



Sounding New Media: Immersion and Embodiment in the Arts and Culture

By Frances Dyson

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Sounding New Media examines the long-neglected role of sound and audio in the development of new media theory and practice, including new technologies and performance art events, with particular emphasis on sound, embodiment, art, and technological interactions. Frances Dyson takes an historical approach, focusing on technologies that became available in the mid-twentieth century—electronics, imaging, and digital and computer processing—and analyzing the work of such artists as John Cage, Edgard Varèse, Antonin Artaud, and Char Davies. She utilizes sound's intangibility to study ideas about embodiment (or its lack) in art and technology as well as fears about technology and the so-called "post-human." Dyson argues that the concept of "immersion" has become a path leading away from aesthetic questions about meaning and toward questions about embodiment and the physical. The result is an insightful journey through the new technologies derived from electronics, imaging, and digital and computer processing, toward the creation of an aesthetic and philosophical framework for considering the least material element of an artwork, sound.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Dyson seamlessly integrates theoretical perspectives with the history of technological developments in this thought-provoking work for scholars and practitioners.”

(*Choice* 2010-07-08)

“An informative book on the still developing role between new media, consumer, and creator.”

(Heather Pinson *Notes (Music Library Assoc)* 2011-03-04)

“Sophisticated and . . . ambitious. . . . Dyson’s skillful, erudite excavations of rhetorical and conceptual structures bring many benefits.”

(*Filter Magazine* 2010-07-12)

“A stimulating read. . . . Dyson engages with an impressive range of perspectives. She contributes valuably to contemporary music scholarship.

(Nina Sun Eidsheim, Mandy-Suzanne Wong *Organised Sound* 2011-12-08)

From the Inside Flap

"Dyson takes on both the paucity of commentary on sound in new media arts, and the centrality of sound metaphors in talk about new media. Immersion comes into the language from musicology and music criticism, and Dyson does a great job of tracing its gradual integration, in various forms, into the rhetoric of new media since the 1960s."—Sean Cubitt, University of Melbourne

"Look no further for a wonderfully rich study of the strange new materialities opened up by radical developments in sound technology."—Timothy Morton, author of *Ecology without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics*

About the Author

Frances Dyson is Associate Professor of Technocultural Studies at the University of California, Davis.

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