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A BASTARD IN THE MACHINE

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree Master of Fine Arts

in

Visual Arts

by

Juan Eduardo Mendoza-Ramírez

Committee in charge:

Professor Ricardo Dominguez, Chair
Professor Rubén Ortiz Torres
Professor Lisa Cartwright
Professor Jürgen P. Schulze

2021

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University of California San Diego

2021

This research study is dedicated to:

The Bastards

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PREFACE

This writing will be my thesis version. Here, I will analyze —from my perspective— both the history and the status quo of object and artifacts creation — which we may call them, contemporary artistic practice. I will explore the various extensions regarding the creation of these objects and artifacts towards their abstraction, industrial production and expansion. Inspecting towards various medium and new media, even their convergence; as well as their social interaction. Contributions that have shaped this document (thesis) —through my work—, will try to bring the reader closer to certain moments in history, perception and interpretation of objects and their different forms. By means of this writing, I will try to talk about the transformation and transition of my work, due to its ability to mutate and expand in various fields. I will expose regarding my relative arbitrariness and indeterminacy implementation over and over again both in the process of research, creation and construction, as well as in my artistic practice during the last three years, meaning to my staying in the master's program at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD).

Images of forms and means that I have been adopted in my practice in conjunction with certain theoretical and historical perspectives regarding the artistic object and artifacts will be included in this writing. A focus on traditional and physical materials, as well. A material presence that somehow becomes radical, even to seem new, in our age, a time of simulation, creation and action in immaterial field. Reflecting and opening questions on the material and the space, and its obsolescence, or not. In some way, I will argue that these classic materials in artistic production have enabled not only my artistic practice, but, in general, new media and technologies. What has been said is, of course, only one side of this process. This document will talk about the other sides. After focusing predominantly on the historical, political, theoretical, conceptual baggage of the current situation of artistic objects and artifacts creation —in this case mine— looking at their immediate present, and their possible future. The idea of an "endless" practice somehow came to life. Attending to their "external / physical" expansions into other materials, processes and fields, for the purpose of their "internal / conceptual" inspection.

Envisioning towards the horizon. That is, to reflect on a not silenced materiality, questioning and proposing objects and artifacts creation —so-called artistic— in lockstep with immateriality times. Immateriality, a notion that is made up of historical veins, of philosophical, technological, and socioeconomic meaning.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

A Bastard In The Machine

by

Juan Eduardo Mendoza-Ramirez

Master of Fine Arts in Visual Arts

University of California San Diego, 2021

Professor Ricardo Dominguez, Chair

This project attempts to offer an extended discussion related to objects as an attachment, as body extension, as interlocutors in how the individual –the body– experience the world. It refers to the physical representation and the many attempts to understand the transformation of both the object and the human body, through their intervention, transformation, re-invention, re-design, and meaningful effects that may produce. A set of elements that will serve to capture, recreate, and redesign my own version and understanding of this interaction. Thus, this functions as a means of reinterpretation inviting to question and reflect upon artifacts and their modification, body attachments and the ability to modify and reinvent the individual, as well as their public, historical and contemporary discourses, implications, and dimensions.



Figure 1.0.- Documentation of *The ACB, Lessons To Be Indoctrinated, (A Coetaneous Bastard)*. Intervened Base Ball Caps. My beginning in the program

A DYSFUNCTIONAL RECOGNITION

For twelve long years without knowing it, I had a secret. But now, aware of my dimensions, I know that I am a Bastard!

This is my life.

I am not a puppet for your world domination.

Having a soul, and a mind as well,

I realize the truth.

I am NOT a robot mechanized, computerized, paralyzed, hypnotized,

I realize it is time to stop, I am a free Bastard in your machine.

Unconventionally skeptical of your deal.

If you look you will see,

There is something.

I am motivated by the search, I am surprised by the encounter of new topics, things to talk about. I think this has to do with how reality affects us as individuals; in my case, as an artist. I think it even has to do with how we are gaining more experience in that dual relationship that we have with reality —of accepting it and / or reading and discussing it. Basically, this is largely why I always keep myself searching. My exterior influences me, perhaps not so much in the investigation, but in the information that I obtain from any source. For me, that is vital. I am concerned of my reality and context. First, because I am part of my country, of society; of the world. And my work is there thinking that there is another —an equal—, an interlocutor, a repository arising from the same society as my peers. Indeed, I am worried about reality. I am concerned enough to just only be thinking of one thing to do. It seems quite complex to be in a situation like the current one and that this practice, which, although it is an enriching space;

it is only approached as spectacle or merely particular thoughts that provoke absolutely nothing. That is to say; doing things that only function as a hook, a sales item. I also want to add that I started to do this because I realized that it —art practice— was a way to annoy. Besides that, I do not know if this —my practice— can be taken as a voice, and therefore tried —by others— to be made a mandate. What, I have realized, is that there was a part of education that perhaps did not work for me, did not contain me, or does not work for me —or does not contain me and does not work for me— is then what I tried, and I have tried in this search, to form it to my measure. Yes, I have rethought the world and I continue rethink it, that is why I make my contribution. Every day through this.

I belong to a generation, that one. The one that transitioned into the current world. The one that happened from an analogous childhood to their predigital youth adaptation. The one in that place, the one my generation delineated. Where now both new and past generations navigate, speak, write, and unfold.

This has definitely set me up as a mobile agent, I can admit it, but perhaps I cannot. Questioning the status quo and being disobedient. Incessantly searching — usually in a very rugged way. These are my priorities. Thus, by constantly permuting among places, forms, modes, media, and ideas —as much as possible—, I am not concretized, nor am I an immutable entity, rather I am indeterminate: a hybrid entity, a bastard one.

Rethinking “objects, the human and the artificial beyond those conditions, if it works, it is obsolete”, I agree with, because there is the beginning of their failure. This is a combination of a quote from Marshall McLuhan and my own idea to state what we already know, that: La tecnología está hecha para fallar.

INTRODUCTION

Coming from a traditional school in artistic practice, but a curious subject, belonging to a generation —as I mentioned in previous lines— with a great interest in the exploration of technologies —to meet here with the most advanced ones, perhaps—, their experimentation and uses from, and for the art platform. Upon my arrival at this program, during a presentation in one of the seminars, I witnessed an event which was very revealing at the time, and I identified that event as problematic, at least for me. This problem was witnessing the excessive use of a medium, a digital technique —the photogrammetry—, which led several of my peers to carry out practically the same exercise —scanning objects, taking them to digital process and assisted production, 3D printing, to turn them into a kind of image or artifact later, probably an artistic one— maybe, none of them noticed it. By means of this revealing moment, as I mentioned, I reflected upon the use of media. From that overuse —in my perspective— I traced an analogy with the use of painting —as the manually made—. A media taken for granted that it only needs to be used —at least, it seems to be for others— because it is already recognized as an artistic one. Related to the other process; the digital one, a question came up: Does the photogrammetry —a digital process— through excessive usage and under this specific context immediately become an artistic, even a traditional media in contemporary practice? Although this calls into question the way in which the object is translated and re-produced, it would lead us to think about the definition of the artistic object, but that one, is another conversation which will not be addressed in this document. Looking back to that gesture, the digital event prompted me to

inquire: Should I make use of the technologies that this place offers to me? What way should I do it? Should I reject the opportunity? What the type of access is that we can have to these technologies, and what is the purpose of that? This personal standing when reflecting on the interaction between man and machine in this world—now digital— could be wrong and without foundation. Or it could be taken that the only thing underlying these questions is mere ignorance or resentment. It is not my intention to use an easy argument to blind us to a reality that proposes that, although there are a series of human efforts and natural forces, this reality today is largely defined in the world of technical objects. Objects or artifacts mediating between man and nature. Now, it has to be asked: What are these new technical objects and how are they manifested today?

Why asking this question?

Because I identify that there is an imbalance, by granting recognition to certain objects, for example, to things that make reaction or responses manifest from those who experience it—let us call that reaction, aesthetic impressions. This is giving rise to situate these objects / artifacts in a corresponding place in the world of meanings. The problem here is that it banishes so many other objects, particularly artifacts or things that have no meaning, but have a use, a utilitarian function.

With this motivation or crossroads, I crated my first research topic which I titled äb-jekt, a project based on my immediate experience in this context, for me, a hypertechnologized place. This was based on first trying to understand the origin and nature of the objects and materials I work with, as well as the new modes of production, experimentation, and perception I was facing. Then, under that scenario my practice was oriented to explore limits between the

artisanal and the virtual —as well as human limitations, mine— limits that vanish or disappear in a border space. These limits that are also a meeting place between materiality and immateriality, and not a place of separation. Limits and modes that undoubtedly not only create, but also articulate and unleash new forms, for example, artifacts or objects that can even be called artistic.

In this way, in my exploration of the object as an interlocutor between the human and reality, a type of sequence was built:

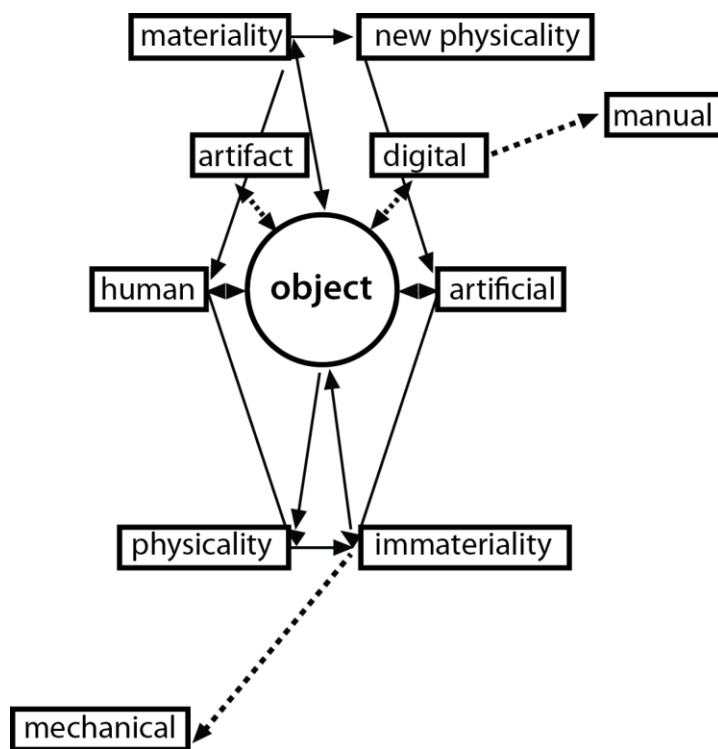


Figure 1.1.- Scheme, *Objects Research Structure*, made in First Year in the Program. 2018.

Therefore, this sequence providing structure to my research offered me an opportunity to reflect on our perception, experimentation, and our own relationship with the world.

Following this logic of how humans are intimately related to objects and machines, as well as their discourses, implications, and dimensions; “articulation” was one another concept that came up here, taken as a new category within my research. Rethinking “articulation” as notion in relation to the corporeal and the machinic. As a result, it revealed the idea of using sound —specifically from human voice— as an object, as extension directly and immediately involved with the body. Between the human and the inanimate. This allowed me to inspect through a series of artifacts that were created to record and replicate sound and human voice. In this way, both sound and function were defined as an extension of the body interacting and having capacity to transform itself, expanding towards and through a technological entity. Thus, the synthesized / synthetic voice was then taken as a kind of artifact that has the possibility as well as the limitation of connecting, adjusting, changing, or increasing both the human and artificial body in physical and virtual space. Resulting in an unrequired second-year project at the MFA Program, which I entitled " T.H.I.O.T.H.S." “The Human Invention of The Human Sound.”

Further on, after reading *Cyborg*, by Martin Caidin, the 1972 novel that was adapted into the television series *The Six Million Dollar Man*. I managed to track and landing down ideas for a new project. My assumption was that this would be a kind of a self-reference story, a fake one that should be entitled “XIS NOILLIM RALLOD BASTARD”. Keeping this in mind, a maelstrom of questions concerned in a technological mediated world appeared: *What would happen if the access to technology were not reachable? Under this panorama, how life is going to be improved? In an accelerated technological development, what kind of errors, dysfunctionalities and limitations have been overseen? How low technology and its limitations may / is providing to people? Do Six million dollars are now enough to pursue a better life through technology in current days? What an augmented body is? What does it mean in a*

contemporary world? Keeping the idea of the body's rearchitecting and redesign in mind, then why not considering the human body as a glitch? What are the relations and distances between a human body and a glitch? Why the errors persist in an assumed error free and 100% efficient contemporary world? Hereon, I had another reason to explore and investigate both science fiction narratives and theorizations in relation to technological processes –manual or digital, past, and contemporary– in which it is shown how the human being seeks to improve components – objects and artifacts – of their context, their body, to define new abilities and expand the function of other organs or senses, while their limitations and failures become simultaneously evident. *“Save for the doubtful exception of himself, he could never tell the difference between a man and a Robot.” (Ryle, 2009, p. 10).* And here, in this intersection, is where I find the power of the glitch using techno imaginary and synonyms such as error, and mistake. Knowing that glitch is a failure to function, a signal that something is going wrong; indetermined, the imperfection. I translate it, as the impure, lo bastardo.

As a next step, this research became an exercise in exploring the ways narratives are configured through the body mediated by technology, where the artificial and the organic are interwoven in a specific subject or id-ENTITY –an indetermined one. As a result, this project made my perspective visible on this interaction, which has led me to define –in my idea– that the glitch –comparable with Bastardo– is not just a failure, something that becomes errant, dysfunctional or an object due to its condition. Rather, as an artificial and hybrid id-ENTITY, is also a nucleus of revolution, a transgressive and transforming site. A locus that can generate a new perspective on contemporary art practices.

1st Chapter

äb-jekt: BEYOND THE ARTIFACTS

RECOGNITION, PRODUCTION, AND INTERPRETATION OF OBJECTS.

I want to write here about objects and artifacts, and I want to clarify that speaking of all this idea of their materiality, interaction, and significance I regularly do not know where to start or even what to say. It seems that the way the material means, or it can have a meaning, really arises from having an implicit knowledge on both the material and the objects. Knowing the objects' world and their materiality, —their recognition— in a way that cannot really be described or communicated through a system of words or symbols. On the one hand, this materiality, and its meaning — understood — is directly instinct connected, it seems. Therefore, if someone's knowledge of materiality is coming from an inbred line, that is, that some other interlocutor goes beyond how we behave through objects. That is because of this knowledge is considered to be part of one's nature, it has not been learned. Thus, one interacts with the object or artifact with more learned or instinctively acquired experience, we may say. What I will do here then, is to talk about some ideas that have to do with the recognition, production, and interpretation of objects — the materiality and meaning of these “things”.

I will start by defining the use of the language in “äb-jekt”. I propose we understand the concept of artifact and object in the same way that they are respectively defined at Oxford Dictionary: *An object made by a person, especially something of historical or cultural interest. Something material that may be perceived by the senses, is a cause for attention or concern.* The artifact and object concepts, then, involve the knowledge that both are permanent, independent entities that exist in space and time even when one cannot perceive or act on them.

