



## INDEX

*Artist's statement*

*Press release*

*Fact Sheet*

*Photo Sheet*

*Exhibition walkthrough*

*Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi Director General Arturo Galansino catalogue introduction*

### **A CLOSER LOOK**

*Thermodynamic Constellation: the new Tomás Saraceno's installation for Palazzo Strozzi courtyard*

*Tomás Saraceno Arachnomancy Cards*

*Aerocene: Aerocene Flights and Museo Aero Solar*

*Aria talk and Fly with Aerocene Pacha*

*Tomás Saraceno Biography*

*Activities in the exhibition and beyond*



# TOMÁS SARACENO ARIA

FIRENZE  
PALAZZO  
STROZZI

22 FEBRUARY  
19 JULY  
2020

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

*Liquified animals are burned to propel us toward unforeseen futures. They take over the sky after being cast out from the depths of the earth. Tension between air, water, and land, beware of geological revenge when taking without asking.*

### CARD NO. 15 + LOST SECRET

In the context of the current ecological crisis, named the Sixth Mass Extinction, invertebrates such as arachnids and insects are disappearing at an accelerated pace, with major consequences for the environment and ecosystems. While invertebrates make up more than 95% of animal species, most countries lack ethical guidelines and regulations regarding their nonhuman rights. An avoidance of the rights of the non-living is rooted even deeper as inestimable ecosystems dwindle in size, *pro rata* to the offshore accounts of intercontinental agro-capitalists; trash bouncing from coast to coast as a few pockets get deeper and toxic incinerator fumes blow back over the border. This interface between us and the Sun, is controlled by the few and continues to be compromised: carbon emissions fill the air, particulate matter floats inside our lungs while electromagnetic radiation envelops the earth, dictating the tempo of digital capitalism, in the era of global warming. Yet, a different epoch is possible, an Aerocene epoch -one of interplanetary sensitivity through a new ecology of practice. Towards this, collective ideas must form, by asking: how would breathing feel in a post fossil fuel economy? Enter an atmosphere dotted with complex geometrical systems assembled to form alighted clouds. Irregular structures reminiscent of Weaire-Phelan arrangements of aggregating foam and soap bubbles whose remarkable shapes act as an invitation to engage from diverse bearings, as mirrored planes trace the sun's rays in a play of light and shadow. Enter an atmosphere populated by spider's webs, their silvery strands becoming thick with carbon dust. Sunlight, air, ash, organochlorine pesticides, sulfur dioxide - particles that populate what once was simply wind and rain, particles that throw into question the very fiber of our world.

To understand why extinction is happening, or why our alarm bells sound only now that ninety-two percent of the world's population breathes contaminated air, we urgently need to exercise a new ecology of practice. Ecosystems have to be thought of as webs of interactions, within which each living being's ecology co-evolves, together with those of others. By focusing less on individuals and more on reciprocal relationships, we might think beyond what means are necessary to control our environments and more on the shared formation of our quotidian. Let the spider/web guide here.

In an Arachnomancy oracle reading, thirty-three futures emerge all at the same time. As you ask the spider/web your question, they pick your card; in another universe, they pick your card...

*What you see is my mind, my body. I cannot eat until I weave the mouth that feeds me. These threads belie the geometries of extinction, telling stories against extraction, mind the stories you are spelling out in your trajectories.*

### CARD NO. 2 + SPIDER/WEB INTELLIGENCE

Palazzo Strozzi will feature ten such simultaneous futures: ten cards chosen by the spider/web oracle at once, taking place in ten interplaying universes.

*Gravitational waves resounding the cosmic web, yet to be felt. Infinite sensing of the world, lifeforms weave constellations. Close your eyes, cover your ears, I will still sense your felt vibrations.*

### CARD NO. 1 + MULTIVERSE

We are all invited to take part in this giant jam session, a way to shift our attention to worlds in tension and suspension. By doing so, we attune with nonhuman voices that join with our own in endless webs of connectivity and disconnectivity. The installation challenges the idea of a hierarchical tree of life, instead proposing a rhizomatic web of life, highlighting the hybridities between and among species and worlds. Encounter the oracle from anywhere in the world with the **Arachnomancy App**, and participate in the collective exercise of Mapping Against Extinction through the process of becoming sensitive to the multispecies ecologies in which we are embedded.

The oracle of our present, past, and future, our multidimensional universe with an ontology that extends past the living, the emphasis is on connections: across scales - between the cosmic web, spider/webs, and connectomes; between cosmic dust and pollutive dust; between soap bubble formations and overlapping worlds that together we form.

**TOMÁS SARACENO**



# TOMÁS SARACENO ARIA

FIRENZE  
PALAZZO  
STROZZI

22 FEBRUARY  
19 JULY  
2020

## PRESS RELEASE

### Tomás Saraceno. Aria

Firenze, Palazzo Strozzi, 22 february-19 july 2020

#TomasSaraceno

From 22 February to 19 July 2020, Palazzo Strozzi is pleased to present **Tomás Saraceno. Aria**, a major exhibition curated by Arturo Galansino devoted to one of the world's most original and visionary contemporary artists whose multi-disciplinary practice encompasses art, social and life sciences.

Saraceno creates immersive works and participatory experiences that suggest a new way of living in our world by making connections to non-human phenomena such as dust particles and plants. This major exhibition will be his largest project to date in Italy, responding to the specific context of Palazzo Strozzi, and its relationship to the cultural and scientific history of Florence.

*"The art of Tomás Saraceno prompts us to reflect on the emblematic and increasingly urgent problems and challenges of our age, the Anthropocene era, such as pollution, climate change, sustainability and overcoming geographical and social barriers", said Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi Director General Arturo Galansino, the exhibition curator, adding: "In Palazzo Strozzi, the artistic research of Tomás, who unveils utopian and yet very real worlds with his open and interconnected vision, is further exalted in terms both of its significance and of its unique aesthetic power by being juxtaposed with the setting of our palazzo, a symbol of Humanism. The exhibition title, Air, does not simply refer to themes and elements that are typical features of the artist's work, it also sets out to sound the alarm bell for our planet and its atmosphere, now in a critical condition, and to herald the transition to a new geological era, the Aerocene, which centres precisely on this extremely precious and valuable element".*

The exhibition will open with **Thermodynamic Constellation** a major site-specific installation for the courtyard of Palazzo Strozzi. This work, comprised of large, reflective spheres, introduces Saraceno's interest in challenging our approach to environmental issues by envisioning a future free from borders and fossil fuels; ideals moved forward by the interdisciplinary artistic community initiated by Saraceno called **Aerocene**. The sculpture builds on Saraceno's research into solar balloons that are capable of floating using only the heat of the sun, encouraging us to rethink the way we inhabit our planet in a poetic and collective manner. The installation is made possible by the support of the Fondazione CR Firenze within a large project, that touches various themes of the exhibition, consisting of numerous activities aimed in particular at schools and young people.

The exhibition is organized around Saraceno's **Arachnomancy Cards**, a set of thirty-three cards that celebrate the radical interconnectedness of all things, both living and nonliving. At Palazzo Strozzi, nine of the exhibition spaces are associated with a card that act as herald composing new threads that connect seemingly disparate elements. Another room is dedicated to the complete set of thirty-three cards. Just as a spider sends out vibrational signals along its silky web, Saraceno's works act as indicators of worlds beyond the bounds of human perception. By amplifying the unheard voices of those beings that are hidden in plain sight, Saraceno transforms Palazzo Strozzi into an arena where experimentation and participation provide the pathway to imaginative experiences, helping visitors to rethink the ways in which we inhabit the planet now and in the future, prioritizing practices of multispecies care and partnership over anthropocentric ideologies.

The exhibition continues from the courtyard installation onto the Piano Nobile amid large installations that allow visitors to immerse themselves in evocative settings that suggest alternative futures: **Connectome**, a set of suspended sculptures suggestive of the Weaire-Phelan geometries of soap bubbles, which borrows its name from the map of neural connections in the brain - the collection of pathways and synapses, the tangible record of thoughts and feelings; **Sounding the Air** and **Webs of At-tent(s)ion**, works containing the sensorial worlds of spider/webs and the affective and elemental atmospheres they compose; **How to Entangle the Universe in a Spider Web?**, a study into the relationship between dimensions, as communicated by a spider/web; **Particular Matter(s) Jam Session** and **Aerographies**, installations investigating the connections between cosmic dust and the dust that litters our planet and lungs - black carbon, toxic pollution, and PM 2.5 - and their movements through the air; **A Thermodynamic Imaginary**, an absorbing experience of the universe's desire to defy scale; and **Flying Garden**, a sculptural provocation which displaces our conventional notions of boundaries and territories. The oracle of our





present, past, and future, the spider and its web may be interpreted as a comprehensive metaphor for the exhibition. An extension of its cognitive system, the spider's web allows for communication with and orientation in the greater world through vibration, its consciousness mapped along threads like the neural map of our own brain. Saraceno's collaborations with spiders offers us a way of connecting with their world - a moment of transcendence past the traditional hierarchical relationship through which we organize it.

