

Design and User Experience Team

Facebook, Inc.
1 Hacker Way
Menlo Park, CA

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to the Design and User Experience team at Facebook,

My name is Nathan Turczan, and I'm an LA-based Sound Designer and Media Artist. I have deep passion for the role sound plays in our experience of technology—especially because it doesn't exist in a vacuum. At the highest level, a user experience is layered and multisensory: sound overlaps with haptics and visual design to choreograph the rhythm of the user's attention. The composition of these elements creates a sensory moment that communicates information and evokes an emotion. This experience is repeated many times a day in many contexts, eventually becoming integral to the fabric of a user's life.

As someone who is deeply impressed by the experience design at Facebook (I am a user of most if not all Facebook products), I was very excited to read your posting. I am sure that I can bring a lot of value to Facebook's Design and User Experience team in the role of Interaction Sound Designer. My background is in music, and I received a B.F.A. in Vocal Performance from UC Santa Cruz. In the course of pursuing this degree, I happened to enroll in David Cope's Workshop in Algorithmic Computer Music, where I fell in love with programming. This love turned into a life-changing decision to apply to Music Technology program at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), where I acquired a variety of skills including interaction design, programming in three different languages, digital signal processing, studio and concert production, and sound design for [theatrical](#) and [film](#) projects.

My experience at CalArts culminated with my thesis "The Scale Navigator: A Synesthetic Interface for Manipulating Harmony in Composition, Performance and Installation" where I discuss the design and implementation of my [Scale Navigator](#) software, a multi-modal web app for navigating complex procedurally-generated harmony. I later presented this research at the [New Interfaces for Musical Expression conference](#) in June of 2019.

I continually return to the well of ideas that the Scale Navigator has opened to me, namely the power of metaphor in music. If harmony is an abstract space, what does "up" sound like? In the realm of musical semiotics, what kind of melodic and rhythmic gestures already have meaning, and how can we use this pre-existing language to communicate more effectively? How can we coordinate shape and color with our sounds to create a more seamless, synaesthetically unified experience? My work as a designer of [audiovisual installations](#) has proven an effective vehicle for exploring these questions.

Facebook innovates and changes the lives of millions of people on a regular basis, and you are positioned to do this again with augmented and virtual reality. Sound design will play a huge role in a user's experience of these new digital spaces, and Facebook is on the forefront of this area of research. Rather than relying only on skeumorphic sound design, you are pioneering a more abstract sonification of data, interaction, and events—the simple-yet-genius "post" sound in the Facebook mobile app comes to mind, as does the family of sounds in Messenger that improve the flow of our text conversations. I can't wait to see how you apply this design aesthetic to the augmented and virtual space.

When I saw the call for an Interaction Sound Designer, I knew that my skills and creativity would be a valuable part of your team and company. My M.F.A. thesis was entirely about making harmonic space tangible and navigable, which I believe will be a significant area for growth as UIs become less reliant on the visual dimension. Though it flies in the face of some conventional design wisdom, I believe that harmony is an untapped resource for representing information—especially from an accessibility standpoint.

I would welcome the opportunity to be considered as a candidate for the Interaction Sound Designer position, and I would love talk more about the future of sound design. I hope to one day to contribute to Facebook's vision for sound in the realm of digitally augmented social interactions.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Nathan Turczan

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