On the other hand, I invoke the word abject. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines abject as *that which disturbs the self, or to be cast down in spirit*. The abject is therefore not an intrinsic quality of a thing, a being, or a state of affairs. The object, in light of the abject, must be understood as a social and cultural construction. On the other hand, the words material and materiality have opposite meanings, values, or interpretations. On the one side, material is defined as "what is material", that is, what ponders the physical aspect of things; on the other side, it means something that can be created or elaborated, or of what anything is formed. The last definition —materiality— can be better understood through its relationship with the first definition which, likewise, can be differentiated into two main meanings: something material is that which "belongs to a matter in opposition to the form." Therefore, although material designates physical matter, it also assumes the potential of its association with non-physical matter.

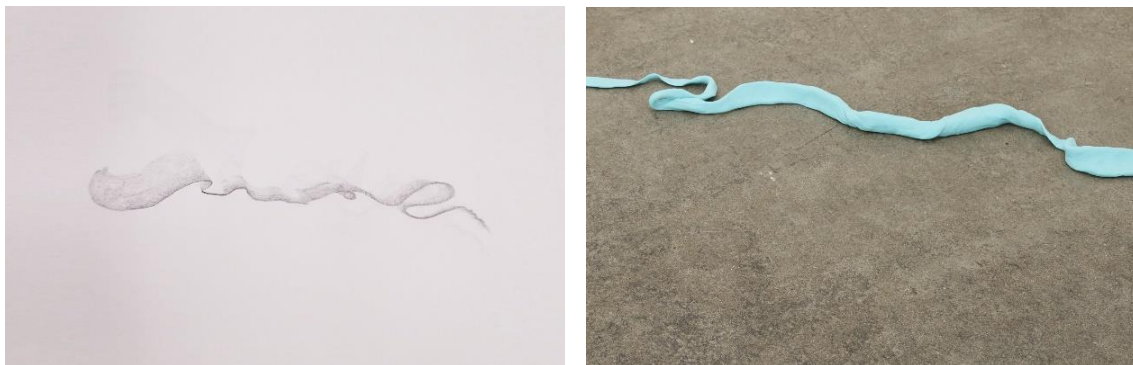


Figure 1.2.- Documentation of Preparatory Drawing *Hey! What do you think made this thing here?* From First Year Review Show in the Program. 2018-2019.

Object and artifact creation in the arts has changed with the emergence of new instruments of production, meaning and communication. For example, the 3D printer has become a standard option among the tools used by artists working modeling out from a custom material (metal, plastic, wood). Computer-aided design and manufacturing has become accepted practices. The use of new instruments, digital devices among them, has given rise to novel forms and modes of register and circulation in image, and objects, for example sculpture production. New technologies implemented to solve particular production requirements have been enlisted for hybrid forms of experimentation and interaction. Nevertheless, sculptors, for instance, continue to resort to material experiences that do not involve digital technology. In this sense, we may argue that contemporary image and objects production has two modes. On the one hand, it remains largely not digital, and remains a modality for exploring and recognizing immediate reality; on the other hand, it has been transformed by the emergence of newer mechanisms and modes of non-material-based production, such as instruments for creating virtual reality. Involvement in this newer environment of the digital image, with studio objects—for example, sculptures—constitutes both a defiance of the traditional discipline and an opportunity for the visual and object-based work of art to be differently oriented, modeled, modified, experimented with, perceived, and interpreted, or not.

To jump ahead for a minute, this dual condition of the practice today leads me to propose a manner that—properly exploited and used or not, perhaps—embraces dysfunctionality and error. By properly exploited, I mean for example, in the case where I use a conventional script code, but it is broken, resulting deformed object. Not only in the use of computing instruments but also *prima Materia*, in traditional media, I try to provoke changes in production, perception, and interpretation of artifacts we may call sculpture.



Figure 1.3.- Documentation of *Rather than New Media*, and *Objects of various types*. From First Year Review Show in the Program. 2018-2019.

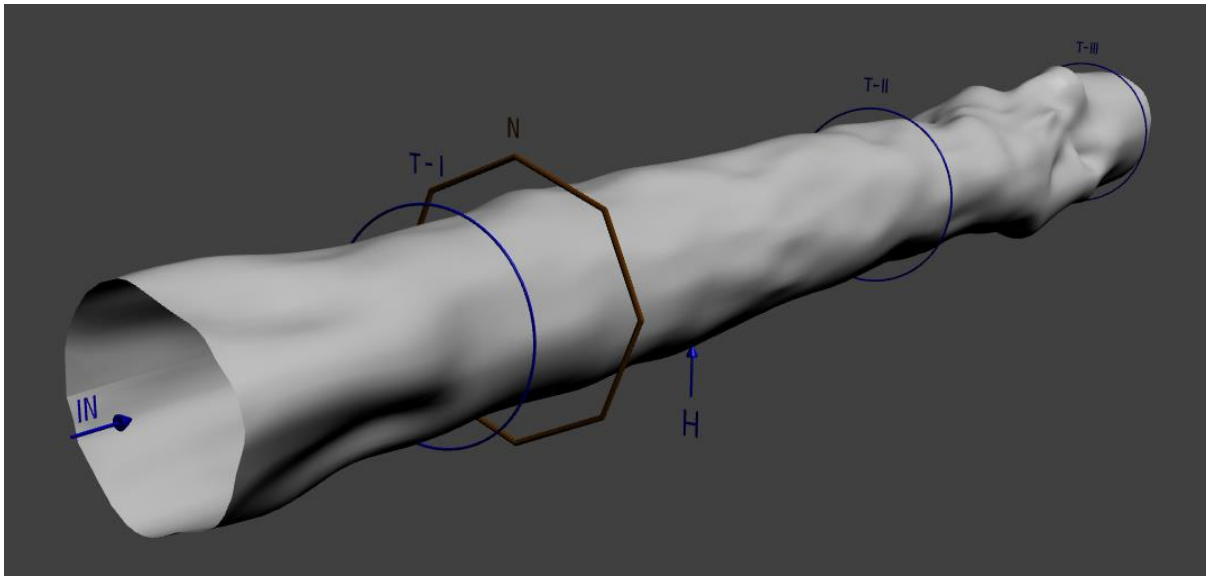


Figure 1.4.- Digital Version file of *Rather than new media*. From First Year Review Show in the Program. 2018-2019. Unknown Author.



Figure 1.5.- Documentation of *Rather than new media*. From First Year Review Show in the Program. 2018-2019.

THE OBJECT: EXTENSION AND INTERLOCUTOR BETWEEN THE HUMAN AND REALITY

To start this section, I am going to begin this story again from my perspective, which leads me to develop this idea of the object as an extension and interlocutor between the human and the reality. Although my formal education was in painting —through the pictorial object— I am now using multiple media —*physical, non-physical*— to produce my work in order to establish more efficient, flexible, or simple modes of production. By means of this work, I try to explore potentialities and limitations – not only my own but also the material's limitations, as well as the new materiality given by the digital and virtual forms. I am interested in the digital and technological turn, its uses and abuses. And it is —from my perspective— through this —the excessive use and abuse of computers and machines in the process of doing work— that responses, such as errors in the code that produce deformities, are important for practice, the theory and criticism of the image and the object / artifact in current artistic creation.

In this way, my idea focuses then on three questions: what can a focus on materials and (new) materiality do for the recognition, making, interpretation of and response to images and objects in a context that assumes digital modes will be used? What can the digital do for discovering and enhancing a new materiality for image and object-making among those artists who identify as visual and objectual artists? This is a question we may also ask about critics, theorists, and historians of art making. What digital anomalies in processes have been and may be enlisted by artists as provocations for experimentation, perception, and interpretation of this new modality of images and objects without rejecting doing work manually, by hand, at a point it might make more sense to use a machine.



Figure 1.6.- Documentation of *Difficult Objects*. From First Year Review Show in the Program. 2018-2019.



Figure 1.7.- Documentation detail of *Difficult Objects*. From First Year Review Show in the Program. 2018-2019.

The artifact reflects then a pursuit of the physical and non-physical experience. It operates on both a perceptual and conceptual level, encouraging and engaging both the viewer and the object to have a contemplative, meditative, and interactive response. As symbol system and artifact creation environment, the notion of object might consist in documentation: a type of archive, shapes, prima Materia, colors, and several media. Far from knowing what they are, these components try to affect and to present to the viewer predominantly, probing questions. Regarding “äbje-kt”, actions and objects are guided not only by the digital and technological, which produce accuracy but also anomalies in materials. The object is a medium, a strategic actor, that raises philosophical questions. These philosophical questions concern the origin of the object, its materiality, shape, and its relation to mechanical, technological, and manual processes. Moreover, this project is not intended to find or fitting a perfect material or a specific term to name these objects. It attempts to articulate more questions rather than answers, forcing an encounter between who observes and the Materia that raises the question --“*An object that seems like it never changes, involving action and being: ‘How’ has it emerged and ‘what’ has emerged?*”—these are objects/Materia which are in a long-lasting metamorphosis, a transformation that lies in a formless matter, onto which form has not yet to be imposed? Thus, matter that is leading viewers not only towards being aware of content, but also towards a deeper understanding of materiality.

As methodology in this project, the technological, the digital and the material have been intertwined as another possible way in —mine— art practice convinced of its crucial role in contemporary production of art. Common and simple objects as well as images (physical and digital) were processed and manipulated by computer, also manually. In this fusion also the anomalies, errors, and dysfunctionality they may trigger during processes contributed to my modes of production. This mode attempts to redefine the spatial, the objectual, the participation of the spectator, the virtual and the real in the work of art. I use the theoretical and experimental,

also empirical contrasting in these broad areas in conjunction to address knowledge from these realms (digital and artisanal). In this exploration I found useful examples to unveil towards a new perspective to integrate features, medium and processes in my work production. Finally, it should be noted that through an eclectic and whimsical methodology I became more aware of difficulties, sometimes coming up in the same creation process, which inevitably suggests a commitment towards not only these realms but also artwork, and who experience it. (social interaction / Object / Artifact /Human).

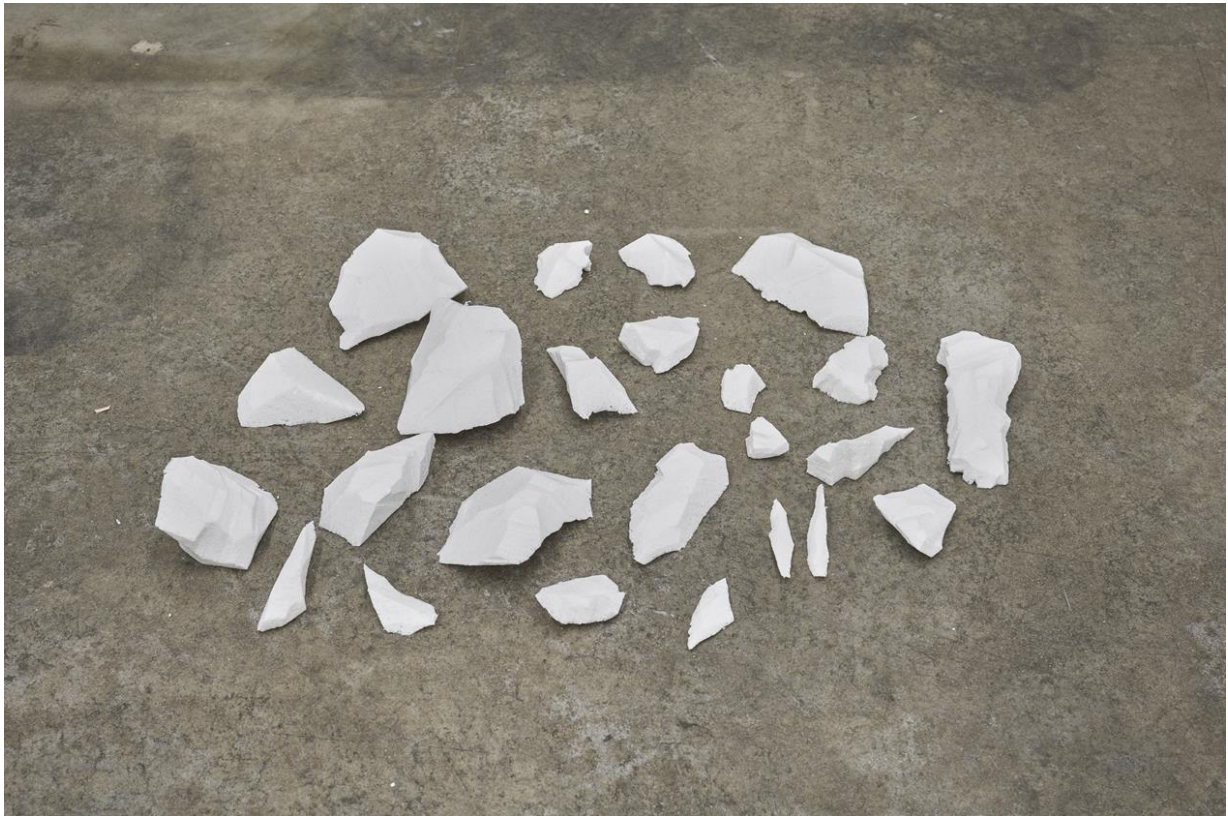


Figure 1.8.- Documentation of *One can here see why we would ask ourselves how this kind of ritual relates to protocols.* From First Year Review Show in the Program. 2018-2019.

äb-jekt, ERROR, DYSFUNCTIONALITY AND HYBRIDIZATION

When the project began, I had only a diffuse but attractive outline of concepts, ideas, and premises. To organize and articulate relations between my previous work —and current one— and this group of concepts in a very brief way, I have summarized concepts. I consider those directly related to sculpture and installation, inquiring about the issues involved in these artistic languages in relation to the capacity of the significant and symbolic central value of the objects. That set of texts is coupled with others focused as much on the aesthetic concepts as on the relation of traditional practice —materiality— to new processes and tools —technologies— in the work of artists engaged in the contemporary practice of making art in digital culture —immateriality. I link these discussions to my project.

The relation I found with sources studied and many of the authors reviewed is that most of them, like my work, they have been oscillating in a border position between several fields. For example, across language, philosophy, and art making.

Over the past almost two decades. I have produced work in diverse media. Now in observations of daily life, as well as the politics and conditions of display, and image and objects-making, I made a type of *archive* composed of images and objects. I think of these as apparently non-commonplace items. By this I mean my objects could be something commonly found in daily life but broken or deformed; rarefied. Through documentation, digitization, repetition with subtle changes of color, perspective, and shifts of scale, I frame the everyday and the non-quotidian features of these objects in ways that challenge the viewer to reexamine the image, the object, the artifact. Over the ensuing years, I have sampled imagery and artifacts from common or irrelevant objects to digital allocations—all translated —before and now— into

diverse techniques, which include digital rendering and editing, also photostats. For me, these objects and their mixed, physical and digital version, contain heterogeneity, errors, dysfunctionality and hybridization.

