

Things in Between Sonia D'Alto

The career of flowers differs from ours only in inaudibleness
(Emily Dickinson, L 388, April 1873?)

How can we live together in an intersectional way? How can we relate the multiple and multilingual in an empathic way? *In Our Midst* is a work that interrogates through performance the multiple possibilities of perception and sensoriality. It presents an attempt to go beyond the limits of a reality produced exclusively by anthropomorphic speculations. In fact, the work inserts the body of the user in the interval that attempts the encounter between human and non-human, in the possibility of an alliance between species. It is a liminal state in which to recognise and experience transient practices that resound through disorientating, procedural and cyclical ways. It is the attempt of a language between diverse spaces and points of view that find a common space. In this way, the ego and the (authorial) individual's identity are annulled in the reciprocal relationships of perceptive immersion and speculative interrogation within a cavity, in the echo of a passage. Marco Giordano's work moves in this direction. Junctions and relations that overcome dichotomies and dualistic metaphors. Such a way of working and artistic research allows Giordano to investigate the possible resources of an interstitial space of reunifying and overturning the coordinates of the modernist disciplinary system. The work attempts to open a path towards possibilities of expansion, stratification and contamination of the systems of division that organise the modern "reality principle".¹ A dialogue between human and non-human, a hybrid between nature and technology, contamination and symbioses of several languages and senses, the work triggers an interruption, an excess compared to universal classifying models and at the same time offers us the possibility to approach nature and technology from a different angle. The sculptures that make up *In Our Midst* realistically represent a series of flowers, made in cold porcelain and having an organic, slightly translucent appearance. A poetic text written by the artist and translated into sound by the composer and artist Luke Fowler issues from the corolla of every flower. The flower's form functions as a sound amplifier, inviting the listener to bring his ear closer and listen more intimately. The anatomic emphasis of the sculpture suffers distortion by linguistic diffractions of the performing audio element and a transformation that involves the regime of customary perception. Humanism's rationalist premise is questioned by this post-human approach, challenging the division between human and animal, and between nature and culture. In fact, the work attempts to make the public relate in the spatial interstice that decentres the human subject and relates with other entities starting from the co-inhabitation of an immersive space. The audio track is, in fact, a hybrid composed of vegetal sounds converted into electronic sound and the human voice of Wojtek Rusin. This is an experiment in synthetic "bio-music", starting from sounds of nature generated by non-anthropogenic signals. The use of SCÍON – made by Instruō, a synth-modular company in Glasgow – allows bio feedback to be recorded directly from the micro-cavities within the

plants, then transformed into electronic sound and finally modified by the human voice. In this way, poetic texts composed by Giordano and emitted by the plants via *embedded*² speakers generate a state of alteration that involves both the senses and the anthropocentric categories. At the same time, the texts were written thinking of the other's body – that of the plants and the technology, its perceptions of the world, experimenting a decentred vision in the practice of thinking. Through such reciprocal relationships, the text becomes voice and the voice becomes sound. The audio tracks resound like the leftover and disproportional between natural and artificial. "Each and every identity is extended through a relationship with the Other",³ in a transformative process of composition, de-construction, reinterpretation and abstraction. *In Our Midst* is an invitation to contamination and the overturning of perception pursuing the sound physicality within an empty space, within the micro-cavities of the sculptures. Apart from separations and taxonomies, inside a cavity according to a background categorial ambiguity, the one that belongs to the language of poetry, to the vocality of polyphony, to empathic and symbiotic possibilities. In order to learn differently and unconsciously from the environment in which one lives.

1 Anselm Franke, *Animism: Notes on An Exhibition*, e-flux, Journal #36, July 2012.

2 Cfr. Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2013.

3 Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1997, p. 11.