Through private **Arachnomancy readings** and Saraceno's **Arachnomancy App**, visitors are invited to cultivate new arts of noticing and consulting the "spider/web oracles," one of the many ways participants might reconsider what they have to learn from those with whom we share this planet. With the app, visitors may consult the spider/web oracles they find in their daily life, and participate in the collective exercise of Mapping Against Extinction by recording spider/webs that might otherwise go unnoticed. The exhibition will also be accompanied by a full programme of events and activities that includes bringing projects realized with the collaboration of Aerocene Foundation, such as **Aerocene Flights** to be held at Manifattura Tabacchi together with a section of videos and materials dedicated to Aerocene, and **Museo Aero Solar** realized with the participation/collaboration of **IED (Istituto Europeo di Design - educational partner)** and **Publicacqua**, performances of ongoing collaborative artworks that Saraceno has developed to explore new modes of transport powered by air and sunlight rather than fossil fuels.

The Palazzo Strozzi exhibition offers visitors an opportunity to discover the work of Tomás Saraceno and experience his vision of the world and its possibilities. He leaves space for phenomena or non-human entities such as dust, air, spiders or plants that become real active agents in the creation of his installations, responding to the historic Palazzo Strozzi by creating a dialogue between the Renaissance and the contemporary world - a shift from the hierarchical idea of 'man at the centre of the world' to the conception of 'man as part of a universe' in which to seek a new accord.

The exhibition is promoted and organised by Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi and Studio Tomás Saraceno, with the support of the Comune di Firenze, the Regione Toscana and the Camera di Commercio di Firenze, with the contribution of Terna, with the collaboration of Manifattura Tabacchi, and with the participation of IED (Istituto Europeo di Design).






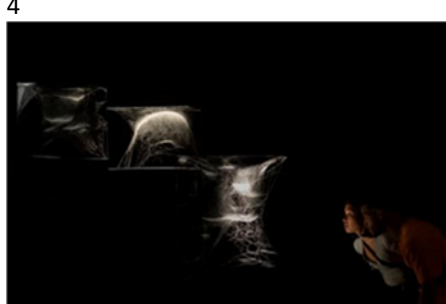
## FACT SHEET

Title	<i>Tomás Saraceno. Aria</i>
Venue	Florence, Palazzo Strozzi
Date	22 February-19 July 2020
Exhibition curated by	Arturo Galansino
Promoted and organised by	Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi and Studio Tomás Saraceno  Comune di Firenze, Regione Toscana, Camera di Commercio di Firenze, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze
With the contribution of	Terna
With the collaboration of	Manifattura Tabacchi
With the participation of/Educational partner	IED (Istituto Europeo di Design)
Technical sponsors	Trenitalia, Busitalia, Ataf gestioni, laFeltrinelli, Ufficio Turismo Città Metropolitana di Firenze, Toscana Aeroporti, Unicoop Firenze, Firenze Parcheggi, Rinascente, Mercato Centrale Firenze, Destination Florence Convention & Visitors Bureau, Publicacqua
Press Office	Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi: Lavinia Rinaldi T. +39 055 3917122 l.rinaldi@palazzostrozzi.org Sutton: Fiona Russell fiona@suttoncomms.com
Promotion	Susanna Holm – Sigma CSC T. +39 055 2478436 susannaholm@cscsigma.it
Catalogo	Marsilio Editori, Venice
Bookings	Sigma CSC T. +39 055 2478436 F. +39 055 244145 prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org
Info	T. +39 055 264515
Opening hours	Daily 10.00-20.00, Thursdays 10.00-23.00. Last admission one hour before closing.
Admission	Full € 13.00; Reduced € 10.00; Schools € 4.00



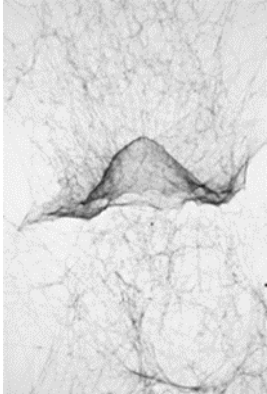
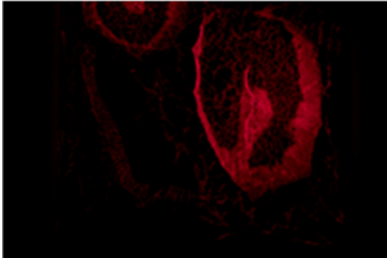

## PHOTO SHEET

High resolution images available from the **press area** on [www.palazzostrozzi.org](http://www.palazzostrozzi.org)

<p>1</p> 	<p>Tomás Saraceno, <i>Stillness in Motion – Cloud Cities</i>, 2016 Installation view at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), USA. Courtesy of the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer contemporary art, Genoa; Esther Schipper, Berlin. © Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2016</p>
<p>2</p> 	<p>Tomás Saraceno, <i>Sundial for Spatial Echoes</i>, 2019 Installation view at Bauhaus-Museum Weimar, Germany. Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer contemporary art, Genoa; Esther Schipper, Berlin. Bauhaus-Museum Weimar, courtesy of Heike Hanada_laboratory of art and architecture. With thanks to Klassik Stiftung Weimar. © Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2019</p>
<p>3</p> 	<p>Tomás Saraceno, <i>Webs of At-tent(s)ion</i>, 2018 Installation view at <i>ON AIR</i>, carte blanche exhibition to Tomás Saraceno, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2018 Courtesy of the artist and Esther Schipper, Berlin © Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2018</p>
<p>4</p> 	<p>Tomás Saraceno, <i>Webs of At-tent(s)ion</i>, 2018 Installation view at <i>ON AIR</i>, carte blanche exhibition to Tomás Saraceno, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2018 Courtesy of the artist and Esther Schipper, Berlin © Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2018</p>





<p>5</p> 	<p>Tomás Saraceno, <i>Hybrid semi-social instrument Almagest Sinope 758.89 built by: a duo of Cyrtophora moluccensis - five weeks</i> (detail), 2016          Courtesy of the artist and Esther Schipper, Berlin          © Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2016</p>
<p>6</p> 	<p>Tomás Saraceno, <i>How to entangle the universe in a spider/ web?</i> (detail), 2018          Courtesy of the artist, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles          © Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2018</p>
<p>7</p> 	<p><b>FORTUNATE WEBBING</b>          Clothed in many plants, birds singing, insects buzzing and worms crawling. There are colonies of different kinds, interspecies togetherness in complex networks. What does it mean to be with worlds instead of being in them?          Suit: Spider/Web of Life          Species: Deinopis subrufa          Notation: Gb          Plant: Phylogenetic tree</p> <p>Tomás Saraceno  <i>Arachnomancy Cards</i>, 2019          Card's drawings and reinterpretation based on Duncan, W. (1949). <i>Webs In The Wind</i>.          New York: The Ronald Press Company and Bristowe, W. S. (1958). <i>The World of Spiders</i>. London: Collins;          Curtis, William, 1746-1799; Marbury, Elizabeth, 1856-1933, donor; Vollrath, F. 1988. <i>Untangling the spider's web</i>. <i>Trends Ecol. Evol.</i> 3(12): 331–335. Tomás Saraceno would like to thank the Arachnophilia archives and his Studio for their endless support in the conceptualization, design and making of these cards. As well thanks to the galleries for all their support: Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles, Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genoa, Esther Schipper, Berlin. Download the Arachnomancy App to help you find other Spider/Web Pavilions and encounter their oracles, joining a collective exercise of mapping against extinction. For more information visit <a href="http://arachnophilia.net">arachnophilia.net</a>, a living archive of coexistences.          Courtesy the Artist          © Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2019</p>



8



Tomás Saraceno, *Arachnomancy Cards*, 2019

Card's drawings and reinterpretation based on Duncan, W. (1949). *Webs In The Wind*. New York: The Ronald Press Company and Bristowe, W. S. (1958). *The World of Spiders*. London: Collins; Curtis, William, 1746-1799; Marbury, Elizabeth, 1856-1933, donor; Vollrath, F. 1988. Untangling the spider's web. *Trends Ecol. Evol.* 3(12): 331–335.

Tomás Saraceno would like to thank the Arachnophilia archives and his Studio for their endless support in the conceptualization, design and making of these cards. As well thanks to the galleries for all their support: Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York / Los Angeles, Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genoa, Esther Schipper, Berlin.

Download the Arachnomancy App to help you find other Spider/Web Pavilions and encounter their oracles, joining a collective exercise of mapping against extinction.

For more information visit [arachnophilia.net](http://arachnophilia.net), a living archive of coexistences.

Courtesy the Artist

© Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2019

9



Tomás Saraceno, *A Thermodynamic Imaginary*, 2018

Installation view at *ON AIR*, carte blanche exhibition to Tomás Saraceno, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2018 Courtesy of the artist; Esther Schipper, Berlin; Pinksummer contemporary art, Genoa

© Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2018

10



Tomás Saraceno, *32SW/Stay green/Flying Garden/Air-Port-City*, 2007-2009

Installation view at Lyon Biennale, 2007 Courtesy of the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen: Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer contemporary art, Genoa; Esther Schipper, Berlin

© Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2007

11



Tomás Saraceno, *Cloud Cities*, 2011

Installation view at Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin.