Besides that, these works serve for questioning and challenging traditional and digital notions of artifacts creation. Then, it is my intention they generate experiences, in an innovative approach, challenging conventions and yet remaining deeply committed to visual possibilities. With suspicion about these conventions of the objects and their digital rendering, I have cultivated a skepticism that has freed me to experiment with both the object and the digital medium, apparently not taking either one too seriously. In this way, my work draws one fundamental question provoking myself to question the act of creation of the object in relationship to digital techniques. The object becomes abject in its deformation. As a result, "*üb-ject*" intended to give a broad overview of my perspective. To summarize, in this research the work —objects / artifacts— is also distributed as an *archive* to look out at a place and examine it from multiple viewpoints to recognize, understand and describe that now we are seeing. I encourage interlocutors to consider the image and the object —these artifacts— themselves as sites for questioning their cultural, social, economic, and political conditions. Thus, this inquiry offers an opportunity to reflect about our perception, experimentation, and our own relationship to the world.



Figure 1.9.- Documentation of *Negotiation and experimentation*. From First Year Review Show in the Program. 2018-2019.

It should be noted that this project involves a mode of artistic production that arises from my presence in a social, political, and advanced technological context —hybrid— that, historically speaking, has been marked by multiple manifestations affecting the field of arts. It is a context with a conceptual and post-conceptual base that emphasizes collaborations, process art, and technologized practice, and which includes multi, inter, intra, and transdisciplinary actions. In this frame, seeking to break with the well-known traditional categories of art by experimenting with new expressive forms that we may now call artistic. In this manner, my artistic production has taken a contrary position relative to pieces I previously produced. First, ideas have emerged around ideas about the origin of objects not only in the art world, but also

in everyday life. As well, I have considered the use of technologies and digital instruments for art production, engaging in use and abuse that may give rise to trigger errors, dysfunctionality, anomalies, and hybridization. Thus, from a large and unbridled range of information received, and by using photostats, digital documents, objects, prima Materia, and video, this approach has allowed me to transmit my consideration of such factors as devising a language that can be used in a pertinent manner to give definition to the project.

Finally, the presentation of this project is defined by difference in practices between the manual and the digital, wherein both relationship and contrast work as significant elements. The object found, observed, rethought, and processed is put in relation to the artifacts created the object's documentation, the idea of dematerialization, and these elements' rupture with the bi and three-dimensional spaces. As well, I am interested in the object's processing in digital media as a means of returning it to materiality. My intention is to engage another possible interlocutor and the defined space as active and fundamental components of the discourse in the artwork presented. In this sense, *äbjekt* is a project that could draw a conclusive line, possibly its consolidation. Instead of drawing a conclusive line, this is a project that should not be limited to its production and installation, these are not defined or limited to a certain way or form. This is a project that aims to generate a dialogue between the space, the object and the interlocutor, all of them as key points of development in this installation. This is a project that aims to find new artistic forms in a space, proposing an experience based on visual, spatial, and temporal integration. I aim to generate an immersive structured environment in which to establish spaces for questioning, also for reflecting. To go beyond artifacts.

2nd Chapter

T.H.I.O.T.H.S. THE HUMAN INVENTION OF THE HUMAN SOUND

THE UNWANTED BASTARD PROJECT

As mentioned in the previous at the beginning of this document, I took on the task of carrying out a project entitled T.H.I.O.T.H.S. "*The Human Invention of The Human Sound*" a not required –unwanted– project during the following year — since that second year is considered just to continue with first year research and the initial idea within the program. Thus, in the face of the constant rethinking of my practice, the daily relationship and rejection of and with our objects / extensions, plus the countless conversations, the use of speeches and the listening to different voices —as well as their reliability, which I have so many times questioned— occurred in the second year; it gave me guidelines to carry out the unwanted project. In the following paragraphs I will make a brief development of concepts, moments, and places that I have considered related to the process of T.H.I.O.T.H.S.

THE HUMAN AND THE ARTIFICIAL

I will start by trying to define the human and the artificial, to try to differentiate it from objects, if it is possible to do it precisely, and under this context.

As a definition of the human, according to the Cambridge Dictionary, everything that belongs to man or part of him is known as human. The word *human* is of Latin origin "humanus", formed by "humus" which means "earth", and the suffix "-anus" indicates "origin of something", by virtue of the made reference that the first human was made with clay, earth, or mud. Another definition is the following: Being, relating to or belonging to a person or people instead of animals. The artificial, for its part, can be defined as follows: the word *artificial* originated from the Latin "artificialis" in turn made up of "ars" = "creative work", the verb "facere" = "to do" and the suffix of relation "alis". Then, artificial is everything that is not creation of nature but human elaboration, cultural production, achieved thanks to the gift of intelligence that allowed people to make their lives easier, more pleasant, and comfortable, imitating many times what was given.

In relation to the concepts of human and artificial we can say then that both are entities that can be abstract, and that linked to a certain context they allow us to articulate a sense of truth; or state of truth, we may say. On the one hand, existence, data on the other. Both based on past, present, and future experience, even as a unique and unrepeatable experience. With the latter, it is possible to associate it—in some way—with the golden [the aura] moment—a feeling or character [soul] that seems to have a person or place—that unique and unrepeatable moment—like life—but that is perhaps representation. The human or the artificial, are they?

THE TURK CHESS GAME

In sense of the historical development or rearticulation and the representation of the human and the artificial, I find the analogy raised with the Turk, the automaton chess game interesting — the Turk was a famous structure that is believed to be an automaton that played chess. It was built and revealed by Wolfgang von Kempelen (1734-1803) in 1769. (Walter Benjamin. Thesis I). On the one hand, this chess game shows the deception of the game, it uses the automaton —the artificial, as superior— to defeat the opponent. On the other hand, this analogy / relationship proposes us that moment as a fictional place which based on illusions or stories — let us call the movements of the automaton in chess game that way - configures a state of truth that must be assumed as an event, a theatrical experience; a simulated experience along with a series of narrative mechanisms allowing sense of veracity on it; we will say, reality. Posing this as the place that had not been able to live but that has been reached. It is even worth mentioning this event, experience, or simulation as another way the subject has or generates to create and recreates himself. The interesting thing here, —at least for me— is how the absence / questioning of veracity plays an important role. When we have to believe a story, we believe one while we deny another. Therefore, it is possibly based on an act of faith. But which act of faith, or towards what, if the idea of divinity must not be seen, must be suggested illusory, abstract, invisible, hidden. This is possible to define — I guess— from description of the revealed automaton's secret — it is said that the Turk's secret was in the folding nature of compartments inside his cabin and that the cabin was a well-posed optical illusion that allowed a short chess master to hide inside and operate the mannequin. Although it is also said that von Kempelen never revealed the secret— in analogy with the concept of history made by Benjamin, when he suggests in his thesis, the concepts of story, system, illusion, historical materialism,

and theology (Benjamin Thesis I). We can say then that the sense of veracity as the historical is false; not simulation, but falsehood.

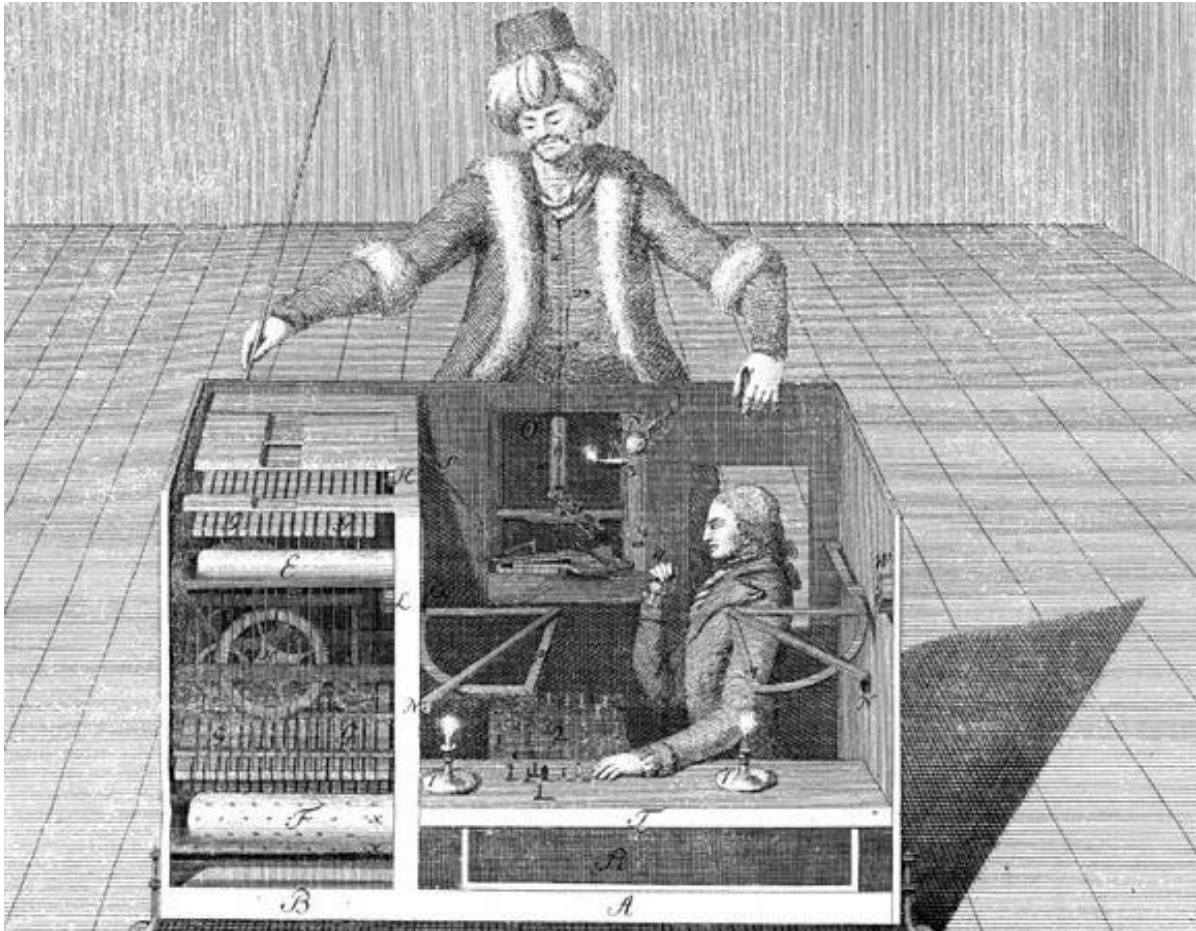


Figure 2.0.- *Turk Chess Illustration*, Image of a copper engraving from Karl Gottlieb von Windisch's 1783 book.

SOUND RECORDING MACHINES

The history of sound recording dates back to the mid-19th century when the oldest known recording sound device was first patented. Thus was born the invention called “the phonoautograph” which paved the way for future inventors. In this way, not only better capable

sound recording devices, but also audio playback devices, were introduced to the world. Artifacts that would change not only the way the audible is captured - the veracity of history and memory, perhaps - but the ways we listen.

Due to human fascination with sound and the ways it could or can be translated, various ways have been developed and designed over time to achieve their goal. These efforts have led humans to the introduction and development of methods that have allowed the recording of sound, aiming for new technology—in every moment—that has facilitated the capture of information from real life—in this case the sound. Among these forms, medical texts, diagrams on the human auditory anatomy have been used, which are translated into forms of capture and reproduction mechanically. For example, a horn to collect sound, elastic membrane substitutes, diaphragm eardrum replacements, and moving needles; artifacts that first recorded sound on a moving piece of paper, wood, or glass surfaces in constant rotating motion.

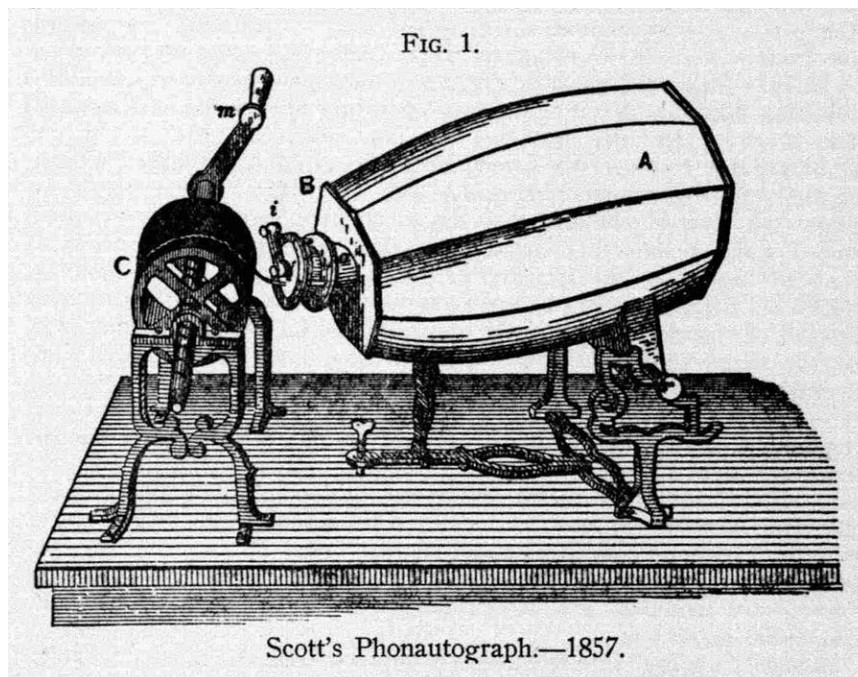


Figure 2.1.- *The phonautograph*, an early recording device, invented by Edouard-Leon Scott de Martinville, 1857.

In this way, beyond those methodologies, the imagination of the inventors was fed, resulting in new and varied designs, all improving the ability to record sound with greater precision. These inventions were at some point almost forgotten and it is not until this contemporary time that with the help of modern technology, scientists were able to process and to recreate the sounds of the first recorded sound, which is a traditional song performed by the inventor of “the phonautograph” himself. This song recorded on April 9, 1860, represents the oldest known recording of the human voice in human history. Thus, this series of devices that mimicked elements of the human ear to capture sound were invented and subsequently gave way to a series of future advances.

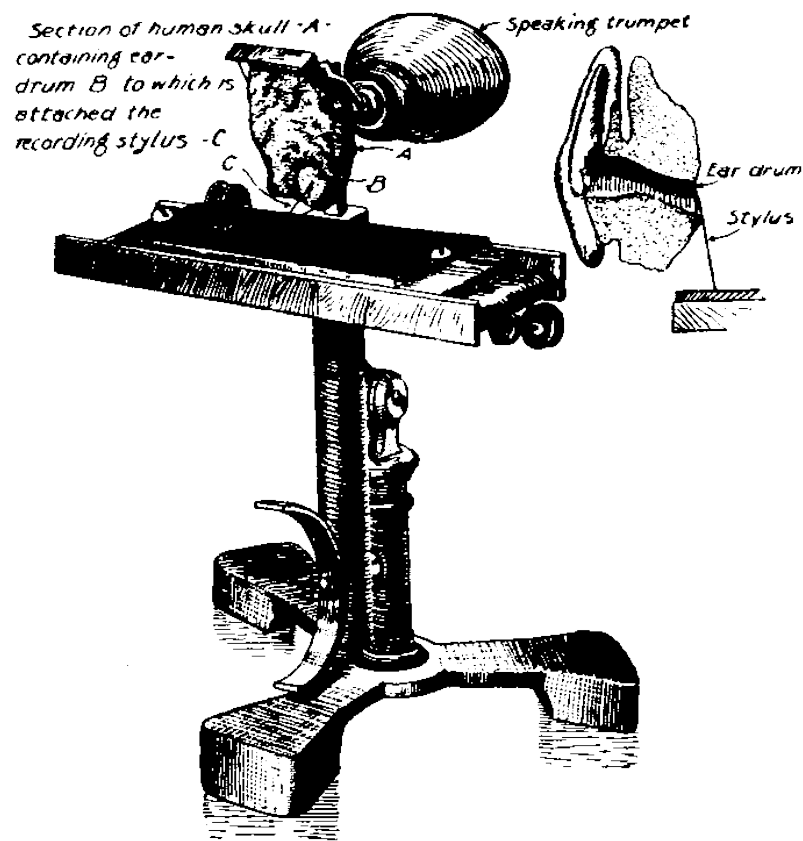


Figure 2.2.- Alexander Graham Bell's *Dead Ear Phonautograph* illustration 1879.

