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**PANEL 3: LIVE ACCESSIBILITY NEW CONTEXTS**

"Drawing with sounds: amplifying the sonic experience delivered through audio description for visually impaired film audiences"

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VIDEO PRESENTATION <https://youtu.be/smXpzt9ooyo>

**ABSTRACT**

The sound of a film is a force unto itself. Giving a sound to every element presented in a scene creates a unique effect, as everything the audience hears is amplified, so nothing is ignored in favor of what is seen on the screen. Furthermore, a shift from traditional soundtracks had allowed stories to perform a new range of sonic distinction, creating a whole new language that associates a visual content to a group of music or sound motifs. However, for blind and partially sighted audiences this might be a bit different, as some of the visual and audio features of a film can be lost due to the limited time to adapt visual features through a service called audio description (AD). This lack of detail has unfairly cast blind and visually impaired viewers aside in the greater audience of entertainment; limiting the richness of the visual experience of a film to those who are not able to see the story, but can only listen to a limited version of it.

Using the opinion of visually impaired participants and experienced audio descriptions users from the Royal National Institute for the Blind People (UK) and Noisy Vision (Germany), "Drawing with sounds" explores the diversification of audio description through immersive sound. The ultimate aim of the research project is to lower the amount of description during a cinematographic experience by implementing an alternative called sound introductions. Such alternative provides audiences with the description of key visual elements before the start of the film that is supported by 3D audio, experimental AD and predictable sound effects. The

use of AD mixed with immersive sound proved to raise the level of engagement on visual mediums and to create a clearer picture of those elements that are missed, yet important for visually impaired audiences, on standard AD approaches. The use of sound as a language as a support for AD proved to enhance the levels of immersion and accuracy for interpreting visual elements from an amplified audio experience; Allowing audiences to feel closer to the visual experience of the character and the story due to the amplification of sound.