Courtesy of the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen: Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer contemporary art, Genoa; Esther Schipper, Berlin.

Photography by Jens Ziehe © bpk/Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof - Museum für Gegenwart - Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2011





12



Tomás Saraceno, *Aerographies*, 2018

Installation view at *ON AIR*, carte blanche exhibition to Tomás Saraceno, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2018 Courtesy of the artist and Esther Schipper, Berlin

© Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2018

## AEROCENE

13



Museo Aero Solar, (2007-ongoing)

Left - at Prato, Italy in 2009, with Alberto Pesavento, Tomás Saraceno, Janis Elko, Till Hergenhausen, Giovanni Giaretta, Marco, Alessandro, Manuel Scano, Michela Sacchetto, and Matteo Mascheroni.

Right - Museo Aero Solar at Aerocene Festival, Olympiaberg in Munich, Germany in 2019 with Tomás Saraceno, Alice Lamperti, Roxanne Mackie, Erik Vogler, Charles Gonzalez, Camilla Berggren Lundell, Susanne Witzgall, Beate Engl, Erik Bordeleau, Igor Mikloušić, Gwilym Faulkner, Debora Swistun

Initiated by artist Tomás Saraceno in conversation with Alberto Pesavento in 2007, Museo Aero Solar unfolds in the space formed between human and nonhuman participants in the simple acts of cooperation and reusing plastic bags, to collectively produce an aerosolar sculpture. Fostered in more than 21 countries to date, Museo Aero Solar embodies a vision of pollutionfree futures through the growth of self-assembling, geographically dispersed participatory communities; in this way, the practice can be seen as marking the beginning of the genealogy of Aerocene.




Courtesy Museo Aero Solar and Aerocene Foundation.

Photography by Janis Elko (left).


Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno (right)

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<p>14</p> 	<p>83AQI Free Flight, 48°02'32.9"N 11°11'03.5"E -- 49°58'22.6"N 16°17'48.3"E</p> <p>A zero-carbon, aerosolar journey from Hechendorf, Germany to Oucmanice, Czech Republic on Sep. 10, 2019. As part of Aerocene Festival, Olympiaberg, Munich, 6–11 Sep 2019.</p> <p>Together with: Scott Beiben, Camilla Berggren Lundell, Daniel Bürkner, Saverio Cantoni, Andrea Familiar, Gwilym Faulkner, Jasper Humpert, Thomas Krahn, Dario Laganà, Alice Lamperti, Sara Mack, Roxanne Mackie, Nan Mellinger, Kerstin Möller, Tomás Saraceno, Rebecca Schedler, Cordula Schütz, Sven Steudte, Débora Swistun, and Erik Vogler.</p> <p>Courtesy Aerocene Foundation Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2019 Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0 by Aerocene Foundation</p>
<p>15</p> 	<p>Aerocene Tethered Flight, 24°08'54.4"S 65°15'54.8"W, Salinas Grandes, Jujuy, Argentina, 2017 .</p> <p>With the support of CCK Buenos Aires. Courtesy the Aerocene Foundation and CCK Agency</p> <p>Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2017 Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0 by Aerocene Foundation</p>
<p>16</p> 	<p>Aerocene Tethered Flight, 24°08'54.4"S 65°15'54.8"W, Salinas Grandes, Jujuy, Argentina, 2017.</p> <p>With the support of CCK Buenos Aires.</p> <p>Courtesy the Aerocene Foundation and CCK Agency Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2017 Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0 by Aerocene Foundation</p>

## PORTRAITS

<p>17</p> 	<p>Tomás Saraceno. Palazzo Strozzi. © Alessandro Moggi, 2019</p>
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18



Tomás Saraceno. Palazzo Strozzi.  
© Alessandro Moggi, 2019

19



Tomás Saraceno  
© Alfred Weidinger, 2015





**FONDAZIONE PALAZZO STROZZI DIRECTOR GENERAL AND EXHIBITION CURATOR ARTURO GALANSINO  
CATALOGUE INTRODUCTION**

*I don't know if what you read in books  
is true, that in ancient times a monkey  
that left Rome could get to Spain by jumping  
from tree-to-tree without  
ever touching the ground.*

(Italo Calvino, *The Baron in the Trees*, 1957)

For contemporary artists, exhibiting at Palazzo Strozzi means measuring themselves against one of the Renaissance's symbols. For Palazzo Strozzi, opening a contemporary art exhibition is not merely creating an aesthetic experience; it involves assuming the responsibility of an institution intending to speak to its present times, of addressing themes that are most pressing and timely. The art of Tomás Saraceno (b. 1973) causes us to consider the issues and challenges of our era, the Anthropocene, which have become increasingly urgent, such as pollution, climate change, sustainability and the overcoming of geographical and social barriers. At Palazzo Strozzi, his open and interconnected vision, which accesses utopian and simultaneously real worlds, is further amplified by meaning, and made unique by the contrast of a building representing humanistic culture. This exhibition, one of the largest shows ever planned in the course of the artist's career, suggests changing the reference model through a deep and original dialogue between history and the present day: from humanity at the center of the universe, the founding thought of humanism, to humanity as part of a whole, in which to seek new harmony by eliminating all class systems and hierarchies.

**FROM HUMANISM → TO AEROCENE**

Through the work of Tomás Saraceno, Palazzo Strozzi turns into a system that expresses the complex network that connects the microcosm of particles and dust, to the macrocosm of suns and galaxies; a cosmic jam session in which the elements comprising the universe reveal themselves as a myriad of sounds from an evolving, living orchestra. Here, every anthropocentric concept is shaken and questioned, giving voice to what is not visible and not human, i.e. to all those mysterious and imperceptible processes that dominate the cosmos and escape us, thus conjuring a new perspective towards which to steer our future.

Tomás Saraceno's approach to work is completely interdisciplinary, annulling any division between gender, hierarchy of knowledge and practices, and taking the diversity and hybridization that for centuries have marked Florentine artistic culture, to the extreme. In the same way that Saraceno's gaze reaches galaxies hundreds of thousands of light-years away, the Florentine artists of the fifteenth century carefully observed the sky with a sense of wonder. For example, the small dome in the apse of the old sacristy of San Lorenzo, designed by Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446) and likely frescoed in 1442 by Giuliano d'Arrigo, a.k.a. Il Pesello (1367–1446), depicts a starry sky in which the heavenly bodies are positioned with great accuracy with the assistance of astronomer Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli (1397–1482). The astronomical precision is such that it allows for the determination of when the sky above the city featured those characteristics. Also in Florence, a century and a half later, Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), observing the sky armed with a telescope and an experimental scientific method, confirmed the Copernican hypothesis once and for all by invalidating the geocentric and anthropocentric vision of the universe. His watercolors from the end of 1609, depicting the moon with its changing phases and luminescence, bring to mind Saraceno's *Calendrier Lun-Air de Paris*, which indexes the air pollution at different times of the day, relative to our habits and the use of fossil fuels. Galileo translated his celestial observations into fascinating and detailed representations, in which the night star does not appear as a perfect Aristotelian body, but rather, is marked by mountains and valleys, "unequal, harsh, dotted with cavities and protrusions not unlike the face of the earth."

Obviously linked to Florence and the relationship between humans and the sky, is Leonardo da Vinci's (1452–1519) flight research; his drawings of flying machines, studies of parachutes and birds, are precursors of Saraceno's Aerosolar sculptures that are lighter than air and hover and move across the sky without fossil fuels. Certainly the best known flight experiment ever carried out in Florence is Leonardo's attempt to operate one of his flying machines, assisted by alchemist and friend Zoroastro da Peretola (1462–1520) and "filling the universe with awe." In 2009, Tomás Saraceno caught NASA scientists off-guard with one of his flying sculptures in the Silicon Valley when, for the first time, he flew a man with just the heat of the sun...



*The great bird will first take flight on the back of its great Swan, filling the universe with awe, filling all the manuscripts with his fame and everlasting glory to the nest where it was born.*

*(Leonardo da Vinci, The Codex on the Flight of Birds, c. 1505)*

Alongside the scientific and technical components characterizing Tomás Saraceno's work, more esoteric suggestions do coexist that conjure the alogical, symbolic and unconscious elements driving our destiny. Since prehistoric times humans have used divination practices pertaining to the animal world to learn their future. The artist emulates *nggám* fortunetelling, a practice used by the Mambila people in Cameroon, to decode the mysterious messages of spiders through the *Arachnomancy Cards*, a deck of thirty-three divination cards for consulting the spider/web oracle.

