

# Digital Inclusion: Artificial Intelligence, the Body, and Voice in Posthumanist Practice

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**Abstract:** This paper analyzes the intermedia artwork *Transplantatio*, presented at the contemporary art festival Biela noc. Created by Paulína Ebringerová and Peter Mazalán (Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava), the work combines artificial intelligence and 3D modeling with a neurodivergent subject, engaging with themes of digital embodiment and bodily modification. Through this integration, the artists enabled a nonverbal boy with autism spectrum disorder to “speak” using an AI-generated voice, resulting in a unique performative act. The study interprets *Transplantatio* through the lens of critical posthumanism and disability studies, with particular attention to embodiment, voice, authenticity, and artistic representation. The analysis situates the work within a critical framework that challenges normative understandings of identity and communication. Presented in a setting where the subject was placed in direct relation to both technology and audience, the work extends beyond aesthetic concerns and becomes an intervention that reconfigures dominant notions of presence and agency. Although the generated voice is not biologically authentic, it fulfills the function of voice as a marker of subjectivity and co-created existence. *Transplantatio* thus opens a discourse on inclusion in which technology operates not merely as a supportive tool, but as a co-creative agent in shaping new modes of being and expression. The paper reflects on the ethical and philosophical implications of representing difference and considers how art can expand the space of neurodivergent and technologically mediated forms of communication.

**Keywords:** posthumanism, intermedia art, inclusive art, performative art, neurodiversity, AI-generated voice

## Introduction

Imagine the silence of a festival space, where suddenly a voice emerges—not an ordinary one, but a gentle child’s voice generated from vocal fragments of a non-verbal boy with autism spectrum disorder. At the moment, when the boy, together with his mother, steps from the audience toward the screen, and his 3D-modeled face comes alive through projection while the AI-generated voice speaks in his tone, we feel the trembling of reality. As the mother later described the moment: “Suddenly I wasn’t the only one speaking for him. He was truly present—people heard his world, not his diagnosis.” This collaboration with the family, shaped by emotional ambivalence and trust—where the boy’s vocal outbursts and intonations served as training data for ElevenLabs—was not merely a technical gesture, but a transformation of his embodied presence.

The artwork *Transplantatio*, presented during the 2024 contemporary art festival Biela noc (Bratislava, Slovak Republic) by artists Paulína Ebringerová and Peter Mazalán, represents a unique intersection of artistic expression, artificial intelligence, and neurodiversity. The project—in which a non-verbal boy with autism spectrum disorder “spoke” for the first time through an AI-generated, simulated voice—challenges traditional understandings of communication and subjectivity by enacting a form of digital body modification—not surgical, but performative. It crosses the boundaries of the biological body; subjectivity emerges in a hybrid space where technology extends non-verbal expression into a resonant presence encountered by the audience.

This paper approaches *Transplantatio* through the theoretical lens of posthumanist thought, which critiques classical humanism’s focus on the autonomous, rational individual and instead emphasizes the emergence of relational, technologized, and hybrid subjects. Building on

the work of theorists such as Rosi Braidotti, Karen Barad, and Donna Haraway,<sup>1</sup> the analysis explores how technology functions not merely as a medium, but as a co-agent in processes of embodiment, bodily transformation (body modification), and meaning-making.

At the same time, the work engages with critical disability theory, particularly the contributions of scholars such as Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, Melanie Yergeau, and Alison Kafer, who reconceptualize disability not as a deficit but as a generative and expressive mode of being. From this perspective, *Transplantatio* does not attempt to “restore” a missing voice; rather, it creates a new way of being heard—embedded within synthetic, performative, and affective dimensions.

