

# Birdly an Attempt to Fly

Max Rheiner  
Zurich University of the Arts (ZHDK)\*

## Abstract

'Birdly' is an installation which explores the experience of a bird in flight. It tries to capture the mediated flying experience, with several methods. Unlike a common flight simulator you do not control a machine you embody a bird, the Red Kite.

To evoke this embodiment we mainly rely on the sensory-motor coupling. The participant can control the simulator with his hands and arms, which directly correlates to the wings and the primary feathers of the bird. Those inputs are reflected in the flight model of the bird and displayed physically by the simulator through nick, roll and heave movements.

Visualized through HMD (Oculus Rift) the participant is embedded in a virtual landscape where his body is the body of a Red Kite. The whole scenery is perceived in the first person perspective of a bird.

To intensify the embodiment we include additional sonic, olfactory and wind feedback. Sound wise you perceive only the roaring of the wind and the flaps of the wings. The olfactory feedback is based on the location which the bird flies over in the scenery and ranges from the scent of a forest, soil, to several other odors of the wilderness. According to the speed of the bird the simulator regulates the headwind with a fan.

---

\*e-mail: max.rheiner@zhdk.ch