*Above all I was committed to examining the tarot cards carefully, with the eye of someone who didn't know what they were, drawing suggestions and associations from them and interpreting them according to an imaginary symbolism.*

*(Italo Calvino, Introduction to The Castle of Crossed Destinies, 1973)*

As in a "palace of crossed destinies" set in a parallel universe, nine Arachnomancy cards employed as narrative tools guide visitors through the exhibition, simultaneously revealing and concealing the meaning of each of the nine installations and establishing unexpected connections between apparently remote elements. Introducing arachnomancy, the cards are inspired by the fifteenth-century tarot, a card game and repertoire of symbols popular in the courts of the time and poised between Marsilio Ficino's Neoplatonic philosophy, and Matteo Maria Boiardo's chivalric world, between the classic Renaissance imagery and the golden glow of Michelino da Besozzo or Bonifacio Bembo's late Gothic. Afterall, the history of Palazzo Strozzi expresses Renaissance Florence's trust in the divinatory power of the stars: the palace's patron, wealthy merchant Filippo Strozzi (1428–91), placed his trust in astrologer Benedetto di Giannozzo Biliotti who, following a set of complex astrological calculations, determined that the dawn of August 6, 1489, under "the sign of the lion," was the favorable time to lay the first stone of the building designed by Giuliano da Sangallo (1445–1516).

*The sign of the lion rose above the eastern horizon, which being a fixed and concrete sign, signified the building would last in perpetuity and be inhabited by great men, noble and of good health [ . . ].*

*(Filippo Strozzi's register of debtors and creditors, 1484–91)*

## ARIA

A new card, *Aria*, lends its name and look to the exhibition and is the catalogue cover. The title, in addition to referencing the themes and elements that are typical of the artist's work, issues a warning about respect for the planet and its critically compromised atmosphere, foreshadowing the transition from the Anthropocene to the Aerocene; a new geological era developed around this precious element the air, in which *Homo sapiens* will have finally evolved into *Homo flotantis*, learning how to live and travel by floating through the atmosphere, in an aerial nomadism free of fossil fuels and boundaries restricting thoughts and existence.

Air is the element in which we live, a platform shared with all other living beings, which marks every moment of our lives. Every breath is a complex universe containing billions of molecules flying faster than sound and colliding with one another, millions of times per second. To paraphrase Evangelista Torricelli (1608–47), the mathematician and physicist, Florentine by adoption and a follower of Galileo: "We swim in an ocean of air." Nowadays this ocean is also polluted by carbon dioxide and other toxic elements that compromise our right to breathe. Increasingly, political discourse centers around air; colonized, restricted by regional borders, wrecked by harmful matter and radio frequencies, and transformed into an asset for the elite. The actions and thoughts of the Aerocene Foundation circle around these issues, on the simple assumption that the air belongs to everyone, the international and interdisciplinary community seeks to develop a new set of ecological practices, to raise awareness and respect for the atmosphere, to imagine a sustainable future by using Saraceno's flying sculptures. During the exhibition, various workshops will be organized in the area, to share these flight experiments and reclaim the air in Florence and Tuscany.

The large mirrored spheres of *Thermodynamic Constellation*, anchored and suspended in the courtyard of Palazzo Strozzi, float in the air ready to take off to faraway destinations, inviting us to move towards a new era, in tune with an atmosphere that is free of harmful emissions; the air diffuses the concert *Sounding the Air* and the dust pervading the magnified spiderweb of the *Particular Matter(s) Jam Session* rises, as we enter the sensory universe of a spider; while moving through the air we become



extras in the shadow theater of the 'Thermodynamic Imaginary', following the course of the *Aereographies* balloons in the same way that the *Flying Gardens* grow and find nourishment in the air.

*Did spiders live in my house or was I living in the spiders' house?*  
(Tomás Saraceno)

In the *Aria* card, a spiderweb recalls distant nebulae and galaxies in the darkness of *Webs of At-tent(s)ion*, resulting from a collaboration with spiders of different species. For hundreds of thousands of years these invertebrates have woven architectures resembling the structure of the universe before our eyes: a three-dimensional spiderweb like the ruby-colored *How to Entangle the Universe in a Spider/Web?*, in which the galaxies are placed along strands of hot gas, and dark matter distributed along the threads of a huge cosmic spiderweb as they encroach and merge into a single large net. At the center of the image, a community of *Argyroneta aquatica* use their silk to live and move underwater aboard an air bubble. Like the ballooning spiders—flying spiders living in colonies, which hurl long threads into the sky and take off propelled by the wind, reaching high altitudes as if attached to kites—during their evolution, these aquatic arachnids have developed incredible skills, embodying alternative futures.

Below, an apocalyptic view of Florence, flooded, alludes to the recent flooding event in Venice, brought on by the climate change that we keep ignoring, also recalling the Florence flood of 1966, a catastrophe that marks the history of our city and beyond. This dystopian image likewise refers to the "Radical" architects, a movement in Florence arising in the late 1960s as a reaction to the flood, which prompted the rethinking of architecture in a mix of utopia, research and technology, personified by figures such as Frei Otto (1925–2015), Yona Friedman (b. 1923) and Richard Buckminster Fuller (1895–1983), who have become Saraceno's touchstones.

#### INVISIBLE CITIES

*The invisible cities are a dream that originated in the heart of uninhabitable cities. (Italo Calvino, Introduction to Invisible Cities, 1972)*

Saraceno's structures arise from these architects' research and incorporate modular, biological or molecular models that can be repeated endlessly as in *Connectome*, an installation inspired by the brain's neural pathways, and *Cloud City*, cities floating in the clouds, "hung by a thread," potential visions of an antithetical development to the horizontal borders created by mankind. These architectural utopias appear to be built like "a city that expands and is built by many expanding concentric cities, a spiderweb-city suspended over an abyss," as author Italo Calvino (1923–85) describes his *Invisible Cities*, whom Saraceno discovered in his youth in Italy, and which inspired him poetically.

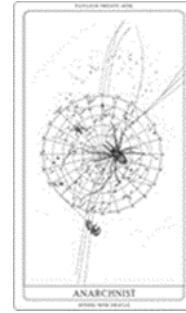
We too, like Kubla Khan in the face of an unsustainable empire that is crushing itself, dream of "cities as light as kites, cities latticelike as lace, cities transparent like mosquito nets, cities like leaf ribs, cities like hand creases, cities like filigree," while Marco Polo recounts of Bauci, lost in the clouds and hoisted on thin stilts; of Tamara, where clouds run in which known figures are recognizable; of Anastasia, suspended by kites; or Lalage, which was granted the privilege of growing in lightness by the moon . . . Unable to speak, or rendered mute by a spell, Marco could select another tarot from the deck, depicting *Aria*, a city connected to the stars, in which spiderwebs in buildings turn into segments of universes predicting radiant futures, the spiders play cosmic music and courtyards are open ports to the sky, from which to journey to the clouds floating above the domes, bell towers and hills.



## EXHIBITION WALKTHROUGH

### COURTYARD THERMODYNAMIC CONSTELLATION

*Lifted by the air and carried by the wind  
over borders, fluid in language  
in stateless movement.  
If you follow their trajectories,  
synchronicities emerge, contours of possible  
coexistences, in airnomadic choreographies.*  
**ANARCHINIST- Arachnomancy Card 29 of 33**



While fossil fuel based industries enterprise to colonize other planets, the air, this interface between us and the Sun, is controlled by the few and continues to be compromised: carbon emissions fill the air, particulate matter floats inside our lungs while electromagnetic radiation envelops the earth, dictating the tempo of digital capitalism, in the era of global warming.

Imagine a different era, defined instead by interplanetary sensitivity, shared through a new ecology of practices. *Towards this, collective ideas must form, by asking: how would it feel to breathe in a post fossil fuel era? And, what are our response-abilities to be on air?*

*Thermodynamic Constellation* provides a launchpad for a new era of mobility that we call Aerocene. The spheres that comprise the installation, are prototypes for aerosolar sculptures that are able to float around the world, free from borders, free from fossil fuels. Floating airborne without carbon emissions, these aerosolar journeys speculate about what kinds of nomadic socio-political structures might emerge if we could navigate the rivers of the atmosphere, reconsidering the ways in which borders are set up by humans, the power of national institutions to decide who can transit, policies that dramatically affect vulnerable subjects, humans and nonhuman life forms. To board this constellation is to become airnomads, moving from *Homo economicus* to *Homo Flotantis*, who is attuned to planetary rhythms, conscious of living with other humans and non-humans and who learned to float in the air, adrift with the wind, within its elemental being.

Tomás Saraceno (Argentina, 1973)

#### ***Thermodynamic Constellation***

2020

Mylar - transparent and metalized, mirrored acrylic plate, membrane pump with pressure control, overpressure release valve, PE tube, PES rope

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

The installation is promoted and realized thanks to Fondazione CR Firenze

#### **ups And c/M+M, 2019**

Metal, monofilament, metal wire, polyester rope, mirror panels

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

### ROOM 1 CONNECTOME

*Liquified animals are burned to propel  
us toward unforeseen futures. They take  
over the sky after being cast out from  
the depths of the earth. Tension between air,  
water, and land, beware of geological  
revenge when taking without asking.*  
**LOST SECRET - Arachnomancy Card 15 of 33**



Enter an atmosphere filled with complex geometrical systems assembled to form alighted clouds. Irregular structures reminiscent of a Weaire-Phelan structure of foam and soap bubbles whose remarkable shapes act as an invitation to engage from diverse bearings, as mirrored planes trace the sun's rays in a play of light and shadow, where there is neither up nor down anymore, no inside or outside.