A central aspect of the work lies in its engagement with the concept of bodily modification. Through the technological simulation of voice and the use of digital body modeling, the artwork transcends the boundaries between the biological and the artificial, between what is innate and what is constructed. In doing so, *Transplantatio* demonstrates how subjectivity can emerge through interventions into the body—not surgically, but through digital and performative means—thus expanding artistic explorations of the body in the posthumanist era. In this context, it is useful to situate *Transplantatio* alongside other experimental artistic practices that explore neurodivergence and technological mediation. A notable example is Graham Sack’s *Neuro-Theatre*—a hybrid project that integrates real-time biometric and neural data with narrative performance.<sup>2</sup> Like *Transplantatio*, Sack’s work investigates how internal

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<sup>1</sup> Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013); Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> Graham Sack, “sol\_AI\_ris,” a live immersive neuro-theater project combining brain-computer interface (BCI) data, AI, and performance to explore distributed cognition and human-machine interaction, Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics, accessed March 20, 2026, [https://bioethics.jhu.edu/research-and-outreach/the-dracopoulos-bloomberg-bioethics-ideas-lab/projects/sol\\_ai\\_ris/](https://bioethics.jhu.edu/research-and-outreach/the-dracopoulos-bloomberg-bioethics-ideas-lab/projects/sol_ai_ris/).

cognitive or emotional states—often inaccessible or nonverbal—can be externalized, aestheticized, and mediated through technological systems. Both works destabilize normative models of authorship and agency, proposing instead distributed and technologically mediated forms of expression.

Finally, this paper examines how *Transplantatio*, through its use of artificial intelligence and digital modeling, enables new forms of representation while also engaging deeply with philosophical and ethical questions related to voice, identity, embodiment, and inclusion. It asks how technologically co-created art can expand not only representational but also ontological space for neurodivergent subjects—not simply by “giving them a voice,” but by redefining what it means to speak, to be present, and to be recognized.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Posthumanism offers a productive framework for reevaluating contemporary notions of humanity, agency, and embodiment in the context of technological transformation. As Braidotti states, technology in posthumanist thought does not function merely as an external tool, but as an integral part of subjectivity that emerges through the interweaving of biological, technological, and environmental processes.<sup>3</sup> Body, voice, and consciousness thus cease to appear as exclusively human attributes and instead take on the character of modular, relationally constituted entities.

This shift builds on artistic practices that have thematized the body as a technicized and mutable site since the late twentieth century. The performances of Stelarc and Orlan challenge the notion of the “natural” body as an autonomous, closed whole: whether through technological extensions or surgical interventions, the body becomes a medium that can be overwritten,

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<sup>3</sup> Braidotti, *The Posthuman*.

expanded, and culturally reconfigured.<sup>4</sup> Their work demonstrates that subjectivity emerges in cooperation with technology, rather than in opposition to it.

These artistic strategies are further developed in Bernadette Wegenstein's theoretical reflection, which understands the contemporary body as a semiotic and technological interface—open to mediation, inscription, and medial circulation.<sup>5</sup> This perspective is key to interpreting *Transplantatio*, in which voice and presence do not stem from biological speech capacity, but from technologically mediated performativity. Here, the voice is not proof of the body's "functionality," but a sign of its relational existence.

*Transplantatio* can thus be read as a performative materialization of these theoretical foundations. Enabling vocal expression in a nonverbal autistic boy through an AI-generated voice is not simply a case of technological assistance, but the emergence of a new communicative subject—one that is simultaneously human and nonhuman, natural and artificially constructed. Within a posthumanist understanding of subjectivity, this represents a configuration in which the boundaries between medium, body, and voice are disrupted and reconstituted through relational complexity.<sup>6</sup>

At the same time, the work problematizes the representation of neurodiversity. Rather than adopting a medical model that frames autism as a deficit, *Transplantatio* implicitly aligns with an inclusive understanding of difference, close to critical disability studies.<sup>7</sup> In this context, the aim is not to "fix" a missing ability, but to create a space in which the subject can express

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<sup>4</sup> Stelarc, "The Obsolete Body: Stelarc and the Chimera of Cyberculture," in *Stelarc: The Monograph*, ed. Marquard Smith (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 246–255; Orlan, "Carnal Art Manifesto," in *The Ends of Performance*, ed. Peggy Phelan and Jill Lane (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 315–316.

