

THE INFLUENCERS

A Moon for All Mankind: Sound Designing Silence

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A Moon For All Mankind | Sound designing silence

Samsung's brand new VR experience developed in partnership with NASA's Johnson Space Centre in Houston is a sensory spectacular. Framestore and Iris Worldwide knew that doing justice to the 50th anniversary of the Apollo program would take a real team effort.

Those taking part are placed in a custom-designed simulator rig and IMU (inertial measurement unit) spacesuit. It registers the user's weight in real-time and accurately offsets it as you jump, emulating the gravity of the moon's surface and that weightless feeling (a great excuse to ignore that summer diet!).

However, designing an authentic experience of sound in space provided us with a challenge – there is no sound in space.



At GCVRS, we wanted the experience to feel real yet cinematic, so we decided to take some artistic licence to compliment the rest of the action. The experience involves a personalised mission, and the space suit itself gave us our first audio opportunity. We used ambisonic audio to recreate the sound of a real astronaut's spacesuit interior, so even before the mission begins, anyone taking part should feel really dressed for the part.

To try and make the experience as authentic as possible, we used Quindar tones, which are the beeps that are often heard during the Apollo space missions. We carefully researched these and made our own from scratch in order to incorporate them into the soundscape.



Sound, as always, played a powerful tool to immerse the user in the mission. Not only were subtle drones and Shepherd tones used to create a feeling of presence, but as the mission progresses they were designed and manipulated in real-time to heighten the tension and match the unfolding drama of the storyline.

A Moon For All Mankind's objective is to bring space travel to all with the help of the Samsung S9, an impressive mission in itself. The final product is something we're undoubtedly proud of, and like many projects with such an unusual brief we've created something truly unique.