What I present below is a chronology –by way of examples– which in some way can define the historical imaginary –and its implications– of the creation of sound recording machines.

1857: Frenchman Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville invented the phonoautograph.

1874: Alexander Graham Bell performed a terrifying phonoautograph experiment.

1877: Thomas Edison defeated Charles Cross with the phonograph.

1877: Charles Cross invented the Paleophone.

1878: Thomas Edison perfected a cylinder phonograph he had invented the year before.

1880: Charles Sumner Tainter and Chichester Bell, by working with Alexander Graham Bell in his Volta laboratory, improved the cylinder of the phonograph.

1887: Emile Berliner changed the game by inventing the gramophone. The gramophone changed everything.

1888: Columbia Records was born out of Alexander Graham Bell's Volta Graphophone Company.

1889: William Barry Owen and Trevor Lloyd Williams registered the Gramophone Company in London.

1898: Valdemar Poulsen demonstrated, in principle, the magnetic recording on the Telegraph of him.

1902: Successful molding processes for cylinder records were developed, and mass production began.

1904: Enrico Caruso became the first superstar recording artist. Recorded for the first time by the Gramophone Company.

1917: The first jazz recordings were made.

1920: Recording went electric.

1925: The invention of electric recording allowed all major record companies to begin using microphones in studio sessions.

1928: Fritz Pfleumer developed magnetic tapes for sound recording in Germany.

1929: Flat discs became very popular making the cylinder obsolete, and cylinder production stops.

1931: Alan Blumlein developed binaural sound (now known as stereo sound) in the central research laboratories at EMI's Hayes site.

1934: Lacquer coated discs were introduced.

1934: Talking books for the blind. The American Federation for the Blind collaborated with the Library of Congress and RCA Victor Records to make full-length audiobooks for the visually impaired.

1940: Multitrack recording was developed.

1948: All major American record labels introduced vinyl records.

1950 to 1970: This was the time of vinyl records, miniskirts, and reel-to-reel recording.

1963: Phillips developed the cassette tape.

1964: Vinyl records became the global industry standard. Shellac discs were no longer commercially produced.

1970: World entered the digital era.

1980: CDs –eventually– changed the game.

2000: Digital audio files reign.

Today:

2020: Creation of T.H.I.O.T.H.S. (The Human Invention Of The Human Sound) for the exploration of the articulation / re-articulation / redesign of speech through noise to raise

questions: Is the voice an object? What political possibility does noise have? What makes the voice human?

Future:

2034: The voice has been silenced, there is no more capture or reproduction of voice frequencies; there is only silence as a form of communication. It has been returned to the past nullifying streaming services. The unexpected backflip.

THE VOICE MACHINE

One might assume that, on the one hand, historically, the presence of the voice must have generally implied the body that produced it; even after the advent of recorded speech, testifying to the action of sound waves produced by a "vocal" artifact.

Whereas, on the other hand, there are almost a century of efforts to design artificially synthesized speech, thereby managing to produce a voice that is capable of convincingly emulating a human sound.

As we can see that series of contributions to capture sound and in some way, let us say, to imitate the "Mechanism of speech"; they show, both the theoretical reasoning about speech and the production of speech, as well as the constant development in relation to practical knowledge for building a talking machine or device. Certainly, I cannot answer exactly what has compelled the human to imitate human speech. I cannot even clear up that anxiety to find sound artifacts that resemble the human voice. Thus, with this small example that will be described below in this section and prior to the development of my project in this document, I

try to bring a bit of motivation and the starting point before the invention of certain artifacts—in this case Euphonia—that they help to give—somehow—clarity to my second project. The focus here, then, is the interest in the mechanism of human speech and the description of the talking machine, following my attention to the search and understanding of a certain part of the mechanics and theory of sounds in relation to speech and its subsequent translation for the development and benefit of my—not required—project T.H.I.O.T.H.S.

The fabulous talking machine called Euphonia was created in the early and mid-19th century by Austrian inventor Joseph Faber. This “machine” was a mechanical device—with the disembodied head of a woman and speaking with a gloomy voice—which was built with various mechanisms and different instruments such as: a piano, a bellows and a mechanical replica of the throat and the human vocal organs. For its operation, Faber's "Euphonia" speech synthesizer featured a keyboard operator. By pressing the keys on the keyboard, this human operator produced sounds that inflated the bellows, caused the mechanical mouth to open, the mechanical tongue to lift, and the mechanical jaws to move. Making this artifact capable of producing sentences in English, French and German, pretending to answer or imitate the words of the keyboard operator.

The machine was exhibited in 1845 and it was described as follows: The Euphonia—a quasi-human entity—was displayed with a female mask that covered all the mechanical parts emulating the mouth, tongue, and jaw. Sometimes it was presented in a dress that hung below the mask. This was a machine composed of sixteen levers or keys similar to those of a piano which projected and played—16 sounds—notes corresponding to common vowel sounds in European languages. Among its mechanisms there was a key that had the equivalent function of the glottis—open and close—an opening between the vocal cords. This machine then had a

good imitation of the human organs of speech, which were parts worked by cords and levers instead of tendons and muscles. These elements were declared as everything necessary to produce all the combinations of sounds to decompose and reconstitute language and imitate human speech. Yet the speech was, unsurprisingly, slow, and deliberate.

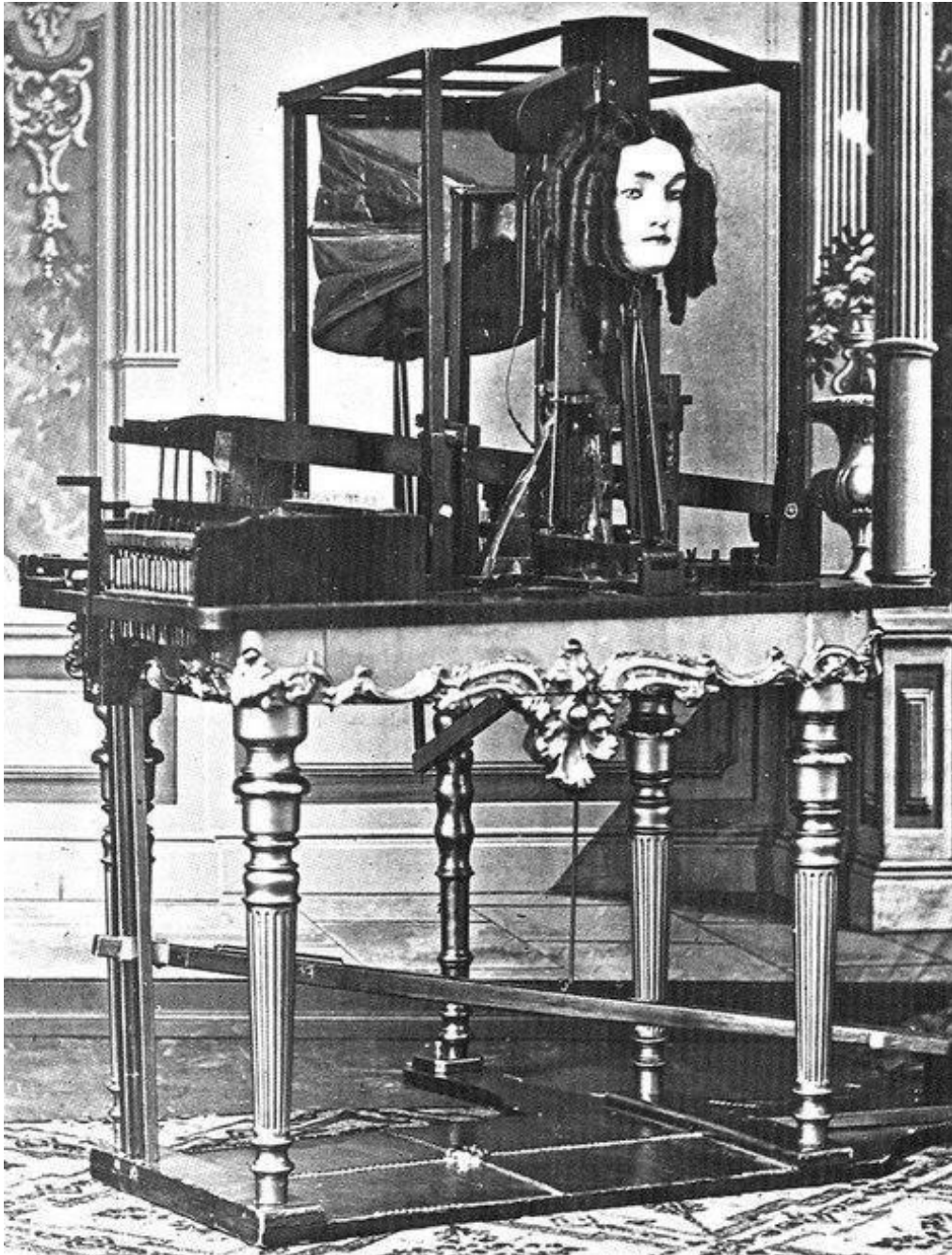


Figure 2.3.- *Euphonia*, the talking machine. (Public Domain Image).

On the one hand, it is mentioned that Euphonia was the most advanced talking machine of the 19th century and that it was at the forefront of telecommunications at that time. However, it was not a novel gadget since it was similar to other invented automata. Furthermore, Faber did not promote the device and it ended up being more a curiosity than a scientific breakthrough. On the other hand, it was commented that Euphonia's breath emanating from the rubber lips could be felt through that feminine face, because the basic conductor of the device was a large bellows operated by a pedal. Although this experience was also described: as sad and depressing.

Focused then on the natural functioning of the organs of speech, building the talking machine was clearly oriented towards the auditory result. And although the first model used for the talking machine continues to be questioned from its theoretical basis, its practical idea in relation to the connection with the surrounding sounds and with it the idea of coarticulation has been a milestone in the development of interdisciplinary fields for the creation of more complete and complex acoustic models.

Finally, it should be clarified that the speech production model used for the creation of Euphonia will not be discussed extensively here, but will later be located, mixed, and reflected in relation to the discussion of the acoustic nature of the voice. This, in conjunction with ideas and observations emerged during the development of the project "The Human Invention Of The Human Sound".

THE HUMAN BEING IN THEIR RELENTLESS QUEST TO UNDERSTAND ALL THINGS

We can say then that the identification of the human through the continuous design and invention of artifacts implies a sort of reflection, of replication. Consequently, when humans see their possibility in these —sonic— things / artifacts, they ask themselves a series of fundamental questions — I believe. How is it possible to accurately identify human / artificial micro and macroevolutions? What are the changes within and between these entities if they are identifiable? Is the human-artificial interface / combination becoming an unidentifiable entity? — while at the time of ask-ing, this indicates that there is no clear differentiation between the human and the non-human — that is, the artificial? The technological? The mechanical? — As a malleable entity in itself, is the human then a malleable artifact? Does it continually reorganize itself? Is it an unfinished project? The idea of clarification is clearly uncertain. So, is it possible to say that the interdependence between artifacts and construction —design— is the merely human? Therefore, it is worth asking where did the impulse to make or re-invent the human come from; to re-invent the artificial?

Moreover, this set of questions and constructions — regarding machines and the creation of artifacts— arises then from the combined and related forces, from the transforming energies —between the human / the artificial— that have somehow inaugurated and given as a result, not only intellectual formations but also creations with a possibility of being politically compromised. On the one hand, it is not so much that they demonstrate the future in which we possibly would like to live, or which we will live, but that they simply demonstrate an idea of the future. When on the other hand, these artifacts are often perceived as machines that distort physical reality — they appear as a variety of extraterrestrial objects that can produce sounds; grinding, screeching and, most importantly, offending— that is, they can show so new and

haunting aesthetics always freshly installed— how creepy life in this new —contemporary— world can be and its implications. They are unsettling machines, to say the least, and that is largely the attraction of them. So clearly patterned, mechanical, and strangely sentimental. In some way, they are then presented as the best-known contribution to the creative world —in this case— by recontextualizing not only the re-invention of the machinic / the contraption / the artificial. Today, as we can see, they triumph and reign over human sensitivity and his re-invention. Let us say that these arise then for a reflection on contemporary conditions, possibly to make evident the human limitations and the incorporation of these artifacts as a means to effect the transformation not only of the human thought, but also of the institutionality, and the social aspects. It is enthusiastic then to emphasize that the concept of machine / artifact / artificial is not only subjective but is one —a concept— that humans actively created. Yet we rarely consider how the ways we perceive the world were shaped. The machine / the artifact / the artificial, in this sense, changed our definition of what the human could be in this relentless quest to understand everything.

THE VOICE AND THE POLITICAL POSSIBILITY OF NOISE

I have decided to build this section to speak —or, rather, to question and intersect— both the idea of reliability and beauty of the voice and the possibility of it to transform itself into noise, into failure and its implications. By way of articulation to establish a more direct approach —I think— with the idea of human invention of human sound in THIOETHS —previously developing my project in the following pages— and I want to do it by asking the following questions: Why does this happen —I mean, the voice? Why is it true? Why is it or does it become interference and therefore noise? What is its political possibility? I don't know

if I can answer these questions with certainty, but it is from these that I find a place for myself and for my project, which is an exercise that allows me to err and to cross limits, boundaries, where new ideas can be created, where many others converge. And in this way, establish my own universe.

VOICE, RELIABILITY AND BEAUTY

If we talk about the voice, we can say that this is a link, that is to say, it is reliable. As long as other voices could or would try to interfere with this voice —which we trust— it would seem that the idea of credibility in the human is even a vocal matter. In other words, we find ourselves as in a struggle between voices, and yet in this struggle, the voice, which we recognize and trust —the true voice— ends up imposing itself against those false voices. It seems to be a voice —or object— endowed with authority, of an innate and immediate truthfulness.

