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

Four major works were realised so far: Expanded Poetry #1 and #2 at the exhibition space der TANK, Basel (CH); Sans besoin de voir – Without need to see (funded by a digital arts grant of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles) and Soliditude at the Anima Ludens Gallery in Brussels (B).

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 spoken choir reading from Alessandro’s forthcoming trilingual poetry book ((( see “Publications” section at the end of this portfolio for details – coupled with an online immersive and interactive textual environment that visitors can experience either on the screen of a computer or with a VR headset. The online environment is permanently available on Mozilla Hubs and features the same texts read by the choir as 3D objects within a metaphysical space, with the digitally processed voices of the choir as soundtrack. For more details and instructions about how to access the environment, please visit: http://dertank.space/alessandro-de-francesco-exhibition/

Expanded Poetry #2 (2021), also curated by Chus Martinez and expected in the fall 2021 at der TANK, features a choreographed performance by the spoken choir, a multi-channel soundscape made with the choir’s digitally processed voices, and a Mixed Reality immersive textual environment with the Aryzon wireless motion tracking technology, thanks to which the visitors will be able to experience and realistically interact with the same 3D virtual texts as Expanded Poetry #1, this time within the real exhibition space. Some texts and other visuals are available in the next page.

In Without Need to See (2018), which featured an innovative wireless motion tracking technology with an infrared occipital sensor (Bridge Headset with Structure Sensor), the visitors were immersed in a completely black 3D space where they could read and interact with a 3D text (reproduced at the following page).

In Soliditude (2017), the visitor 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.