Composed of habitat-like geometries reminiscent of Saraceno's utopistic Cloud Cities, the installation reveals the elemental properties that, though the very essence of our lives, seem to perpetually recede from view. Sunlight, air, ash, black carbon, organochlorine pesticides, sulfur dioxide - particles that populate what once was simply wind and rain, that throw into question the very fibre of our world. Held together in mutual tension, the installation bridges the air between spider/web and cosmic web, its structural allusions spanning scales from the micro to the macro. A web of reciprocal alliances, where if one thread were to move, the vibration would spread, reverberating across the whole structure, producing a greater frequency than could be produced by one thread alone. Immersed in an upturned environment, the senses are challenged to reconsider and reflect on what has precedence in the contemporary world and why.

### **Connectome**

2020

Metal, polyester rope, nylon rope, mirror panels, monofilament

### **Stillness in Motion - 35.02, 2017**

Metal, polyester rope, black nylon rope, mirror panels

### **2I/Borisov/M+M, 2019**

### **beta Pic c/M+M, 2019**

Metal, monofilament, metal wire, polyester rope, mirror panels

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

## **ROOM 2 SOUNDING THE AIR**

*Fluttering leaves, branches flexing east  
if Levant is blowing. If it is a light  
breeze, enjoy the swing, if it is Near  
Gale, be centered and still, but if the  
storm is coming, be ready to leave.  
Release a thread to ask the wind.*

**ON AIR - Arachnomancy Card 9 of 33**



*Sounding the Air* is an aeolian instrument, a musical instrument that is "played" with the wind. Its sound is produced by five threads of spider silk that drift and resonate with the air. Real-time video captures the gestures of these "strings", translating them into sonic frequencies and patterns.

The work thus constitutes a collective creation improvised by an ensemble of forces and bodies: the radiant heat of human bodies, or the flurries and tremors created by the flux and breath of participants, but also the endless intraactions of different aerial elements, dust, silk, heat, wind, spiders and electrostatic forces. Together they create a cascade of influences that transform the rhythms of the fluctuating silk threads.

*Sounding the Air* draws inspiration from the phenomenon of spider "ballooning", a behaviour in which some spiders use airborne dispersal to move between locations.

### **Sounding the Air**

2020

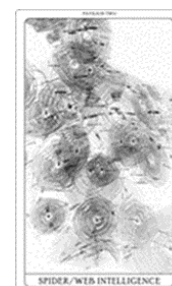
Spider silk, carbon fibre, microphone, transducer, speakers, lights, computer, camera

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

## **ROOM 3 WEBS OF AT-TENT(S)ION**

*What you see is my mind, my body. I cannot eat  
until I weave the mouth that feeds me. These  
threads belie the geometries of extinction, telling  
stories against extraction, mind the stories you  
are spelling out in your trajectories.*

**SPIDER/WEB INTELLIGENCE - Arachnomancy Card 2 of 33**



*Webs of At-tent(s)ion* is made up of a myriad of hybrid spider/webs\* – sculptures interwoven by different spider species, in which individual threads and sensory worlds combine to form a floating landscape. These spider/webs are an extension of the spiders' senses – they become their ears, eyes and mouths – while at the same time providing homes for their bodies. Through the filaments of the spider/webs, spiders send and receive vibrations, and perhaps even thoughts: they offer a way for these creatures to connect to the world. The multiple entanglements and connections between spiders also create sensorial and living connections with non-human animals and ecosystems, inviting us to reflect on our coexistence with this ever-present species.

\*We do not isolate the spider from the web as the latter can be considered an extension of the spider's senses and even of its cognitive apparatus: the external world is perceived by the spider through the tensions and vibrations of its web.

### **Webs of At-tent(s)ion**

2020

Spider silk, glass, carbon fibre, metal, lights, silicone

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

**Hybrid solitary solitary solitary Instrument 8 Scorpii built by: a solo *Nephila inaurata* - one week, a solo *Nephila edulis* - two weeks, and a triplet of *Agelena labyrinthica* - three weeks, rotated 90°, 2019**

**Hybrid solitary semi-social solitary Instrument HD 178524 built by: a solo *Nephila senegalensis* - four weeks, a quartet of *Cyrtophora citricola* - eight weeks, a solo *Holocnemus pluchei* - one week, 2019**

**Hybrid semi-social solitary solitary Instrument SAO 66943 built by: a quintet of *Cyrtophora citricola* - three weeks, a solo *Nephila senegalensis* - eight weeks, a sextet of *Holocnemus pluchei* - three weeks, rotated 90°, 2020**

**Hybrid semi-social solitary solitary Instrument Azmidi built by: an ensemble of *Cyrtophora citricola* - eight weeks, a solo *Nephila inaurata* - eight weeks, a solo *Holocnemus pluchei* - four weeks, 2019**

**Hybrid solitary solitary semi-social Instrument HD 206936 built by: a solo *Nephila inaurata* - two weeks, a solo *Larinioides sclopetarius* - two weeks, a sextet of *Cyrtophora citricola* - two weeks, 2019**

Spider silk, carbon fibre, glass, metal, silicone

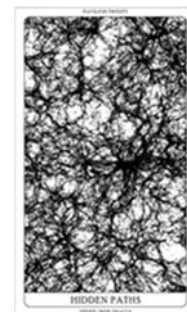
Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; ; Esther Schipper, Berlin

## **ROOM 4**

### **HOW TO ENTANGLE THE UNIVERSE IN A SPIDER/WEB?**

*Traces of living bodies woven in a suspended membrane, biotic multitudes and carbon residues trapped by its sticky threads. To know your future assemblage, choose one web to ask, but remember that not only the living have stories to tell.*

**HIDDEN PATHS - Arachnomancy Card 20 of 33**



The cosmic web is a vibrant superorganism— its filamentary networks of assembling dark matter provide the mesh on which the large-scale structure of the Universe is composed.

Ordinary matter is gravitationally attracted to the densest parts of the cosmic web, and there, galaxies and clusters of galaxies are formed, leaving large, relatively empty voids. Similarly, spider silk acts as an active archive of particulate matter, its silvery strands thickening with carbon dust. Some scientists observed that complex, three-dimensional spider/webs resemble computer simulations of the cosmic web. Building on this analogy, Tomás Saraceno invented, for the first time, an original technique for 3D scanning, digitizing and reconstructing spider/webs. The visual vibratory signals of the laser reveal the hidden architectural entanglements woven by the spider, while also imparting their own effects: with every nanometer that the laser moves, the viewer's sight is transformed, as it becomes visible – with startling clarity – how all three-dimensional space is made up of an infinity of planes. The Universe stands before us between dimensions.

### **How to Entangle the Universe in a Spider/Web?**

2020

Spider silk, carbon fibre, laser



Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

#### FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

**Gravitational solitary semi-social Choreography HR 1577 built by: a solo *Nephila inaurata* - one week, a septet of *Cyrtophora citricola* - two weeks, rotated 180°, 2018**

**Gravitational solitary semi-social Choreography built by: a solo *Nephila senegalensis* - two weeks, a septet of *Cyrtophora citricola* - one week, rotated 180°, 2018**

**Gravitational solitary semi-social semi-social Choreography Kabdhilinan built by: a triplet of *Nephila senegalensis* - three weeks, nineteen *Cyrtophora citricola* - four weeks, twenty *Holocnemus pulchei* - two weeks, 2018**

Spider silk, carbon fibre, glass, metal, silicone  
Courtesy the artist

#### ROOM 5 PASSAGES OF TIME

*Tectonic plates, a tiger mosquito, a mating ritual,  
the waters beneath shaking when a cruise ship  
approaches the canal. The web is an instrument  
that contains its score, the players are multiple.*

*At which frequency are you vibrating?*

**TREMOR - Arachnomancy Card 14 of 33**



The projection *Passages of Time* is an overlapping of the dust live-streamed from *Particular Matter(s) Jam Session*, 2018 and a film that lasts 163,000 years. It is the length of time needed for the light emitted by the Large Magellanic Cloud to reach us. Located in the Mensa and Dorado constellations, this dwarf spiral galaxy can be seen at night in the southern celestial hemisphere. However, we see it with a delay of 163,000 years. The agents of the work are drawn into visibility across epochs, where dust, PM2.5, PM10, Nox, and cosmic dust, resonate across the Large Magellanic Cloud, spanning 163,000 years. As different temporalities appear, dimensions are projected and epochs redefined, questioning our linear conception of time. First, because gravitational waves are disturbances in the curvature of space-time. Then, because the perception of time also depends on each species. Flies perceive 250 frames per second, turtles only 15. The first will see this video in slow motion and the second accelerated. The more perceptual frames that each second holds for an organism, the shorter its life. The question remains which species will be able to attend the end of the video in 163,000 years. The agents of the work are drawn into visibility across epochs, where dust, PM2.5, PM10, Nox, and cosmic dust, resonate across the Large Magellanic Cloud, spanning 163,000 years.

