

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

URL of the project: <https://dertank.space/alessandro-de-francesco/>

## 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.

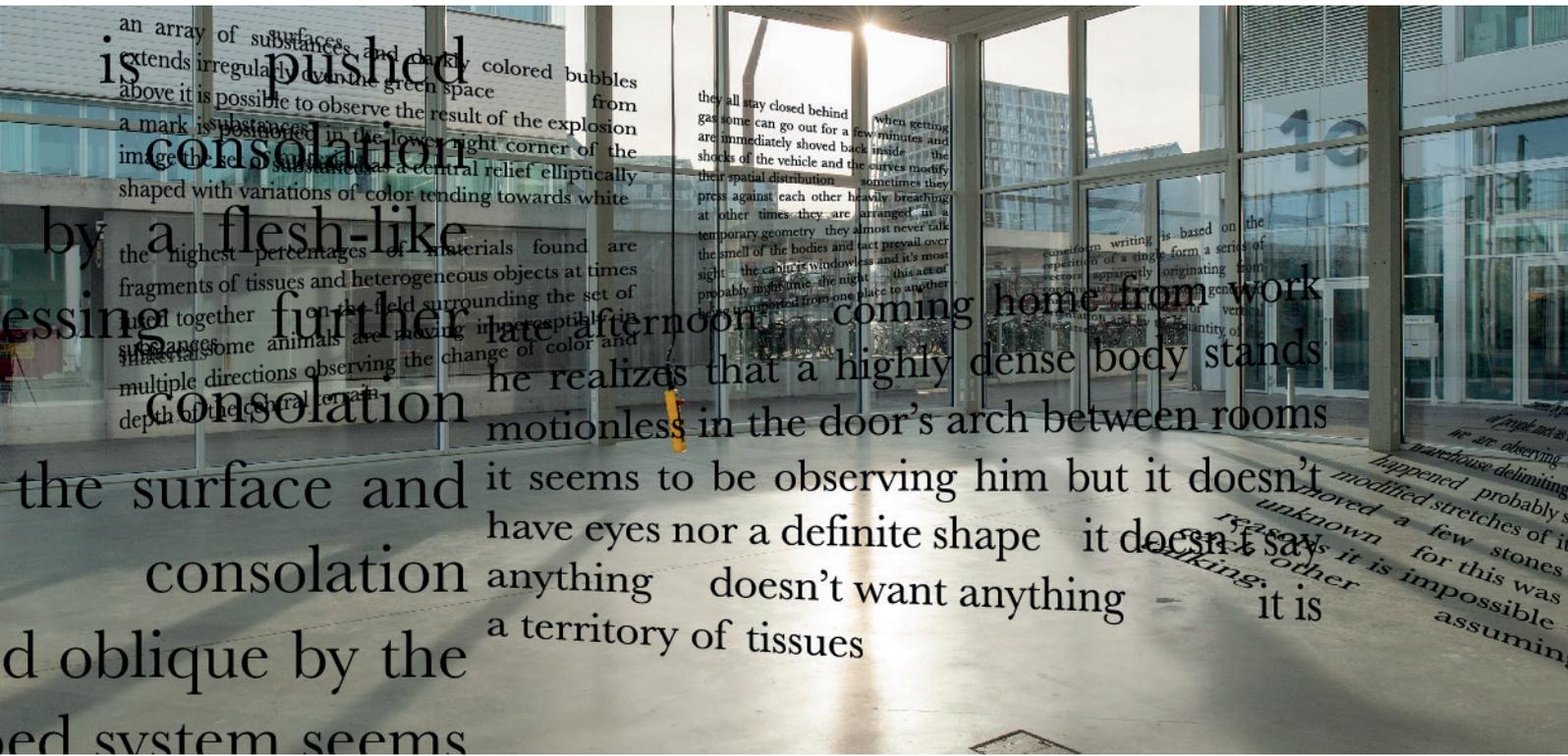
Three major works were realised so far: *Expanded Poetry #1* at the exhibition space der TANK, Basel (CH); *Sans besoin de voir – Without need to see* (funded by a digital arts grant of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles) and *Soliditude* at the Anima Ludens Gallery in Brussels (B).

***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 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/>

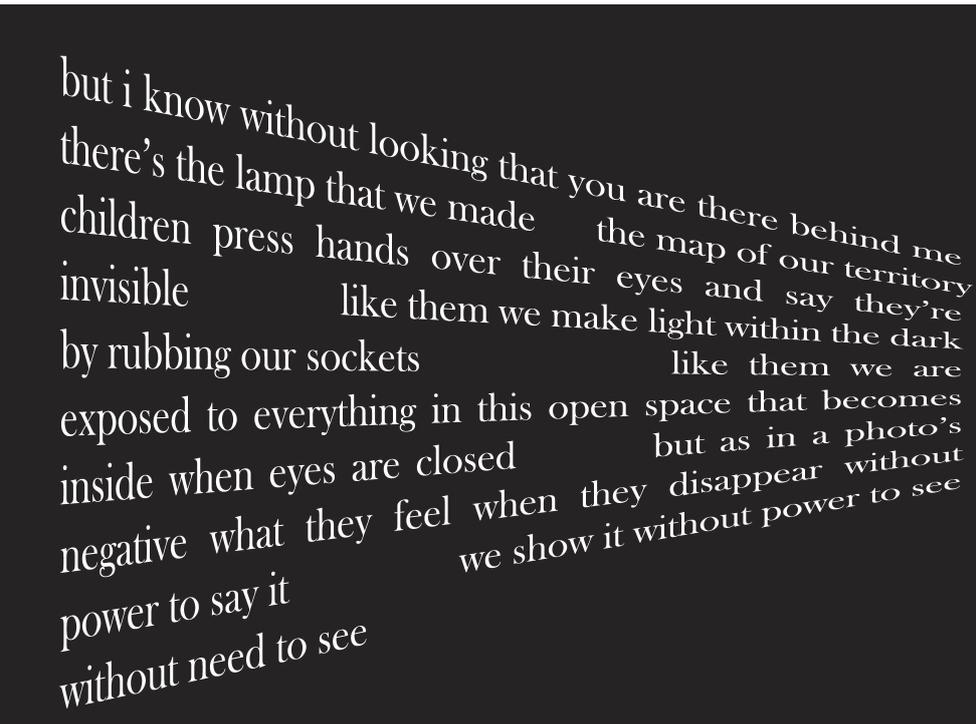
***Expanded Poetry #2*** is a forthcoming project featuring a choreographed reading-performance by the spoken choir, a multi-channel soundscape made with the choir's digitally processed voices, and a Mixed Reality immersive textual environment with the Aryzon wireless motion tracking technology, allowing visitors 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.

***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 moment of *Expanded Poetry #2* in the exhibition space "der TANK", Basel, and the Aryzon MR headset (on the right).



Screen simulation of a view in the environment *Without Need to See* at the Anima Ludens Gallery & Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Brussels, 2018, and the infrared headset Bridge with Structure Sensor (below).