<sup>5</sup> Bernadette Wegenstein, *Getting Under the Skin: The Body and Media Theory* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*; Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*.

<sup>7</sup> Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, "Disability and Representation: The Body in the Cultural Imagination," *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry* (2005); Melanie Yergeau, *Authoring Autism: On Rhetoric and Neurological Queerness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018).

itself differently. The spectrum-based model of embodiment allows the voice to be understood not as a normative capacity, but as a situated and conditioned phenomenon.<sup>8</sup>

The question of voice is also central from the perspective of authenticity. Although technologically generated, the voice mediates the subject's emotional and identity-based presence. This leads to a reevaluation of voice as a sign—not as biological proof of authenticity, but as an event that creates a relationship between speaker and listener. In this sense, *Transplantatio* becomes not only an intermedial work, but an act that enables “being heard” beyond the limits of biological language.

This understanding resonates with Adriana Cavarero's philosophy, for whom voice is a primary expression of being addressed to the other.<sup>9</sup> Voice reveals the subject not through semantic meaning, but through its very sounding—its presence. Similarly, Maurice Merleau-Ponty understands voice as part of the phenomenology of the body, as a mode through which the body manifests itself in the world.<sup>10</sup> In *Transplantatio*, the artificial voice does not negate embodiment, but extends it into acoustic space, where the subject can emerge as a resonant being rather than a diagnostic category.

From this perspective, voice also has an ethical dimension: to be heard is to be recognized. *Transplantatio* thus redefines the concept of “having a voice”—not as a normative capacity to speak or a biologically guaranteed sign of subjectivity, but as a relational and performative event emerging between body, technology, and listener. Here, voice functions not as a property of the subject, but as a process through which the subject becomes present within a

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<sup>8</sup> Fiona Kumari Campbell, *Contours of Ableism: The Production of Disability and Abledness* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Alison Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Adriana Cavarero, *For More Than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

<sup>10</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge, 1962).

shared space of meaning. This shift allows digital voice to be understood not as simulation or assistive replacement, but as an ethico-ontological form of presence that has not yet been systematically addressed in existing scholarship.

## Methodology

This study of the artwork *Transplantatio* is situated within a qualitative research framework that integrates hermeneutic, performative, and critical posthumanist approaches. Rather than adopting a purely descriptive perspective, the methodology is grounded in an interpretive and interdisciplinary lens, aiming to uncover the layered meanings of the work through philosophical reflection, visual analysis, and ethical inquiry. The empirical dimension of the study is based on detailed analysis conducted during the creation of the artwork, as well as interviews with the autistic boy's mother and his special education teacher. The methodological structure rests on four key pillars:

### 1. Posthumanist Interpretive Analysis

This analysis is based on the premise that subjectivity, the body, and voice are no longer exclusively human attributes. Drawing on the works of Braidotti, Haraway, and Barad, as well as N. Katherine Hayles, we approach *Transplantatio* as a performative articulation of hybrid subjectivity—one in which technology does not function as an external aid, but as a co-creator of being.<sup>11</sup> The voice in the work, generated through artificial intelligence, becomes a new form of relational presence that challenges boundaries between body, code, and meaning.

### 2. Semiotic and Performative Analysis

This section focuses on nonverbal communication, the representation of the body, the role of the

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<sup>11</sup> Braidotti, *Posthuman*; Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*; Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women*; N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

sonic layer (especially the synthetic voice), and the ways in which these elements interact to generate tensions of meaning. *Transplantatio* is interpreted as a form of performance in which a new type of subject emerges—one that is not defined solely by biological embodiment, but is co-constituted through relationships between body, technology, and identity. Here, identity is understood as undergoing transformation within a hybrid and mediated space.