But who is that creature of the voice, or in the voice? Who is behind it? If the voice fades without a trace but continues to echo —in its quality of incorporeal, as not all voices do— how can it be reliable? Does this happen just because she is beautiful? Or it is that fading and incorporeality that creates its —illusory— personification and hence its reliability. What is in or behind a voice sustained only by the sound of the voice? The question here is: who can appreciate the beauty of a voice and therefore trust it, especially when there is difficulty in finding yourself at the right moment to appreciate it? When might be the time to do it? Should we then constitute ourselves as individuals, let us say it in this way, with a refined taste, and that it is possible to recognize and trust a beautiful voice when we hear it? What happens if it manifests as interference, if it turns into noise?

If we execute the action of taking the voice and isolating it; Immediately, does it become an object of pleasure, let us say, aesthetic? Does it become a reliable element? Should it then be converted into an object or place bearing a meaning for this to be so? This being the case, if the voice is objectified, fetishized, what is the object of the voice?

THE POSTHUMAN VOICE

Without denying that the voice is a device through which subjectivities are configured, it is said that the voice is corrupted - altered and disrupted - to the human being. On the one hand, because it materializes bodies, on the other, because it manifests itself as an instance that can sound corporealize— various non-animated entities. In this way, it seems that the human voice easily becomes its Other / an Other —perhaps an object— through vocalization. That is to say, in the exercise of its objectification. Therefore, it is through this idea that we can speak of a post-human or machinic voice - I believe. The voice, which, consequently, —because of its variety and invisibility— is always situated in multiple directions —even the most adverse and beyond how it is generated and produced —humanly. Besides, if there is only one way to recognize that the voice is human, and this is through your breathing; then free of breath or breath, which is a sign of life, it will give a pattern to a series of non-human sounds —posthuman—, speaking and sounding in strange, alien shapes and forms. The voice then, —launched or coming from some other place, for example, an unknown one— seems to declare its residence in that other, in the non-human. Thus, the voice can go beyond the limiting definitions of being human, asking for other voices detached from a vocality that overflows the subject and transcends the human body. This is where - I consider - the voice becomes an object, even an instrument, but not human.

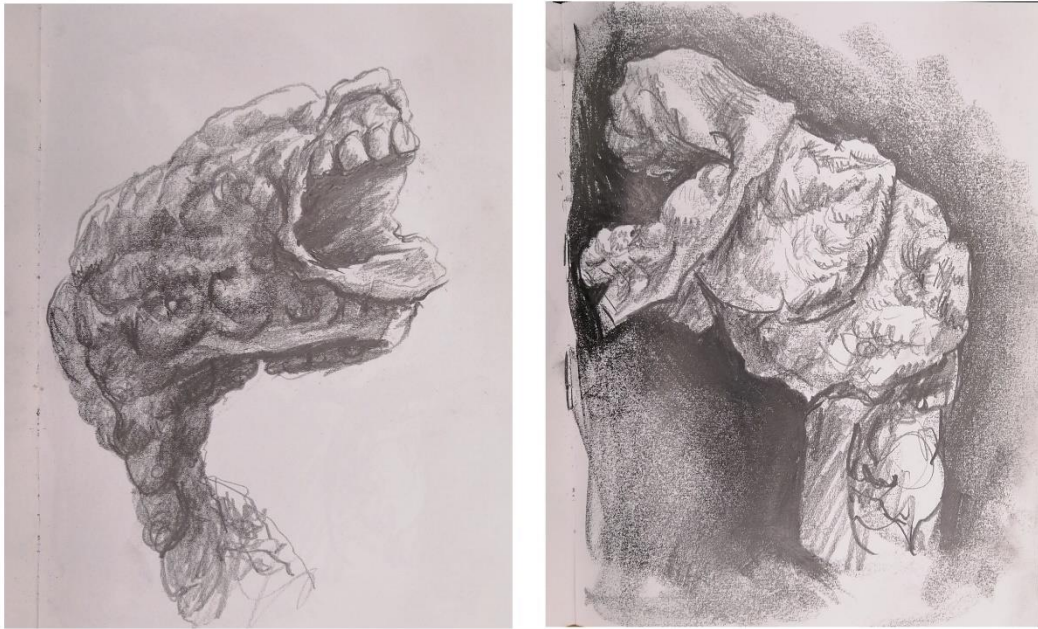


Figure 2.4.- Documentation of Preparatory Drawing for *T.H.I.O.T.H.S.* From the Unwanted Project in Second Year in the Program. 2019-2020.

THE VOCODER AND THE WARFARE

To establish a meeting point with the previous idea —the instrumentalization of the voice or the voice as an instrument—, this will be through the voice coder or better known as vocoder. I will start with a brief definition / description. The speech coder is basically a device that takes human speech to disarticulate the speech signal and convert it into a series of digital signals. The particularity of this "speech" encoder is that it can create fewer bits in the signal, that is, it is a slower speed signal that can then be better transmitted over long distances. This tells us about his creation, (who invented it) which was from the desire to transmit human

speech under water. Basically, the idea with the vocoder was to compress the conversations in the voice coder with the possibility of breaking down the voice and transmitting only the intelligence and the necessary frequencies of human speech. This was a failed act that, due to its complexity and production costs, could not happen, in addition to the quality of the speech produced was distorted.

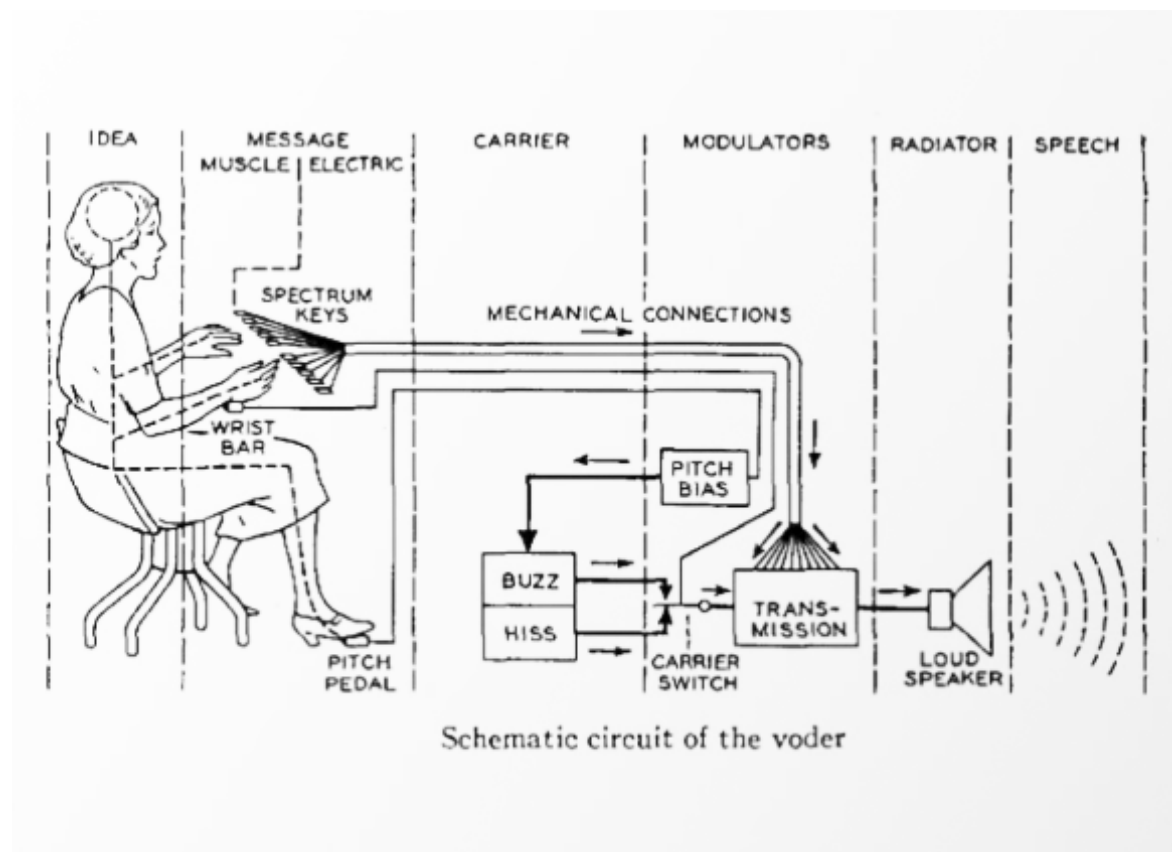


Figure 2.5.- Homer Dudley (October 1940). *The Carrier Nature of Speech*. Bell System Technical Journal, XIX (4); 495-515. Fig.8 Schematic circuit of the voder.jpg Created: 1 October 1940.

Subsequently, this failure gave way to the improvement and creation of the encoder and with it its instrumentalization, and it was thus, that, during World War II, the voice encoder was used for the purpose of secretly communicating with the allies in relation to the details of warfare operations and tactics - such as the Normandy invasion and the Hiroshima bombing -

with the idea of providing a “safe” voice as a way to deter / confuse spies. And here, with the given antecedent, it is possible, in some way, to situate and speak of the instrumentalization of the voice, as discourse, as a weapon, as a combat tool, but, above all, it allows us to open a brief conversation in relation to its unexpected turn and the insertion of this —the vocoder— in the modes of production of the general culture.

YOU ONLY LIKE NOISE AND NOTHING ELSE

In relation to previous lines, evidently the potential of these alienated voices, and their forms of production and reproduction including their instrumentalization— with completely remade / re-configured — affected and failed-noisy— discourses seemed and seem not to inspire confidence. And although the idea of modifying speech can be horrifying, even a bit authoritative because of its robotic form through processing - for example, through the voice coder, vocoder - it is quite attractive. I consider that it is pertinent to think of this type of artifacts - or to rethink them then - not only as key elements in vocal coding, that is, not only as a technological advance or warlike instrument, but also as the voice or noise that manifests as imperfect replicas of us. This idea, for me, develops a notion of possibility that connects sound / noise and auditory imagination with the political understood through its echo as its condition of possibility and purpose. Therefore, the incompleteness, the imperfect and the unpredictable of noise’s articulation is essential and arises as a need to re-imagine and evidence a new era. I'm not sure if this era is just about computers / new machines, as well as their constant new interactions with the human or the inanimate or whether that moment refers only to our relationship with machines / artifacts. But it is through the synthesized / synthetic voice that this noise has the possibility of developing another potential in the culture and creating

alternative imaginaries in the contemporary society of its time, and in that continuity, constructing them through an apparently limitless approach. Thus, in my articulation, the unpredictable, the incomplete, the imperfect and the not required are essential, while at the same time I identify the need for their historicity and the connection with a current circumstance and particularity. So, my notion of a political possibility of noise does not seem like a trivial fantasy, which could easily be dismissed. And although the sound is rarefied, their voices and noises acquire a certain notoriety thanks to that ability developed to generate a reverse side. I do not just like noise and nothing else; but rather its dissent and its real possibilities that are transformative and radical, as well as the position that it manifests.



Figure 2.6.- *Newcleus band*, image from the 1984: *Jam on Revenge* (Sunny view Records SUN 4901) - #84 UK.

T.H.I.O.T.H.S. "The Human Invention of the Human Sound".

I have a theory, or maybe it is just a fantasy. I think in this fake theory that I fantasize with. We were first energy, just floating energy or better said disembodied entities —non-human— that were communicating each other in complete silence, originally. A failure happened upon those energetical entities making them be covered by something that now we call skin over the flesh to shape bodies. And because of that failure, interruptions, interferences appeared. These interferences / vibrations became in that that we identify as sound, then voice, to finally transform into language. Recognizing the human among / upon us. In this way, I believe that the project took its form, and manifests itself in the way it is doing to this day by being carried out under the circumstances we are going through in 2020. The project was simply done digitally —formed and represented, digitally embodied, let us say— thus it is still incorporeal, dis-articulated. And most importantly, without any particular voice yet; or just mine, maybe.

VOX HUMANA / ARTIFICIAL VOICE The sound it produces, the voice and the artifact it articulates.

I can say that the voice is just an echo, tones, timbre, just a signal.

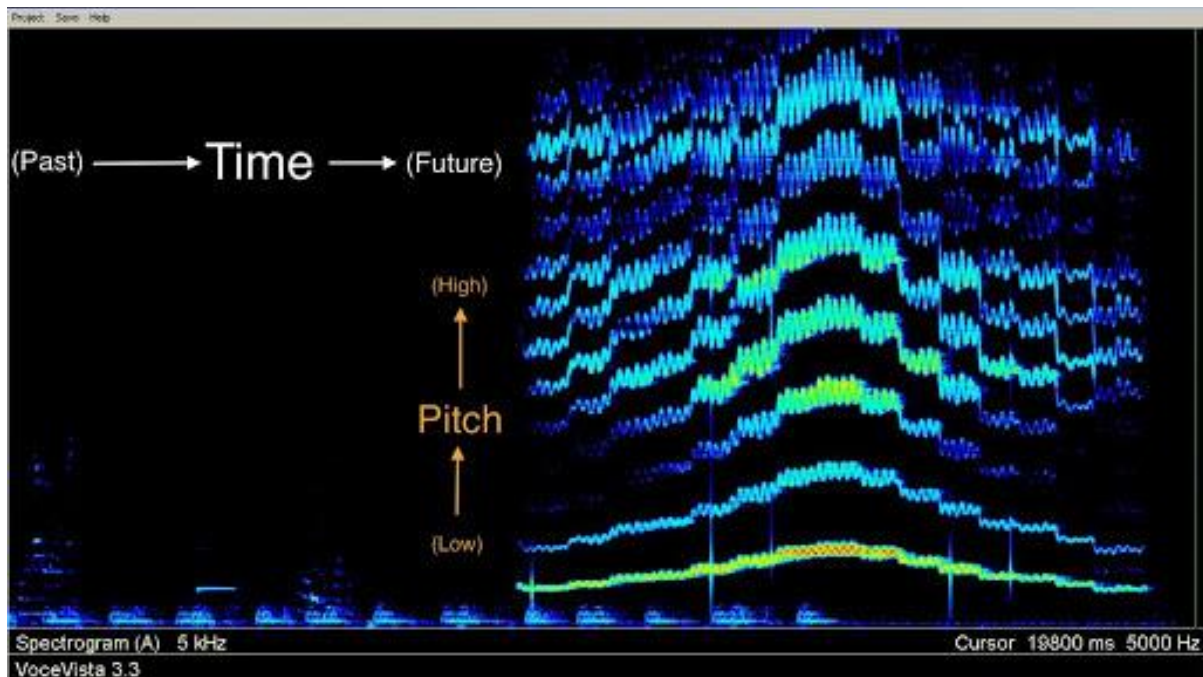


Figure 2.7 *Graphic On a spectrogram*, time moves from left to right, and pitch (low to high) from bottom to top, just like printed music. (This is a female singing a diatonic scale on [i] from E4-E5-E4). Unknown Author.

Considering that the voice is our main method of communication with others and the vector of language, through T.H.I.O.T.H.S. I have continued my exploration in relation to the artificial / human combination. In this way, the human voice has been taken as a case study, as an extension, as an object. I want to emphasize that, although the inquiry made here about the voice involves physics, acoustics, and cognitive science, I have not in any way taken the mere scientific points of view at all. In this project there is no intention to imitate —although to investigate, develop and create an artistic project— the human voice, but through the use of

sound —or rather of noise and the failure that it can produce / represent— the intention is to open more questions —which, I don't know if they are or have been the correct ones or those expected by others. Questioning, on the one hand, to try to understand how it works and what makes the human voice human. On the other hand, the project has, in turn, the intention of questioning the effect of human discourse. Discuss to what degree the sound / voice, even its failure, represents the essential. That is, the idea of noise that becomes an essential factor, as another fundamental channel of communication, interaction, and identification.