#### Passages of Time

Double projection of

**163.000 Light Years**

2016

Single channel video, sound, duration: 163,000 years, frame rate: 1 frame x year

Commissioned by MARCO, Museum of Contemporary Art of Monterrey

#### Particular Matter(s) Jam Session, 2020

Livestream of dust circulating in Particular Matter(s) Jam Session: light beam, cosmic dust, terrestrial dust, pollen, soot, smoke, PM2.5, stellar wind, sonic waves, video camera, loud speakers, video projector, processor, dust tracking software frame rate: 70 frames x second

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genoa; Esther Schipper

**Gravitational solitary semi-social Choreography 34 Aurigae built by: a duet of *Nephila senegalensis* – eight weeks, a quintet of *Cyrtophora citricola* – three weeks, rotated 180°, 2017**

Spider silk, carbon fiber, glass, metal, silicone  
Courtesy the artist

## ROOM 6 A THERMODYNAMIC IMAGINARY

*Gravitational waves resounding the cosmic web,  
yet to be felt. Infinite sensing of the world,  
life-forms weave constellations.  
Close your eyes, cover your ears,  
I will still sense your felt vibrations.*  
**MULTIVERSE - Arachnomancy Card 1 of 33**



This installation suggests a model for a landscape that balances our relationship with, and harnesses the unlimited potential of the Sun. This realization requires a thermodynamic leap of imagination, just like during an eclipse, when only in the absence of light do we become aware of our scale in the shadow of the cosmos. In that moment of alignment between Sun, Moon and Earth, we understand that we rely on a reciprocal alliance between the elements and effects, the shifting winds, the exchange of heat and momentum, and the diff using reflection of solar radiation towards the cosmic extent. Making tangible this invisible web of relations, participants are invited to engage collectively in this exercise for planetary attunement: in the future promised by the parallel ensemble cast about the room, so extends an aerial invitation to play in the thermodynamic imaginary. Different objects and agents cast their shadows in an ever-changing lightscape, where all is floating, revealing, enlarging and fading away, suspended in elemental motion. Bodies and sculptures become diff use, no longer limited to their physical boundaries or scale, equally composed of matter and emptiness, light and shadow, as they merge with the other entities in the room, be they human or non-human, organic or constructed.

### **A Thermodynamic Imaginary** 2020

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

### **Aeroke, 2019**

Mylar transparent and metalized, tape, pump with overpressure release valve, polyester rope

### **Aquarius Dwarf/M+N, 2019**

Metal, polyester rope, monofilament

### **Aerosolar Constellation 22.5/55/19.5/36/15.5, 2018**

### **Aerosolar Pisces, 2019**

Hand blown glass, polyester rope, velvet rope

### **RAY 19.819, 2018**

### **RAY 30.058, 2018**

Hand blown glass, metal, polyester rope, velvet rope, monofilament

### **Aeroscale 170, 2018**

Hand blown glass, glass disks, polyester rope, velvet rope, monofilament

### **Solar eclipse 1.100, 2018**

Hand blown glass sphere, glass disks, metal, polyester rope, velvet rope, monofilament

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

## ROOM 7 FLYING GARDENS

*Lamps and lightbulbs as allies in daily hunting,  
bridging lifeways in entangled dependency.  
Nature seems to elect relationships rather than  
individuals, nothing makes itself alone.  
Ask yourself how many multitudes you contain.*  
**SYM(BIO)POETICS - Arachnomancy Card 3 of 33**



"The physiology of plants is based on different principles from that of animals. While animals have evolved to concentrate almost all their most important vital functions in a few organs such as the brain, lungs, stomach, and so on, plants have taken into account the reality of being easy prey, and avoided concentrating their faculties in a few neurological areas. [...] A plant's functions are not related to organs – which means plants breathe without having lungs, nourish themselves without having a mouth or stomach, stand erect without having a skeleton, and make decisions without having a brain. It's because of this very special physiology that large portions of a plant can be removed without putting its survival at risk: some plants can have up to 90 or 95 percent of themselves eaten, but then grow back normally from the small surviving nub. [...] It's no accident that we continually refer to ourselves as individuals: the term comes from the Latin *in* (which here means "not") and *dividuus* ("divisible"). Our body really is indivisible: if we're cut in half, the two halves can't live separately; they die. But if we cut a plant in half, the two parts can still live independently, for the simple reason that a plant isn't an individual. In fact, the right way to think about a tree, a cactus, or a shrub is not to compare it to a human being or any other animal, but to picture it as a colony. A tree is much more like a colony of bees or ants than an individual animal."

Stefano Mancuso, *Brilliant Green*, 2013

"Agriculture is always and only celestial: working the land and the earth always means manipulating portions of the heavens, tilling the stars. On the other hand, Gaia is not a limited organism that continues to retreat into itself: it is the extension of a sky that never ceases to expand and that contracts only in order to be able to increase its spheres, to extend and amplify the circles of rotation and revolution. Plants have literally created the world in which we live. If they are everywhere and constitute the essential anatomy of our planet, it is because they are its embryonic tissues. Through their conquest of the earth's surface and their extension throughout the whole world, plants have produced (and continue to produce) the oxygen-rich atmosphere that has made it possible for all the "higher" animals to live: the so-called "higher" animals are only able to live because they breathe the by-products and waste of plant metabolism, oxygen. If the plants created the world we live in, then Gaia is a vegetable being: it is much more a garden than a zoo, and it is only because Gaia is a garden that we can live here. Every cosmological speculation must take the form of a botanical reflection. But in this garden, the plants are not (or are not only) the content or the inhabitants: they are the gardeners themselves. Like all living species, we too are the subject of gardening. We are one of their agricultural and cultural products. In other words: plants are not the landscape, they are the first landscape architects. What we call garden is simply an army of gardeners. But their gardening is an astral or solar gardening: the plants are the great farmers of the heavens and of the prince of stars, the sun."

Emanuele Coccia, *"Tomás Saraceno's Astral Ark"*, 2020

### **Flying Gardens**

2020

Tillandsia plants, hand blown glass, monofilament, polyester rope, velvet rope, carbon fibre

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

**Pneuma 20.95, 2020**

**Pneuma 15.999 HM, 2019**

**Pneuma 78.09, 2020**

Hand blown glass, polyester rope, velvet rope, monofilament

**Pneuma 420, 2020**

Hand blown glass, polyester rope, velvet rope

**Callisto 13, 2019**

Glass disk, carbon fibre, polyester rope, velvet rope, monofilament

**Aeolus 15,759, 2019**

**Aeolus 36,184, 2019**

**Aeolus 8.79, 2019**

**Aeolus 4.67, 2019**

**Aeolus 7.5, 2019**

Hand blown glass, nylon

**Aeolus 8.80, 2019**

Hand blown glass, monofilament, Tillandsia plants

**Aeolus 9.7, 2019**

Hand blown glass

**Calendrier Lun-AIR de Paris, 2018**

Black carbon, soot, PM2.5, PM10, filter paper. From the series Printed Matters, printed with ink made of black carbon PM2.5 pollution, sequestered from the air of Mumbai. Image from a special issue of NASA Cosmic Dust Catalogue, April 1982, printed on 8 gram handmade paper, photo glicée.



Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

### ARACNOMANCY CARDS

This deck of 33 cards is an instrument of mediation, one of the many ways to consult spider/web oracles. Spider/ webs are the mouths through which the spider eats and the oracle speaks. The oracle is a messenger between perceptual worlds, transcending the reciprocal blindness between life forms. Spider/webs weave worlds of vibration in tune to the astral scores. Sense new threads of connectivity, or else face the eternal silence of extinction. As life draws lines on your hands, so the spider draws lines on your future. The Arachnomancy reading is written through the silken threads of the spider/web.

Inspired in part by the practice of *nggám*, or spider divination, in the Mambila tribe of Cameroon and Nigeria, during which questions are asked of a grounddwelling spider who submits an answer by rearranging an arachnomancer's 'divination cards,' our Arachnomancy cards thinks through the oracular capabilities of the spider/web, whose vibrational world may open it to knowledge we don't have access to.