### **3. Ethical Reflection on Representation**

This part examines how *Transplantatio* engages with the ethics of “giving voice” to a subject who cannot communicate in conventional ways. Does the AI-simulated voice represent the subject, or does it replace them? How are consent, agency, and authenticity negotiated in this context? The methodology incorporates interviews with the boy’s mother and special education teacher, offering critical insight into the emotional and ethical dimensions of the work. Including the perspectives of the artists themselves is considered an additional step toward a deeper understanding of artistic intention and collaborative dynamics.

### **4. Cultural Framing and the Dis/ability Discourse**

*Transplantatio* is situated within a broader cultural and artistic discourse surrounding inclusion, neurodiversity, and techno-human interrelation. Through the lens of critical dis/ability theory, the work is interpreted not as a compensatory gesture, but as an ontological and cultural intervention—one that challenges normative assumptions about ability, visibility, and voice in art and society. This multilayered methodology ensures that *Transplantatio* is not perceived as an isolated artistic work, but as a complex discursive event in which philosophy, technology, and social practice converge.

### **Ethnographic Approach**

The ethnographic component of this research was conducted through semi-structured interviews and participant observation during the preparation and presentation of the artwork

*Transplantatio*. The aim was to explore the personal, emotional, and interpretive dimensions of participation among key actors: the mother of the nonverbal boy with autism spectrum disorder, his special education teacher, and selected audience members.

### **1. Interview with the Mother**

The interview took place in a home environment and was conducted in an open and respectful manner, allowing the mother to speak candidly about her experiences, concerns, and moments of joy. She emphasized that the possibility of “hearing her son’s voice,” even though technologically generated, represented a deeply emotional and transformative experience. The project was not only an artistic event, but also a moment of profound personal validation and recognition of her son’s individuality.

Suddenly, I wasn’t the only one speaking for him. He was truly present, and people heard him—not his diagnosis, but his world. No one saw him merely as an object of care, but as a person with an inner life. That voice—it wasn’t just a technical gesture, but something that changed the way he was perceived.<sup>12</sup>

She described the collaborative process of creating the voice recordings, which included nonverbal vocalizations, emotional responses, and repetitive sound fragments regularly present in his behavior. This material was provided to the artists as training data for the AI model (using the ElevenLabs tool). The mother also noted the emotional ambivalence of the process—

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<sup>12</sup> Interview with the participant’s mother Veronika Kita Mazalánová, conducted by Paulína Ebringerová, Bratislava, March 20, 2026.

although the voice was not “his” in a traditional sense, it emerged from a shared effort and deep emotional investment.

## **2. Interview with the Special Education Teacher**

The special education teacher, who has worked with the boy over an extended period in a school setting, highlighted the project’s uniqueness within the context of inclusive education:

In special schools, children like him often receive only the most basic support—  
unfortunately, our system often does not allow for more due to limited capacity, staff  
shortages, and the generally low societal priority given to this area. Here, however, we  
are speaking about a completely different level of recognition: integrating these children  
into a broader social context, where they are not seen as a problem, but as equal bearers  
of meaning, creativity, and human value.<sup>13</sup>

## **3. Observation During the Performance**

During the live presentation of the piece at the festival, a profoundly moving moment occurred when the boy and his mother stood up from the audience and approached the screen. His physical presence—combined with the synthesized voice and the 3D projection of his face—created an emotionally charged atmosphere. The observation recorded audience responses: deep silence, visible emotional restraint, and several individuals (especially mothers) moved to tears. These reactions suggest a strong affective impact, in which the boundary between performative experience and lived reality began to dissolve.

## **4. Visual Documentation**

As part of the ethnographic documentation, photographs were collected. Video recording and

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with the participant’s special education teacher “name withheld”, conducted by Paulína Ebringerová, Bratislava, March 20, 2026.

artificial lighting were deliberately avoided, as such stimuli could have been overwhelming for the autistic boy. The artists sought to eliminate factors that might cause additional stress. His younger brother was also present and was gently included in the process through play, serving as a supportive presence.