For many perhaps it is irrelevant, but the voice has become one of my motivations - as perhaps it was for the inventors of sound recording machines -, in a constant question. Because no voice sounds what it seems; and that for me is suspicious.



Figure 2.8.- *Carestream CS 3600 – Full arch scan with bite*, image by Steve Cowburn, BComm; George Cowburn, CAD/CAM Expert.

Hence, in T.H.I.O.T.H.S. I have paid attention to the use of voice, to its instrumentalization; in how the discourses are articulated to inform, to persuade, as well as in their power relations. To think about the sound the voice produces beyond simple ways of thinking or producing meaning. Rethinking sound as a social and cultural system - which it is - which eventually has the possibility of becoming a system or artifact of control. In that sense, arguably, in my project the reason for the use of glitch or noise in sound is because of its capability of providing a critical lens. Because through disarticulation and apparent lack of communication, the failure points to a way. That is to say, the noise, being an error in the transmission it causes disarticulation, a deviation, the mistake. In this way, I consider that noise defines a new heuristic value while serving as a route of knowledge. The idea of using noise or glitch in sound - released in a digital sonic format - in this project is intended to provoke and debate. Also, it can be taken as a critique of the ideological status and grandiloquent speeches failure of the modern and contemporary project. The institutional discourse, its controversies, and rivalries, specifically.

Likewise, in this project, I make use of noise as an aesthetic and significant device due to its degree of essentiality. Its intensity, tone, timbre, and duration distorted in the form of noise allow me to obtain certain sensitive impressions and with it, to question even the hearing, and the listening, which are important factors not only for learning about the world, but also for communicating with other —humans. Through this project, I have searched for certain —visual / physical / sound— impressions in order to understand the discourse and its impact on society. Therefore, when using this complicated and multiple combination, —the abstract and the sensory — in this project it could be said that noise and hearing, artificial and human, sound and the in-corporeal —as I have mentioned; does not intend to imitate the human voice but to

translate these aforementioned impressions to raise questions: What is the function of the human invention of human sound? What makes the human voice human?



Figure 2.9.- *Articulator with 2 denture frame prostheses* used by a dentist or dental technician, unknown photography author.

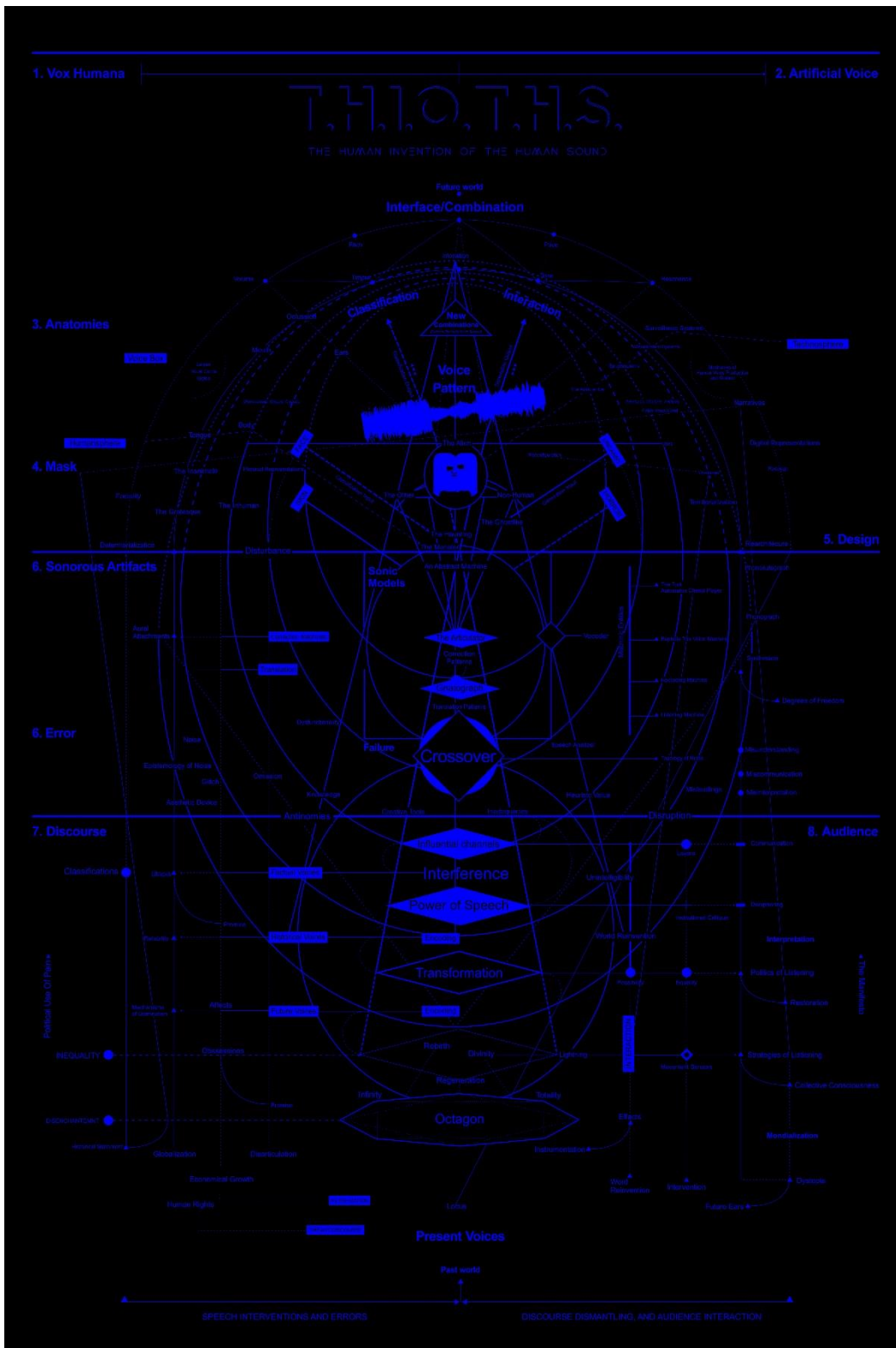


Figure 2.10.- Digital File, diagramming of *T.H.I.O.T.H.S.* (How it operates) 2020.



Figure 2.11.- Digital File, Fake Rendering of *T.H.I.O.T.H.S.* Face Mask view 2020.

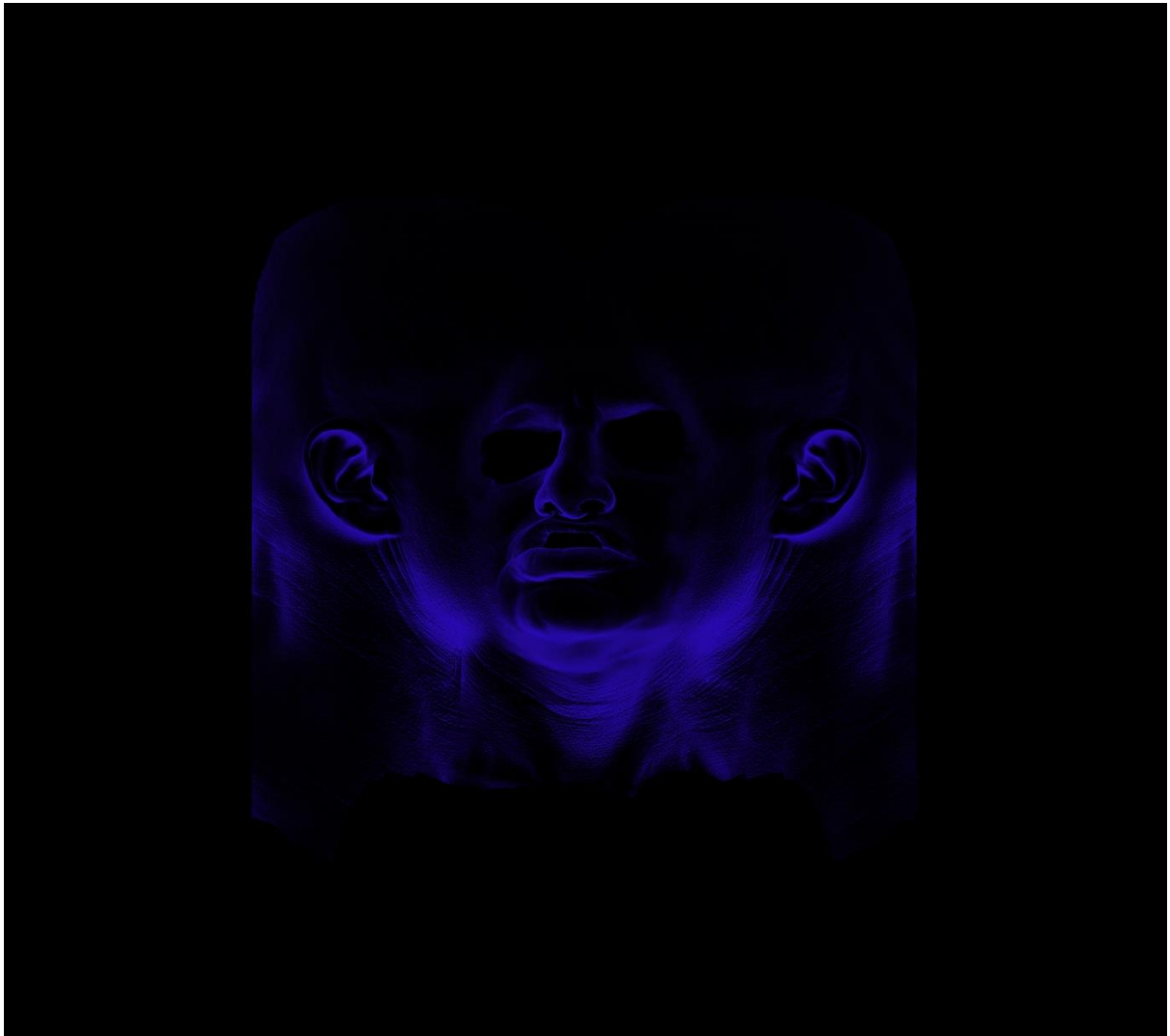


Figure 2.12.- Digital File of Face Mask design for *T.H.I.O.T.H.S.* (Blue Effect) 2020.

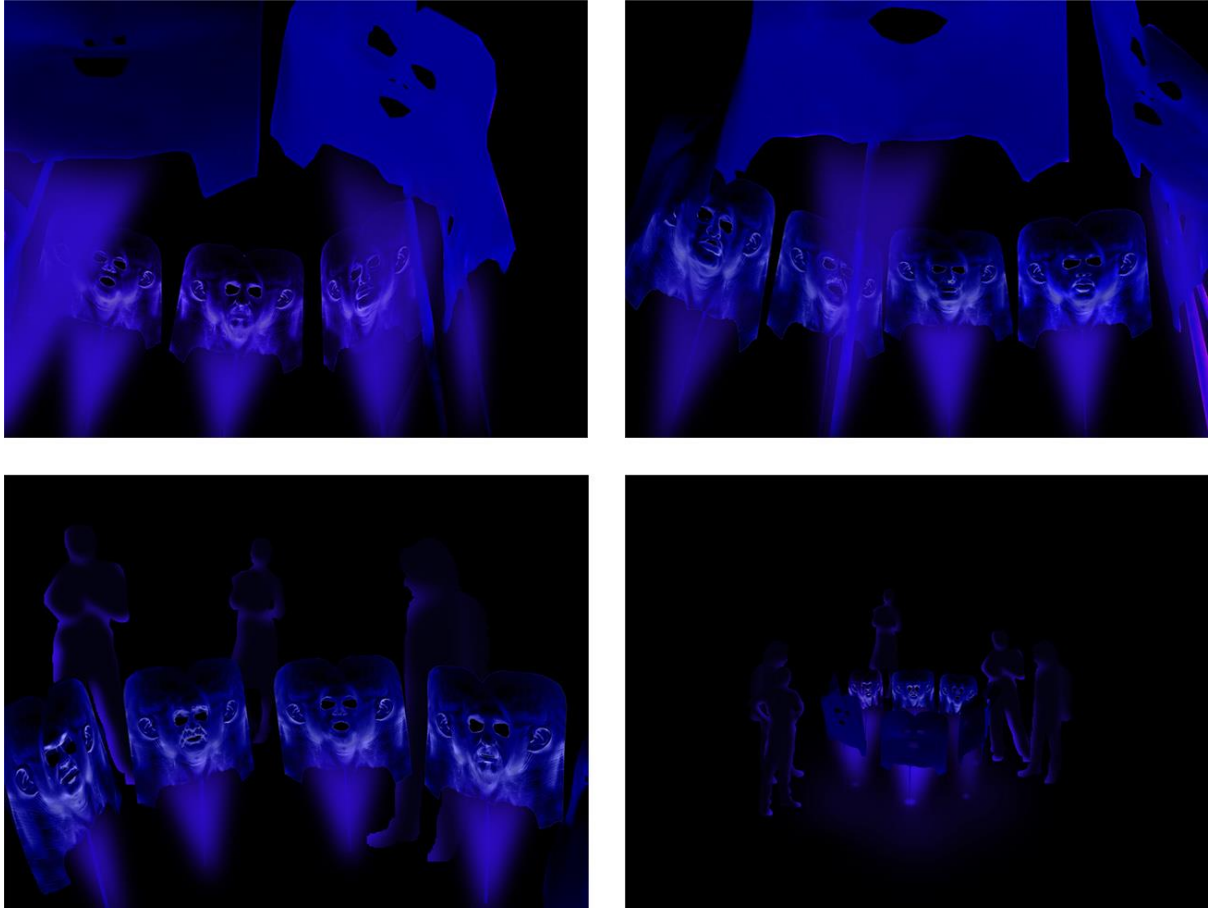


Figure 2.13.- Digital File, Scheme of *T.H.I.O.T.H.S.* installation view. 2020

UN MANIFIESTO BASTARDO

We were born BASTARDS, and being a bastard taking control upon everything is easier than a reform of the human behavior.

Since the beginning of civilization, organized societies have had to put pressures on human beings.

SINCE THE BEGINNING OF CIVILIZATION, organized societies have had to put pressures on human beings for the sake of THE FUNCTIONING of the social organism.

There is a symbolic reminder to societies of the ever-present possibility of failure.

FA I LURE, fa il ure. F-A-I-L-U-R-E E E

Designed systems.

Freedom with technology

Implies r-e-v-o-l-u—t-i-o-n,

Fundamental change in the nature of society.

COMBINATION, INTERACTION, AND CORRESPONDENCE between-them-Bastards.

Designing and developing machines to test failure e e e e e

Humans WOULD YIELD FAILURES that were not predictable, although they were.

Scientific understanding DID NOT progress by LOOKING FOR TRUTH;

looking for mistakes. looking at failures.

BY STARING DOWN THE BASTARDS.