Part of the exhibition are scheduled Arachnomancy Reading sessions to 'read' the structure, vibrations and score of a spider/web oracle through the use of Tomás Saraceno's *Arachnomancy Cards*, and divine from this encounter something of our multispecies future. Let your future be read by a spider/web and download the Arachnomancy app, joining an exercise in mapping against extinction. For more information visit [Arachnophilia.net](http://Arachnophilia.net)

#### Arachnomancy Cards

Deck of 33 cards printed on carbon footprint neutral paper

Courtesy the artist with thanks to the Arachnophilia archives; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genoa; Esther Schipper, Berlin

**Hybrid solitary semi-social BD+10° 4321 built by: a triplet of *Nephila inaurata* - eight weeks, a septet of *Cyrtophora citricola* - four weeks, rotated 90°, 2019**

Spider silk, carbon fibre, glass, metal

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

### ROOM 8 AEROGRAPHIES

*Amid the hills and galaxies, starlight exposure,  
she sews together earth and sky to illuminate  
the night and help wandering beings find their  
paths. Please remember that baser passions  
could interrupt her balance of ecosystemic forces  
when asking your question.*

**THE COSMIC WEB - Arachnomancy Card 21 of 33**



This room puts into perspective the different ways in which the movements of people, heat, animals and spider/webs affect and are affected by the air. Every gesture leaves a trace: the movements of persons, sounds, and spider/webs translate as the potential language of earthly phenomena, an emergent cartography of the air. Spider/webs laid out on paper produce strange new spider maps of invisible cities; alongside, the trajectories of aerosolar sculptures that float freely in the air without the help of fossil fuels trace out Aeroglyphs, plotting a path forward out of the extractive ideology of the Anthropocene. Pens suspended to balloons act as utensils for the wind to draw its trajectories; filled with ink made from black carbon pollution from Mumbai's air, these pens answer the question of what the air would write with – the material with which we have poisoned the air becomes a tool of its communication, reminding us of its ever-present agency even in the face of our destruction. Together these Aerographies are letters, characters and signatures of a new language for the Aerocene era. A three-dimensional web connects floor and the air above, challenging the idea of a hierarchical tree of life and its linear convictions, instead proposing a rhizomatic web of life, highlighting the hybridities between and among species and worlds.

#### Aerographies

2020

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

**Aeroglyph 17-20.04.18 | BEL | Market & Burg Square, Bruges | Explorer flight | Erik, Gwilym, Hannah | Garmin tracker |, 2018**

**Aeroglyph 07.08.17 | ARG | Jujuy | Explorer flight | Joaquin, Tomas | Garmin tracker |, 2018**

**Aeroglyph 12.04.17 | ANT | Antarctica Biennale - Ushuaia | Explorer flight | Nick & Liz | Unknown tracker |, 2018**

Print on adhesive paper

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

**Solitary semi-social mapping of Erakis by a solo *Nephila senegalensis* - one week, a duet of *Cyrtophora citricola* - one week, rotated 90°, 2019**

**Solitary semi-social solitary mapping of HD 28305 by a solo *Nephila inaurata* - four weeks, a quintet of *Cyrtophora citricola* - three weeks, a solo Linyphiidae sp. - one week, 2019**

**Semi-social solitary mapping of Ursae Majoris by a solo *Cyrtophora citricola* - six weeks, and a quintet of *Nephila edulis juvenile* - two weeks, rotated 180°, 2019**

**Solitary semi-social mapping of FK5 337 by a solo *Nephila inaurata* - six weeks, a duet of *Cyrtophora citricola* - five weeks, 2019**

**Solitary semi-social mapping of CCDM J08585+1151A by a solo *Nephila inaurata* - three weeks, a quartet of *Cyrtophora citricola* - five weeks, 2019**

**Solitary semi-social mapping of Alioth by a solo *Nephila edulis juvenile* - one week, a triplet of *Cyrtophora citricola juvenile* - one week, 2019.**

**Expanse NGC 1579 by a *Tegenaria domestica*, 2017**

Spider silk, archival paper, ink, fixative

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

**Solitary semi-social mapping of GJ 4095 by a triplet of *Nephila inaurata* - five weeks, an ensemble of *Cyrtophora citricola* - seven weeks, 2019**

Spider silk, archival paper, ink, fixative

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

## **CENTER OF THE ROOM**

### **Thermodynamic Suite**

2020

Paper, ink, balloon

Courtesy the artist; Andersen's, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles; Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genova; Esther Schipper, Berlin

### **Resine Tree Connectome**

2020

Wood, polyester rope, monofilament

Courtesy the artist

### **12SE/Flying Garden/Air-Port-City**

2007-2020

gonfiabile

Courtesy the artist



# TOMÁS SARACENO ARIA

FIRENZE  
PALAZZO  
STROZZI

22 FEBRUARY  
19 JULY  
2020

## A CLOSER LOOK

### **THERMODYNAMIC CONSTELLATION**

#### ***Tomás Saraceno's installation for the Palazzo Strozzi courtyard***

"While fossil fuel based industries enterprise to colonize other planets, the air, this interface between us and the sun, is controlled by the few and continues to be compromised: carbon emissions fill the air, particulate matter floats inside our lungs while electromagnetic radiation envelops the earth, dictating the tempo of digital capitalism in the era of global warming. Imagine a different era, defined instead by interplanetary sensitivity, shared through a new ecology of practices. Towards this, collective ideas must form, by asking: How would it feel to breathe in a post fossil fuel era? And, what are our response-abilities to be on air? How can geopolitical borders be challenged in an age of climate inequality? How to participate in a new epoch beyond the Anthropocene, towards the decarbonization of the air, and independence from fossil fuels? Together, we call for this new epoch, which we have named Aerocene. Aerocene imagines space as a commons, a physical and imaginative place cleared from corporate control and government surveillance. Aerocene promotes de-securitized, free access to the atmosphere, the last earthly layer created as a result of the interplaying forces of the sun, gravity and the earth mass. Aerocene is a proposal—a scene in, on, for, and with the air."

– The *Aerocene Manifesto*

The launchpad towards this new epoch is an aerosolar balloon, whose only engine is the air and heat of the sun, floating as a result of temperature differentials between internal and external air masses. These self-stabilising aerosolar bodies float differently from any airborne plant or animal. Once inflated with air, they are able to elevate into the sky, thanks only to the sun heating the air in the interior, afterwards relying only on the wind to drift along aerosolar journeys.

*A Thermodynamic Constellation* provides a launchpad for new era of mobility that Saraceno defines as the Aerocene. The spheres that comprise the installation, are prototypes for aerosolar sculptures that are able to float around the world, free from borders, free from fossil fuels. They are modelled versions of bigger structures that would be able to achieve long-distance flights, floating at altitudes between 20 km and 40 km.

Tomás Saraceno was the artist in residence at the French Centre National d'Études Spatiales (CNES) in 2014–15, and the design of this sculpture is inspired by scientific experiments that agency started in the late 1970s by launching infrared radiation balloons (Montgolfière InfraRouge, MIR) into the upper levels of the atmosphere. They are made of two different lightweight materials: transparent and mirror foils. The mirror part of these sculptures would reflect part of the sun's radiation, thus preventing the air envelopes from overheating. This insulation is important during daytime flight. The transparent half helps to maintain the temperature inside the envelope (and hence its buoyancy) during the night, since it absorbs the infrared radiation emitted from the earth's surface—the solar heat that the planet accumulated over a day. Floating like this would reveal a fluctuating trajectory, a woven choreography in the air, free from borders, free from fossil fuels.

As a static sculpture, it speculates about what kinds of nomadic socio-political structures might emerge if we could navigate the rivers of the atmosphere, floating airborne aboard structures like this, across borders, without carbon emissions. These aerosolar journeys reimagine the ways in which borders are set up by humans, the power of national institutions to decide who can travel, policies that dramatically affect vulnerable subjects, humans and nonhuman life forms. To move like this would be to become airmen, moving from *Homo oeconomicus* to *Homo flotantis*, who is attuned to planetary rhythms, conscious of living with other humans and nonhumans and who learned to float in the air, adrift with the wind, within its elemental being.



### ***“Thermodynamic Constellation”***

**The installation promoted by the Fondazione CR Firenze is part of a broader project devoted to environmental issues comprising numerous activities targeting schools and young people.**

The first work in Palazzo Strozzi's *Tomás Saraceno. Aria* exhibition is a large new installation by the artist for the Palazzo Strozzi courtyard, promoted and produced by the Fondazione CR Firenze. The work, entitled ***Thermodynamic Constellation***, is a metaphor of the new age of solidarity between man and the environment embodied by Aerocene, an interdisciplinary artistic community founded by the artist himself.

The installation urges us to rethink the way we inhabit our world in a poetic and collective vein, transforming the Palazzo Strozzi courtyard into a physical and philosophical platform in an attempt to propose a change of paradigm through an original dialogue between the Renaissance and the contemporary world – moving on from the idea of ‘man at the centre of the world’ to the concept of ‘man as part of a universe’ in which a new harmony can and must be sought.

The work is the starting point for an in-depth reflection on sustainability and the relationship between art and science, crucial issues in Tomás Saraceno's work that have also been developed with the Fondazione CR Firenze in a broad programme of activities targeting schools and young people in particular.