**Figure 1.** *Transplantatio*. Photograph by Marko Erd.

The ethnographic perspective on *Transplantatio* reveals that the artistic outcome is not merely the product of creative work, but the result of a layered network of relationships—between technology and the body, between voice and silence, and between artist, audience, and represented subject. It is precisely these interactions—captured through interviews and direct observation—that give the work its depth, allowing it to be understood not only as an aesthetic experiment, but as an ontological act.

### ***Transplantatio***

*Transplantatio* can be understood as a multi-layered artistic intervention that merges digital media, creative expression, neurodiversity, and technological simulation in order to open a new space of representation—particularly for subjects whose voices are often silenced, both literally and symbolically.



**Figure 2.** *Transplantatio*. Photograph by Matej Kováč.

On a formal level, the work consists of a digital 3D model of the body and face of a nonverbal boy with autism, whose “voice” was artificially generated using AI—specifically the ElevenLabs tool, trained on a dataset of fragmented audio inputs. These data included emotional reactions, syllabic outbursts, and other vocal fragments used to simulate the tone and texture of his voice.<sup>14</sup> By combining the 3D model of the boy’s body and face with the AI-generated voice,

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<sup>14</sup> Google Research. “Project Euphonia: About.” Accessed March 20, 2026. <https://sites.research.google/euphonia/about/>.

a performative act of “speaking” emerges—one that cannot be understood solely as the result of audiovisual synthesis.



**Figure 3.** *Transplantatio*. Photograph by Matej Kováč.

During this act, the autistic boy was physically present at the venue together with his mother. At a key moment in the performance, both stood up from the audience and approached the projection screen on which the narrative was unfolding. This gesture created a powerful moment of connection between body, technology, and audience. In this hybrid space, a new form of subjectivity emerges—one not bound by biological functionality. From a philosophical perspective, *Transplantatio* articulates a posthumanist position: the autistic subject extends into a synthetic space, where his existence is expressed through technological mediation.

The emerging voice is mediated—it does not negate the body but extends it into the digital sphere. The visual layer of the work emphasizes the fragility and vulnerability of the body: the boy’s face is rendered with delicate detail and a uniform tonal palette, while his

expression remains largely static. This tension between apparent stillness and vocal expression produces a dynamic interplay between silence and speech, between muteness and testimony. At this point, another interpretive dimension emerges—an ethical one—in which the viewer becomes a witness to a moment of speech that would otherwise remain unheard. The work thus redefines the boundaries of representation: it is not merely “art about disability,” but an intervention that enables an alternative mode of existence within the social sphere.



**Figure 4.** *Transplantatio*. Photograph by Marko Erd.

In the context of contemporary discourse on inclusion, *Transplantatio* carries a strong social dimension. It offers not only an aesthetic experience, but also a vision of a possible future in which technologies function not merely as compensatory tools, but as extensions of subjectivity—not replacements, but mediators of alternative modes of being.

### **AI Tool and the Posthumanist Philosophy of Voice**

A key component of *Transplantatio* is the use of ElevenLabs, an AI-based voice synthesis tool employed to create a voice that had never physically existed. Unlike traditional speech synthesis systems, which require a large number of articulated phrases, ElevenLabs is capable of generating realistic speech from fragmentary, often non-linguistic vocalizations. In this case, the training dataset consisted of audio fragments such as syllabic outbursts, emotional sounds, and tonal inflections collected from a nonverbal boy. The resulting voice is therefore not an imitation of an existing speaker, but a synthetic construct that suggests an imagined sonic identity.

The decision to use ElevenLabs was not purely technical; it was also an ethical and philosophical choice that frames voice as an event rather than a static property of the body. Within a posthumanist framework, voice is no longer understood as a stable index of identity anchored in the body, but as a dynamic articulation of relational subjectivity. Cavarero argues that voice is not merely a carrier of linguistic content, but a performative expression of the subject in a relational space.<sup>15</sup> In this context, the AI-generated voice does not replace the biological voice; rather, it inaugurates a new possibility of being heard.