A new twist was echoed speaking on the subject of technological innovation.

Understanding it comes from failure; And failure is the mother of success.

The mechanical is all about machines.

How they function,

Disruption

power systems,

minority of the population.

the dominant force in society.

Among noise, crowding, forcing human behavior into the mold that society requires.

EVERYBODY wants TO TELL the story of technology.

Human NA-TURE has been approximately constant, analyzing, designing, and

manufacturing systems.

JUST REMEMBER, since the beginning of civilization Reform is ALWAYS RESTRAINED

by THE FEAR of painful consequences if changes go too far.

SINCE THE BEGINNING OF CIVILIZATION.

SINCE THE BEGINNING OF CIVILIZATION.

Since the beginning of civilization. BASTARDS are defined as people that make things.

entities worked together.

Inter----action

Mis---communication

Co--llaboration.

Anecdotes

Know-ledge

Glitchinesssssss

CONTROLLING THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY.

PEOPLE tend to assume that.

Exactly nothing

WHERE ARE MY PEERS? WHERE ARE MY PEERS? WHERE ARE MY PEERS?

WHERE ARE MY PEERS?

TECHNOLOGY is magic.

There is circle of failure in many structures

ONE-DIMENSIONAL CULTURES OR APPROACHES ARE INFLEXIBLE AND PRONE TO COLLAPSE,

Probably OPENING VOICE was stern, and it was A LIE, so that makes me A BASTARD.

I can't tell any true because I'm a bastard.

What is a bastard? Where my equals are? Bastards build worlds

It is nobody's fault; EVERYONE

I puzzled. I puzzled, I puzzled.

I could just barely contain myself from asking, WHAT IS A BASTARD?

WE ARE ALL BASTARDS. Is there no way for no one to not to be? Whatever kind they are WE ARE ALL BASTARDS, and for every fragment WHO FAILED THE GREAT MACHINE, and its smaller counterparts would eventually find how and why entities that once were successful structures did intime FAIL.

I would have no confirmation of so many of theories and applications.

But GO, FIIIND OTHER, other like us. BLAME THEM because we are looking for dislogic, WE ARE NOT LOOKING FOR ANSWERS. We are looking for...

This Manifesto was created using utopian plagiarism, a concept defined by the Critical Art Assemble regarding intellectual property, legitimacy, theft, use, and privatization of language, signifiant, hypertextuality, power, discourse, and prestige. Therefore, this writing is manifested and consolidated with errors; impure, Bastardo.

3rd Chapter

T-XNRB (The Xis Noillim Ralod Bastard or the origin of the project)

It is worth mentioning that this project derives from the 70's television series “El Hombre de los Seis Millones de Dólares/Six Million Dollar Man” which in turn is based on an adaptation of the novel "CYBORG" by Martin Caidin. This story introduces us to the idea of an intervened body by new components, bodily artifacts, an augmented one, instrumentalized, and –from my perspective– prone to failure. The way in which the title of my project is presented here, is by using vesreismo, that is, vesreismo in principle, is a term related to permutation, which, as a procedure it allows the transformation of one word into another without altering the semantic component of the transformed element, although alteration and an apparent glitch. In this sense, this concept has as its application level the relationship between Synectic behavior –the creative process of problem solving and/or creation of new products, which is based on the construction of concrete responses through the union of apparently irrelevant elements– and language. In other words, is directly related to the creative behavior of the person who uses it. In this way, being vesreismo a changing agent, this model –I consider– is directly related to the concept of Bastard. Consequently, this led me to define not only the title of the project but the elements of the project itself in a synthesized way resulting into T-XRNB for its acronym in English, defining this –to me– as an artifact, as an object.

This has somehow allowed me to create a link between my idea of the body (augmented / extended / impure) in relation to technology (but an inferior tech, an elemental one / a kind of high-tech quasi-simulation) and by this, I mean even its errors and limitations as well as their interrelation with my two previous projects during my stay in the MFA Program. Projects

which evoke / embrace concepts such as glitch, error, deformity, malfunction, involving both the manual and the assisted production, and their implications in contemporary culture.

TRANSFORMATION AND SYNTHESIS
SCHEME. DEFINING AN IMPURE AND
CHANGING AGENT OR ENTITY, PRONE TO
FAILURE.
THE ONE MILLION DOLLAR MAN TO THE
MISPLACED BELLO BASTARD

NORMAL USE:
THE ONE MILLION DOLLAR MAN
MAY BE CONSIDERED THE AGENT OF AN
AUGMENTED AND INTERVENED BODY /
IMPURE / DEFECT.
USING WORDS:
THE MISPLACED BELLO BASTARD
MAY BE USED TO LEAVE THE CONCEPT
OF BASTARD AS IT IS WITHOUT ANY
TRANSFORMATION UNDER THE CONCEPT
ITSELF DEFINES AN IMPURE AND
CHANGING AGENT OR ENTITY.
ADDITIONALLY, IN CONNECTION WITH
THE OTHER PHRASE, IT REFERS AND
DEFINITELY LEADING TO
MISINTERPRETATION, WHICH IS
SYNTHESIZING / TRANSFORMING INTO
T-NRB
THIS WRITTEN MAY BE CREATING /
DEFINING FROM MY PERSPECTIVE:
KIND OF OBJECT /
ARTIFACT SENSE, EVEN A SORT OF
MISINTERPRETATION, ALTHOUGH IT SEEMS
TO CONSTITUTE SOMETHING IN THIS
CASE THE APPARENT ARTIFACT, I CAN
RELATE IT TO THE CONCEPT OF BASTARD
BECAUSE OF IT REFERS SOMETHING TO
MULTIPLICITY.

Figure 3.0.- Transformation and synthesis scheme. Defining an impure and changing agent or entity, prone to failure. *T-XNRB*, MFA thesis process and development. 2020-2021.

TRANSFORMATION AND SYNTHESIS SCHEME. DEFINING AN IMPURE AND CHANGING AGENT OR ENTITY, PRONE TO FAILURE.

THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN
TO
THE XIS NOILLIM RALLOD BASTARD

NORMAL USE:

THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN

WHICH IS CONCEPTUALIZING THE IDEA OF AN AUGMENTED AND INTERVENED BODY / IMPURE / REMADE.

USING VERSE:

THE XIS NOILLIM RALLOD BASTARD

I HAVE DECIDED TO LEAVE THE CONCEPT OF BASTARD AS IT IS WITHOUT ANY TRANSFORMATION SINCE THE CONCEPT ITSELF DEFINES AN IMPURE AND CHANGING AGENT OR ENTITY. ADDITIONALLY, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ENTIRE PHRASE, IT RAREFIES AND DEFAMCLARIZE: LEADING TO MISENTERPRETATION, I GUESS SO.

SYNTHESIZING / TRANSFORMING INTO:

T-XNRB

THIS WRITTEN WAY IS CREATING / DEFINING FROM MY PERSPECTIVE A KIND OF OBJECT / ARTIFACT SENSE, EVEN A SORT OF INDETERMINACY. ALTHOUGH IT SEEMS TO CONCRETIZE SOMETHING IN THIS CASE THE APPARENT ARTIFACT, I CAN RELATE IT TO THE CONCEPT OF BASTARD BECAUSE OF IT REFERS SOMEHOW TO MUTABILITY.

Figure 3.1.- Translation of synthesis scheme. Defining an impure and changing agent or entity, prone to failure. *T-XNRB*, MFA thesis process and development. 2020-2021.

BASTARD, GLITCH AND ERROR EQUAILITY

Although object and artifact, as well as other concepts have already been defined in previous chapters, in this case, it will not be the exception to briefly delimit the lexicon used in this third section and in relation to the entire document. In this way, I will start with a brief development where I try to find and problematize the series of associations that I consider this idea has if it is possible under this context.

The word concept Bastardo is used as a synonym for illegitimate, false, vile, infamous, low. Therefore, the word under study can be applied in different contexts. Bastardo is then employed to refer to something that is lacking in authenticity or authority, something that vitiates its origin or nature; that is to say, it moved away from its original characteristics. Additionally, the concepts impure, and improper are related since, on the one hand, the former is defined as something that has a mixture of something else or does not retain its original nature. While, on the other hand, the latter establishes us, that this something does not correspond to the characteristics of a person or thing. That it is not adequate, successful, or timely. That becomes alien, strange, rare. This means - for me - that there is a direct relationship with the concept of malfunction that has as synonyms: dysfunction, malfunction and defective function. This immediately directs us with the word error, which comes from the Latin "errare" which means "to fail or be wrong". This is a term that can be involved in anything or circumstance that may exist in the world. Moreover, the noun glitch which relates to "defect", is almost always used with the meaning of 'material defect, deficiency, or error. usually taken as a minor malfunction. Hence, I can find its direct relation to the idea or concept of ghost which is defined as an unreal, imaginary, or fantastic figure and usually incorporeal, that someone thinks they see. This can even be established as an unreal image or idea created by the imagination, especially the one that is imprinted on memory. Finally, the ghost, is a concept

that has associations with concepts such as trace and remnant which refer to a group or remaining portion and the outlining or making the outline apparent, respectively. Then, whether it has been said that a glitch in any object –even it might be a body– is practically invisible to our eyes. It can be interpreted then, –I guess so– that being so imperceptible to us, if a machine or part of the body malfunctions, it fails to work properly.

In this way, making a simple analogy –perhaps not so simple– between those concepts and the concept of Bastard, one of the possibilities would be to say that, if the failure is considered a ghost or a trace resulting from an error, but it is not the cause or the error itself; therefore, like the Bastard –as impure entity– it is a major error that defines a misplacement of the expected result. *“Malfunction and failure are not signs of improper production. On the contrary, they indicate the active production of the "accidental potential" in any product. The invention of the ship implies its wreckage, the steam engine and the locomotive discover the derailment.” Lotringer and Virilio, 2005, p. 2.*

BASTARDIZATION AND THE REMADE (Artifacts, and Body Attachments)

On the one hand, bastardization commonly resorts to being defined as an agent of change whose process is to do something illegitimate / impure / errant or that makes that something does not represent the values and qualities that it is intended to represent. On the other hand, the re-made is considered as an entity aided by the seemingly uncomplicated modifications, however, invariably considered abnormal. Both concepts manifest a hybrid entity and are directly related –from my point of view– with the concept of failure, and this, –at least for me– indicates more precisely, a milieu shift.

Regarding the above, today –or perhaps it has always been the case– confidence in human rationality, as well as their ability to build a better world through technology in search of establishing new and better relationships not only with machines, it calls for considering machines / technology primarily as the most useful tools. Consequently, if we consider bastardization– this idea then reflects a crisis within technology itself and makes us see ourselves forced to pay much more attention to machines, to artifacts, but above all to their effects, their implications. It should be clarified that –myself– as being part of a generation that belongs to the era of analogical / digital transition –like many others– I am not referring to a technophobic perspective - which is why we witness daily in our media as a kind of exhibition of the technology-. I do not seek to declare that technologies have threatened our nations, our civilization, the environment, and our future. On the contrary, I try among all this range of technologies, to examine their relationship with the changes –and among them, their failures– that occur in culture or human history. This is precisely at a time when accelerated technological advances have drastically affected our context, which leads –in my case– to generate a more acute vision and inspection of the aesthetics of machinery or technology. That is to say, of the pure and strong forms –impure and weak, even– of the objects produced mechanically / technologically / digitally –and their manually made translation or interpretation as well– that now exalt their insertion –ever-increasing– in the fabric of the daily life.

That insertion inevitably sets off fundamental issues associated with being part of these technologies as they embody, change, or challenge cultural forms, patterns, or practices; such as being part human and part machine. Being an impure / bastardized / remade entity, especially in an era of induced paranoia. The connection to the idea of a mediated or augmented reality, mostly through the body and its extensions in a search for new ways of experiencing the world

provokes my interest in the inspection and questioning of the devices to increase, decrease and alter not only –I consider– the sensory information but the social interaction. This raises elementary questions –which become important to me, and not only in this project– that refer to artificiality, modification / mediation of human perception / interaction, and that define a failure. Failures which, therefore, do not always translate into visual results, or that, do not translate well the real world, or in its case an ideal world if it exists. Which I would probably limit to the idea of failure.

This raises –for me– questions –perhaps irrelevant or even innocent for many– such as: Have we been doing the same thing? Are we headed or have we never headed to the new milieu? Do we continue with the same means and believe that others have emerged? Are we still where we were decades ago? As well as the endless questions: What is technological, what is human?

The human being is considered an unstable category. Therefore, by not being defined as a stable organism, on the contrary, is defined by their diversity and malleability, that is, by their ability to modify their own abilities, as well as to change things around self. By redesigning themselves, at the same time redesigns their context, and this shows how malleable and indeterminate is. Apparently, what makes the human human is their interdependence with artifacts. Today, more than at any other time, designed artifacts –let us call them objects or bodily attachments– they have such –or perhaps greater– agency as who produces them. They play a key role, and they have the ability to transform and to be transformed. Between the human and the technological there is always a mutual exchange. And in this inseparable binomial, the human emerges, spreads, unfolds –or reemerge– in the capacity that has been

conferred on them by the artifacts –those that has made. I do not really know, if it can be said that artifacts can be more human than the human.

Therefore, it can be said that artifacts indicate the possibilities of something new in the human, even a re-made, impure, bastard being. Consequently, body artifacts / extensions offer or open up new ways of imagining, new ways in which the human redefines design –their own. In this way, if we think about its potential, it is possible that the artifact is used in a way that was not intended. That is to say, that in principle it will produce practically everything that was intended, but interacting in unexpected ways –likely the failure, I guess so– with other artifacts –even with the human body– it can provoke new potentials. Artifacts can be erratic and never be what we expect, but they are still the potential for new ways of thinking. Thus, artifacts and bodily attachments are interfaces that allow different forms of human interaction with the world, and these show both the potential and the human capacity to manifest in unexpected ways. In this combination, the redesign and series of transformations allow for an active protagonist –possibly the Bastard. And it is not precisely in the lack of an explanatory line –perhaps between the human, the technological and the world and its implications– that causes our always incomplete attempt to shape our own image to form a singular adapted creature. Rather, in this malleability, it is the constant redesign to define a being that progressively adapts to the world with more sophisticated capabilities –capabilities in both the self and the world.

WHY ARE WE DESIGNING IMPERFECTION?

If we are designing imperfection, contrary to the idea of a 100% error-free world, I consider that it is because we live in a human culture of imperfection, which is directed through artifacts / machines. Where it –could it also be the body– fails –it lodges– and has the capacity to be a negotiable asset, a commodity. It seems that failures are now options. Besides being an option for me and talking extensively, if possible.

In the words featured in this document, I find the conceptual value of those failures and unexpected errors or nature –a second one– design accidents –one can say– where the glitch is used as medium –I believe so– in a time that –I consider– imperfections –the bastardization– are enjoyed as qualities. Here the glitch has metaphysical presence as the Bastard has metaphorical presence too, creating –at least for me– philosophical allusions over both nature and origin as well as their correspondences. This way, both the glitch and the Bastard have significance as mediums and aesthetic qualities. They function –for me– as a constant reminder not only related to the human capacity to recreate themselves but also to consider the human / the technological unexpected capacity to err.

