; *And I conceive the morning while you talk to me*, for the solo show *Expanded Poetry*, *Agglomerated Poetry* at the Dreiviertel art space in Bern; *Expanded Poetry #1* at the exhibition space der TANK, Basel; *Sans besoin de voir – Without need to see* (funded by a digital arts grant of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles) and *Soliditude* for the show *Poetry as Artistic Practice* at the Anima Ludens Gallery in Brussels.

Cosmologie portative (2025) and *And I conceive the morning while you talk to me* (2024) are MR immersive textual environments using the Aryzon wireless motion tracking technology, allowing visitors to experience and realistically interact with 3D texts within the exhibition space, that float in the air like digital ghosts.

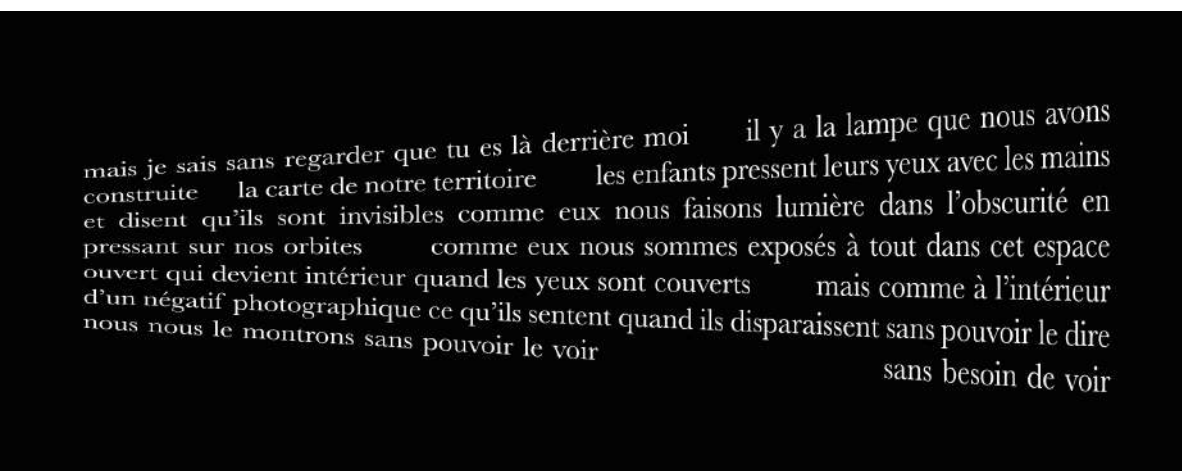
Expanded Poetry #1 (2021), realised as an online exhibition curated by **Chus Martinez** with the collaboration of Marion Ritzmann, features an audio file of a digitally processed spoken choir reading from Alessandro's trilingual poetry book *(((* (punctum books, 2021) coupled with an online immersive and interactive textual environment that visitors could experience either on the screen of a computer or with a VR headset.

Without Need to See (2018) was developed thanks to a Digital Arts grant from the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Belgium. It featured an innovative wireless motion tracking technology with an infrared occipital sensor, which allowed the visitors to be immersed in a completely black 3D space where they could read and interact with a dynamic text (reproduced at the following page).

In *Soliditude* (2017), the visitor wearing a VR-headset is surrounded by the progressive multiplication of the neologism "soliditude" written white on black, until the mass of words forms an immense dome made of text.



Screen simulation of a MR poetry environment with the Aryzon MR headset at the space der TANK in Basel.



Screen simulation of the VR poetry environment Without Need to See at the Anima Ludens Gallery & Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Brussels, 2018.



Aryzon MR headset (on the left) and Bridge headset with infrared Structure Sensor (on the right)