The fact that the voice is generated rather than “restored” challenges traditional notions of authenticity and expression. It raises a fundamental ontological question: can a voice be “real” if it was never biologically spoken? The artwork responds affirmatively—not by claiming technological fidelity, but by reconfiguring authenticity as a function of intention, affect, and collaborative creative process. The mother, educators, artists, and the child himself all participated in the creation of the voice—even if nonverbally. The result is not a simulation of identity, but a distributed act of meaning-making.

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<sup>15</sup> Cavarero, *For More Than One Voice*.

This form of technological “voicing” is not only inclusive—it is generative. It enables the emergence of subjectivity that would otherwise remain inaccessible within dominant linguistic and corporeal frameworks. As Barad writes, agency does not reside in individual entities, but arises through their intra-actions.<sup>16</sup> In *Transplantation*, the AI-generated voice functions precisely as such an intra-active agent: not an external aid, but a co-creative element of the subject’s presence.

## Discussion

*Transplantation* contributes to contemporary discourse on inclusion, technology, and posthumanist thought. By enabling “speech” from a subject traditionally excluded from the realm of communication, the work moves beyond the conventional framework of artistic expression and enters the domain of ontological and ethical transformation.

While many inclusive approaches focus on removing barriers within existing structures, *Transplantation* proposes a more radical shift: it creates a new mode of existence in which the neurodivergent subject is not a passive recipient of care, but an active co-creator of their own representation. The voice that emerges in the work is not merely a functional output of artificial intelligence, but a performative act that challenges normative conceptions of communicative competence.

This form of vocal agency situates *Transplantation* within a broader artistic discourse exploring the transformation of the body, communication, and subjectivity through technology. The work aligns with practices that investigate expanded forms of embodiment, cognition, and mediated voice. Stelarc’s performances, for example, explore the body as a communication interface, extending bodily experience beyond biological limits. Similarly, Orlan’s *Carnal Art*

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<sup>16</sup> Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*.

foregrounds the body as a site of inscription, modification, and authorship, challenging dominant visual and cultural norms.<sup>17</sup>

A conceptually related project is *Neuro-Theatre* by Graham Sack (2021), an experimental practice integrating biometric and neural data into live, interactive performance. Sack investigates invisible internal states—such as brain activity, affect, and cognitive fluctuation—as performative agents translated into aesthetic form. In both cases, the aim is not simply to convey voice or thought, but to reconstruct them as artistic events.<sup>18</sup>

The use of artificial intelligence to generate a voice that has never biologically existed raises fundamental questions of authenticity. Traditional notions of subjectivity as the “truth of expression” give way to a relational model of authenticity. Although the voice does not biologically belong to the subject, it becomes an expression of an otherwise inaccessible inner world. In this sense, the work invites a reconsideration of truth in relation to marginalized bodies and voices.

While technology is often understood as a tool, in *Transplantatio* it functions as a collaborator. It is not merely an instrument, but a medium of subjectivation—an active participant in shaping what is perceptible, audible, and shareable. In Barad’s terms, this constitutes an intra-active relationship in which subject and technology do not pre-exist their interaction but emerge through it.<sup>19</sup>

*Transplantatio* demonstrates that art can operate as a space for testing new models of subjectivity and communication. It does not simply represent disability but creates conditions in which modes of being and perception are transformed. The aesthetic experience thus becomes

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<sup>17</sup> Stelarc, “The Obsolete Body: Stelarc and the Chimera of Cyberculture”; Orlan, “Carnal Art Manifesto.”

<sup>18</sup> Sack, “sol\_AI\_ris.”

<sup>19</sup> Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*.

transformative for the viewer, who encounters an alternative configuration of voice, body, and presence.