On the whole, –although it is my perspective– the glitch and the Bastard remained uncategorizable, they were orphans –they are equals for me– until today –because I have recognized and adopted them not only into my practice but also to my self-identification, but maybe I am wrong. I do believe –as other do so– that their unwanted function –that one, quasi-invisible, as the ghost does– sits well within the changing technology –or any field capable to generate meaningful effects– where is used as a valid form, as medium, as display, as

provocation –because of their lack of function-ing– which convey a needed subversion in contemporary milieu.

IN A GLITCHED OR A BASTARD WAY OF CONCLUSION

By way of conclusion –if it is possible to conclude here– I want to clarify that by using my own name "Bastardo" and my own experience within the Graduate Program to both shape this document in its beginning and create the last project during my training in the program, this has not been with the intention precisely of an autobiographical or self-historical work. Rather, this Project originally arises from inquiry related to objects / artifacts and their relationship with the human. And although the series of connections that these projects have seem to be a series of far-fetched or absurd ideas, the last project has its starting point precisely in thinking / questioning the series of errors –failures– that my body –as object / artifact / machinery– contains and that are there to at some point arise and take you to the world of mere things –purposeless or after body purpose. As a parenthesis in this quasi-conclusion, I also want to share that during the last moment of this project I suffered a mishap, which has led me to a process to, let us say, reprogram my body and return a certain function to my hands –function which, honestly, I do not think it is possible to achieve the percentage they used to have before that happened. What I can somehow specify –I believe so– is that the series of interventions and the process for my recovery have been a fundamental part of the final part of this document. Through this process, I have re-thought –as much as I have re-imagined– how these –interventions, however minimal– strongly require – as well as my body and everyone else's– of the interrelation with artifacts or objects –as I mentioned at the beginning of the document: *the artifacts / objects are our interlocutors in the experimentation with the world–*

with the purpose in this case, –in my case even– of the reprogramming –or deprogramming– of the body –in this case to reprogram my body, the other object– to restore the functioning of what has had a failure to prevent its collapse. Therefore, I find that there is a direct relationship of this experience with the idea of the Bastard in the Machine; since there is a relation –at least from my perspective– of the bastard as a metaphor for error, a representation –or rather presentation– of this –of the error– or perhaps, –again, from my perspective– as a definition of the remade; that is to say, of the impure, even of the glitch. This –perhaps a very obvious– combination could then be pronounced:

Bastard = Error = Machine = Body / Body = Error = Bastard = Machine

Therefore, if I remake it, it is impure and the impure is bastard. The bastard is the illegitimate, it is the false, the errant, it is finally the glitch.

After this series of questions and reflections that start from particular experiences, I could say that this document –as a result of the research for my case– is a kind of partial narrative, located in process, layered and fragmented. That is simply a call for balanced, critical, and reflective thinking about where we are in today's technologically saturated world. By this I mean, rather, that throughout my process I have tried to understand –flexibly and in continuous movement– how this interaction or combination –artifact / human– works or tries to function; what effects does it cause, what are the realities that this relationship builds or how the subjects are configured in these realities, how they reinvent themselves in the new frontiers –as well as how these are reinvented.

"What makes the human being human is not within the body or the brain, not even within the collective social body, but in our interdependence with artifacts." (Colomina and Wigley, 2016, p. 23).

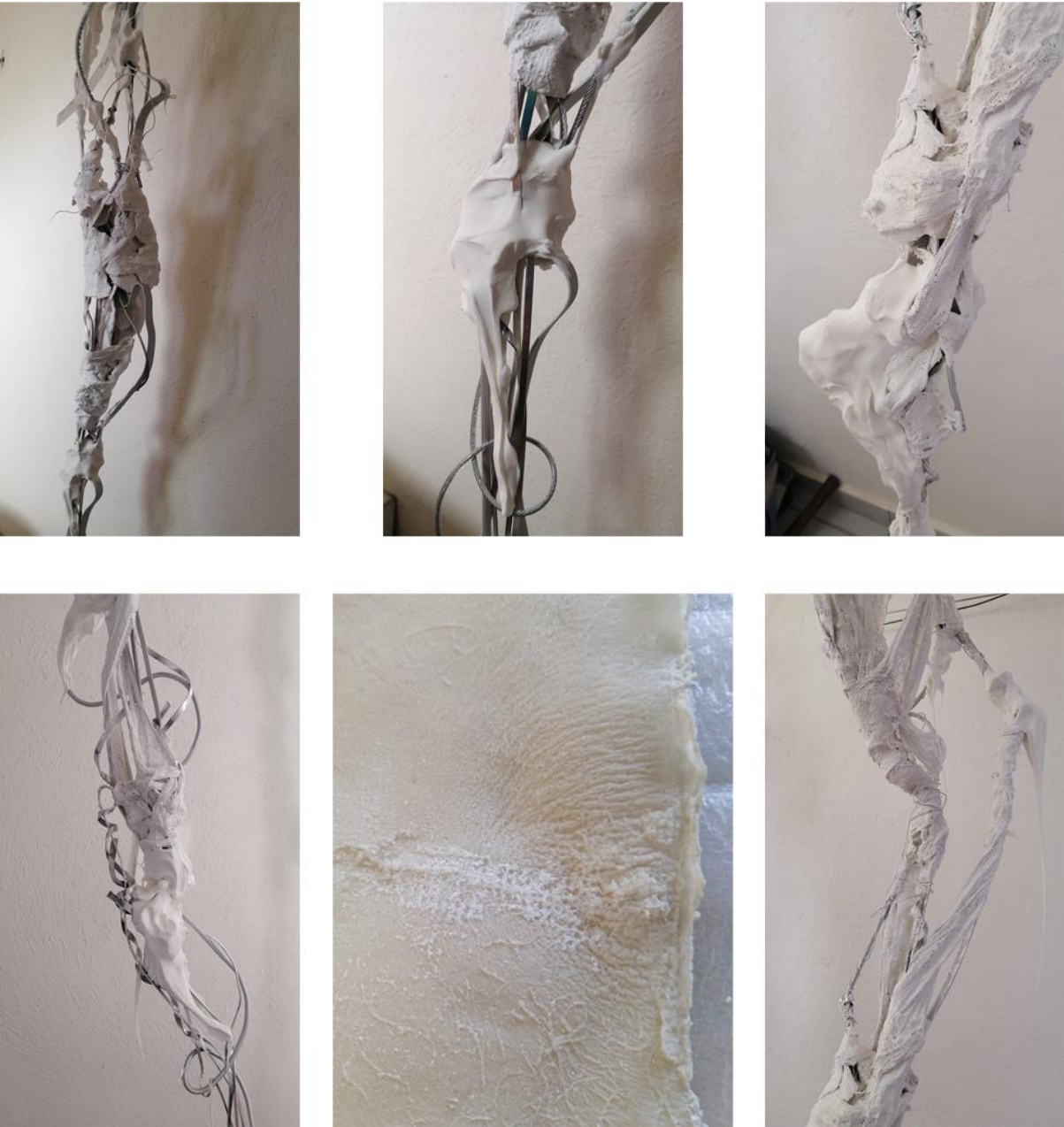


Figure 3.2.- Documentation details of, *T-XNRB*, MFA thesis pieces. 2021.



3.3.- Documentation detail, *T-XNRB*, MFA thesis project. 2021.

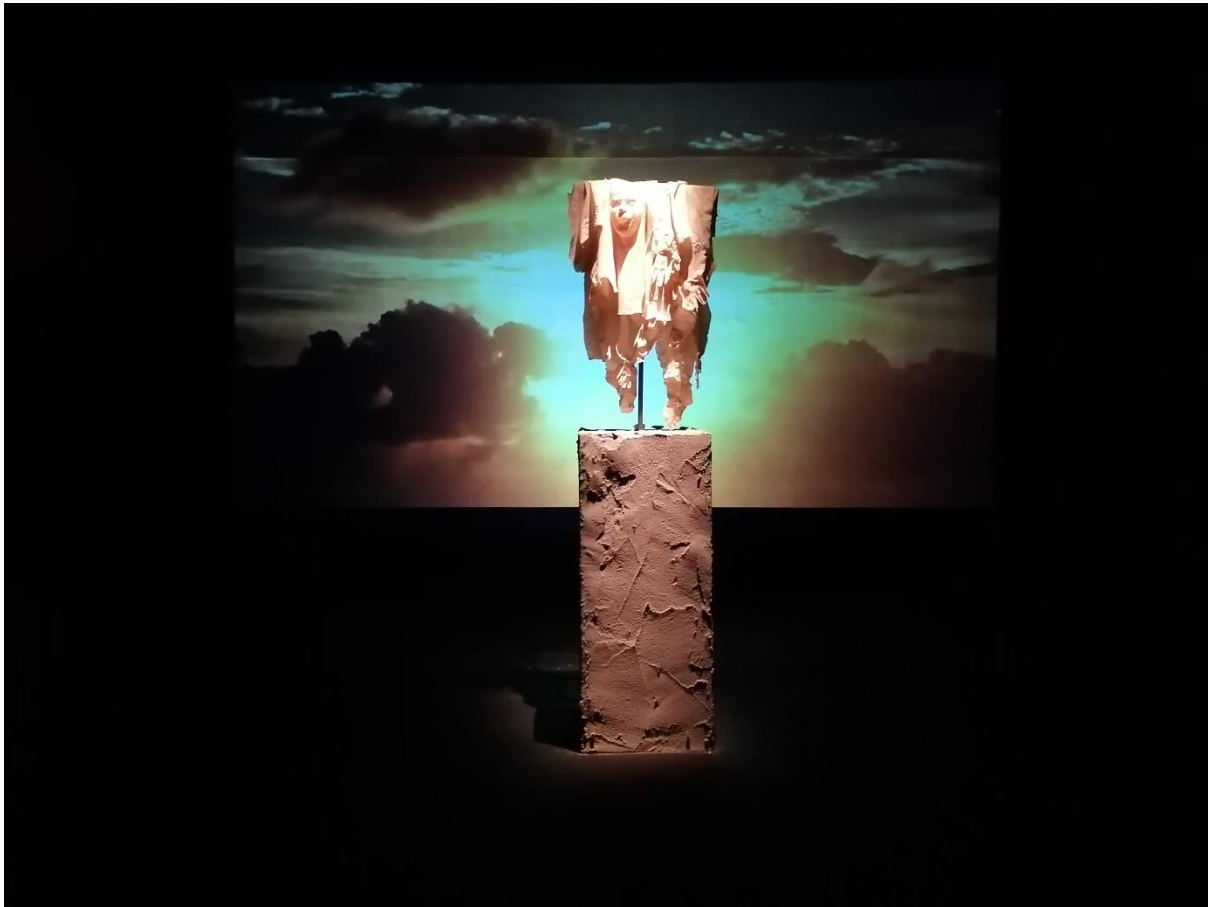


Figure 3.4.- Documentation, *T-XNRB*, MFA Thesis Art Installation. 2021.



Figure 3.5.- Documentation detail, *T-XNRB*, MFA Thesis Art Installation. 2021.



Figure 3.6.- Documentation detail, *T-XNRB*, MFA Thesis Art Installation. 2021.

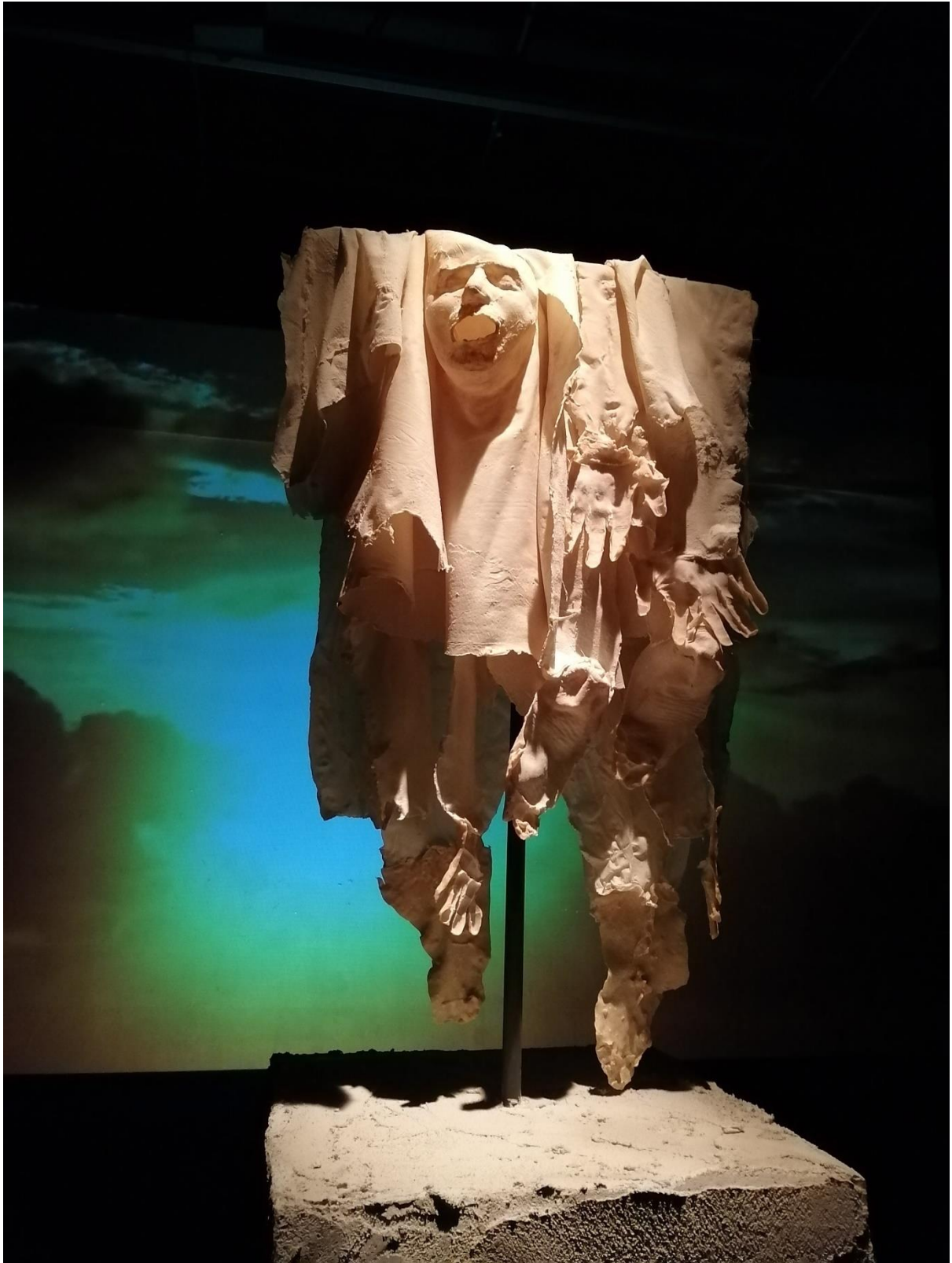


Figure 3.7.- Documentation detail, *T-XNRB*, MFA Thesis Art Installation. 2021.

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