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Embodied Perception in Somatic Sound, Abstract

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# BODY of KNOWLEDGE

## **Embodied Perception in Somatic Sound**

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The paper presents artistic and practice based approaches to innovative haptic interface technologies for creating interactive compositions and user experiences inside of a periphonic, 3D sound space. Somatic sound is here presented as a) as technological innovative musical instrument, and b) as an experiential art installation. One of the main research foci is to explore embodied experiences through moving, interactive and somatic sound. The term somatic is here understood and used as in relating to the body in a physical, holistic and immersive manner.

The Somatic Sound project explores sound installations where the user can i) corporally control the playback of multichannel sound through touch, and ii) simultaneously experience a three-dimensional audio space as a physical continuum. The project combines the production of music through touch-based, multi-channel 3D sound with the simultaneously placing the performer into the position of a listener. The research investigates how this enables new and innovative interpretations.

The paper will discuss different theoretical approaches to somatic sound from Descartes to Pragmatism and Phenomenology. It will apply Heidegger's description of breakdown scenarios to analyze 'natural attitudes' in the meeting with human computer interfaces and more generally with technology. Fundamental here is the often-misunderstood difference between Heidegger's Present-at-hand and Ready-at-hand concepts. Focusing on the importance of physical experience, an argument for embodied consciousness is advanced. This argument follows from a dialectic comparison of Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the natural attitude: the way we behave in the world as if it is not problematic with Shusterman's notion of Somaesthetics.

Contributions of the paper will be introduction of new discourse of what embodiment implies in media art and demonstrating this through artworks where embodied interactions turn action into meaning. Further the paper will outline new practices of inquiry and knowledge making through the emerging field of Somatic Computing.