Through its hybrid nature, the work operates at the intersection of artistic research, neurodiversity, and technological experimentation. In this respect, it resonates with practices that reconceive technology as a partner in articulating otherness and inner experience.

One relevant example is *Project Euphonia* (2019) by Google, which uses machine learning to adapt speech recognition systems to individuals with atypical speech patterns. Rather than “correcting” deviation, the system learns from unique vocal expressions, pointing toward more inclusive technological design.<sup>20</sup>

Another related example is the work of Neil Harbisson, who, through a sensory implant (a sonochromatic antenna), is able to perceive color as sound. His practice similarly challenges conventional boundaries of perception and identity, demonstrating how subjectivity can emerge through technological extension.<sup>21</sup>

From a participatory standpoint, the *Sensory Toolkit Workshops* (2020) by Sarah Evelyn Marsh are also relevant. These workshops create a space for neurodivergent participants to construct their own sensory environments.<sup>22</sup> Rather than pursuing adaptation, their aim is the active shaping of perceptual conditions—a principle closely aligned with the ethical gesture of *Transplantatio*.

These parallels demonstrate that *Transplantatio* is not an isolated project, but part of a broader cultural movement that resists passive representations of disability. Instead, it enables

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<sup>20</sup> Google Research. “Project Euphonia: About.”

<sup>21</sup> Neil Harbisson, “I Listen to Color,” TED Talk, 2012, [https://www.ted.com/talks/neil\\_harbisson\\_i\\_listen\\_to\\_color](https://www.ted.com/talks/neil_harbisson_i_listen_to_color).

<sup>22</sup> Sarah E. Marsh, “The Sensory Toolkit Workshops Initiated by the Open School East (UK),” Open School East, 2020, <https://www.evelynarts.co.uk/>.

the emergence of new ontological configurations in which technology co-creates subjectivity—its intelligibility and its right to be heard.



**Figure 5.** *Transplantatio*. Photograph by Marko Erd.

## Conclusion

The artwork *Transplantatio* demonstrates that contemporary art engaging with artificial intelligence can move beyond the framework of aesthetic experience and address deeper ontological, ethical, and social questions. Through the combination of 3D modeling, AI-generated voice, and performative visuality, a form of subjectivity emerges that is not bound to biological speech capacity, but to relational presence—the possibility of being for and with others.

The analysis shows that *Transplantatio* is not merely an artistic presentation but operates as an ontological act that expands the concepts of voice, communication, and inclusion. Within a posthumanist framework, voice is not reducible to phonation or speech. In the light of Adriana

Cavarero's concept of vocality as relational presence, the AI-generated voice in *Transplantatio* can be understood as an event: it does not simulate a "real" biological voice, but creates the conditions under which the subject can be recognized.<sup>23</sup> Even in the absence of conventional speech, voice becomes a performative force that constitutes the subject as someone who can be heard—as someone who exists in relation.

This reconceptualization carries significant ethical implications. If voice marks the threshold of recognition, then enabling someone to have a voice—even a synthetic one—is not merely symbolic, but a material intervention into how society constructs intelligibility, agency, and empathy. As Maurice Merleau-Ponty suggests, voice is not simply an expression of the body, but a mode through which the body becomes present to others.<sup>24</sup> In *Transplantatio*, this presence is not diminished by technology; rather, it is extended through it.

Although the work opens possibilities for applied research and inclusive practice, its primary significance does not lie in practical application. Instead, *Transplantatio* demonstrates that having a voice does not mean possessing a normative capacity to speak, but the ability to enter into relation and resonate within a shared space. Art here does not function as a representation of difference, but as a means of its ontological reconfiguration. This constitutes its central contribution: showing that presence does not arise from biology or technology alone but emerges through their collaboration with others.

## Acknowledgements

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<sup>23</sup> Cavarero, *For More Than One Voice*.

<sup>24</sup> Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*.

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