*“In addition to its traditional contribution to Palazzo Strozzi's institutional activity - **says President Luigi Salvadori** - the Fondazione CR Firenze was also eager to sponsor the production of a major new work by Saraceno and a programme of activities designed to foster an understanding of the exhibition's themes in secondary school students aged 15 to 19. The scheme also seeks to stimulate an increasingly urgent and necessary debate on man's relationship with the environment. Thus art can stimulate people's critical conscience and allow us to focus on several important aspects of our time ranging from those impacting our own daily lives to such major global issues as protecting natural resources and the ecosystem. Issues relating to climate change and to the environmental sustainability of human activity are the biggest challenges currently facing mankind, and the younger generations will be called on to address them over the coming years. The Fondazione is eager to play a leading role in this process and will be sponsoring a series of schemes at the international level to foster greater sensitivity to, and a greater awareness of, these crucial issues”.*

*“Saraceno's work speaks to us of important and highly topical issues in a powerful and direct way, restoring to art its strong role as a beacon urging us to reflect on the typical and increasingly urgent problems and challenges of our era such as pollution, climate change, sustainability and overcoming geographical and social barriers” says **Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi Director General Arturo Galansino**. “With *Thermodynamic Constellation* in Palazzo Strozzi's courtyard, Tomás Saraceno urges us to reflect in a new and imaginative way on man's ability to transcend consolidated limits and barriers in the name of a new harmony with the planet. I would like to thank the Fondazione CR Firenze for its support for this project which aims in particular to stimulate the active involvement of young people, among whom a growing awareness is turning them into leading players in the new challenges facing contemporary reality”.*

### ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PROGRAMME

On the occasion of *Tomás Saraceno. Aria*, the Fondazione CR Firenze will work in partnership with the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi to present an extensive program of activities, open to all, exploring issues of sustainability and the relationship between art and science with a particular focus on young people and schools. An evening lecture series and schools activity programme will be curated by Marco Bindi, Vice Rector to the Research Department of the University of Florence and member of IPCC - Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (Nobel Peace Prize).

#### CONFERENCE CYCLE AT PALAZZO STROZZI

A series of talks from international experts at Palazzo Strozzi to discuss climate change and the challenges that humanity will have to face in the coming decades to be able to adapt to the changes in our ecosystem which are already beginning to affect us. The speakers at Palazzo Strozzi's climate conference are some of the leading international experts in the field of climatological studies and research related to sustainable development.

- Monday 9/03 (time 18.00), Stefano Caserini, Politecnico di Milano
- Thursday 26/03 (time 18.00), Jerry Glover, USAID e Washington State University (USA)
- Thursday 2/04 (time 18.00), Roger Stone, University of Southern Queensland (Australia)
- Thursday 16/04 (time 18.00), Franco Miglietta, CNR - Istituto di BioEconomia
- Thursday 30/04, (time 18.00), Antonello Pasini, CNR – Research Institute on Air Pollution

#### SCHOOLS SPECIAL

Together with a dynamic programme of visits and workshops in the exhibition, special workshops will be available for upper secondary schools held directly in the classes. Students will be able to discover and debate the work of artists exploring the relationship between man and the natural environment, working collaboratively to reflect on and rethink their everyday environment. A series of meetings, also dedicated to high school students will be held at Palazzo Strozzi with experts from the Polytechnic of Milan, the University of Padua and the CNR. This programme of events will focus on issues of climate change, the conscious use of water, sustainable nutrition, the carbon cycle and the relationship between environmental changes and migratory flows.

#### STROZZI NIGHT

Thursday 28 May, 18.00-24.00

A special late event at Palazzo Strozzi featuring music, live performances and activities for young people and adults as well as late night access to *Tomás Saraceno. Aria*. The event was conceived and developed in collaboration with the group of high school students participating in the PCTO project (Paths for Transversal Skills and Orientation) who supervised the program and communication of the evening with the Palazzo Strozzi team.

#### SOUND CONSTELLATION

A series of three events held in the courtyard of Palazzo Strozzi by Tempo Reale and dedicated to the most unexpected aspects of contemporary experimental music. Francesco Giomi shifts attention to the noise-silence relationship and the importance of listening; Bernard Fort transforms the courtyard of Palazzo Strozzi into a huge resonant sound aviary featuring birdsong from all across Italy; and Christian Zanesi plays live a composition that touches on different territories of sound, both natural and anthropic.

- May 14, 9.00 pm: Francesco Giomi, Silence Jukebox
- 11 June, 9.00 pm: Bernard Fort, Oiseaux
- 9 July 2020, 9.00 pm: Christian Zanesi, Nomadic Flow



### TOMÁS SARACENO ARACHNOMANCY CARDS

There is a theory in metaphysical cosmology that we live in not one universe but many, held together in the shape of the multiverse, in which everything that could happen does and is happening, each decision, each moment of chance giving life to a new universe, a new timeline.

*Gravitational waves resounding the cosmic web, yet to be felt. Infinite sensing of the world, lifeforms weave constellations. Close your eyes, cover your ears, I will still sense your felt vibrations.*

In an oracular reading, thirty-three futures emerge all at the same time. As you ask the spider your question, it picks your card; in another universe, it picks your card; in another universe, it picks your card. Named for the vibrational melodies of our world, its sounds and songs, *Tomás Saraceno: Aria* compiles a multiverse of simultaneous futures. Organized around Saraceno's *Arachnomancy Cards*, a set of cards that act as an invitation to attune to sym(bio)poetic possibilities, it celebrates the radical interconnectedness of all things, both living and nonliving. Against the mass commodification of nature and the self-destructive cultural and economic power structures of the present, Tomás Saraceno's *Arachnomancy Cards* consult the spider/web oracle, engaging with different forms of knowledge in an echo of spider divination methods practiced in different parts of the world.

Inspired by the *nggám* collaboration of ground-dwelling spiders and their human neighbors in Cameroon, the *Arachnomancy Cards* think through the spider's oracular capabilities as a result of its sensory universe. The spider's highly developed vibrational senses allow them to attune to a symphony of biotic and abiotic tremors, knowledge that we are not able to perceive. In the context of the current ecological crisis, named the Sixth Mass Extinction, invertebrates such as arachnids and insects are disappearing at an accelerated pace, with major consequences for the environment and ecosystems. While invertebrates make up more than 95 percent of animal species, most countries lack ethical guidelines and regulations regarding their nonhuman rights. It is imperative that we attune with nonhuman voices that join with our own in endless webs of connectivity and disconnectivity, and recognize their vibratory voices.

The oracle of our present, past, and future, the spider/web connects our multidimensional universe with an ontology that extends past the living, that crosses scales – between the cosmic web, spider/webs, and connectomes; between cosmic dust and pollutive dust; between soap bubble formations and overlapping worlds. International audiences can encounter the oracle from anywhere in the world with the *Arachnomancy App*, and participate in the collective exercise of mapping against extinction through the process of becoming sensitive to the multispecies ecologies in which we are embedded. The spider/web oracle is a messenger between perceptual worlds, transcending the reciprocal blindness between spider/webs and humans. By focusing less on individuals and more on reciprocal relationships, we might think beyond what means are necessary to control our environments and more on the shared formation of our world.

Each room in the exhibition is linked to one of the artist's *Arachnomancy Cards* -invitations to attune to our sympoetic futures, and to celebrate the radical interconnectedness of all things, both living and nonliving. One of the rooms hosts a complete set of the thirty-three *Arachnomancy Cards*. In this space, every Thursday from 19.00 to 21.30, you can attend an individual interpretation of the cards with Gestalt psychotherapist Dr. Gianmarco Meucci. Inspired in part by the practice of *nggám*, or spider divination, in the Mambila tribe of Cameroon and Nigeria, during which questions are asked of a grounddwelling spider who submits an answer by rearranging an arachnomancer's 'divination cards,' our *Arachnomancy cards* thinks through the oracular capabilities of the spider/web, whose vibrational world may open it to knowledge we don't have access to.

For individual interpretation of the cards online reservation is mandatory: [palazzostrozzi.org/arachnomancy-cards](https://palazzostrozzi.org/arachnomancy-cards)

Let your future be read by a spider/web and download the *Arachnomancy app*, created by Studio Tomás Saraceno, joining an exercise mapping against extinction. For more information visit [Arachnophilia.net](https://Arachnophilia.net)





# TOMÁS SARACENO ARIA

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## **AEROCENE: AEROCENE FLIGHTS AND MUSEO AERO SOLAR**

### **AEROCENE**

Aerocene is an interdisciplinary artistic community that seeks to devise new modes of ecological sensitivity, reactivating a common imaginary towards an ethical collaboration with the atmosphere and the environment, in an era free from borders, free from fossil fuels. Aerocene's activities manifest in the testing and circulation of aerosolar sculptures that become buoyant only by the heat of the Sun and infrared radiation from the surface of Earth. As an ever growing research and experimental practice, Aerocene is open-source and collaborative. It consists of a dedicated and diverse global community of practitioners who collaborate to promote environmental awareness and atmospheric sensing experiments. Imagining new infrastructures of planetary mobility and ethics, Aerocene aims to build a new ecology of practice with a DIT (Do-It-Together) spirit, attempting to overcome the extractive approach certain humans have developed towards planetary landscapes, ecosystems and nonhuman species. These aims are achieved and complemented through a bottom-up, participatory approach to environmental policy-making and citizen science, encouraged through the international community-building carried out by the Aerocene Foundation, initiated by artist Tomás Saraceno in 2015. Tomás Saraceno's exhibition *Aria* at Palazzo Strozzi has been accompanied by an extensive public program featuring Aerocene events and activities, including *Museo Aero Solar* and *Aerocene Flights* to Florence and Tuscany—aerosolar performances of the Aerocene epoch that move us from carbon-powered flights to moments of drift, as we float at the bottom of an ocean of air.

### **AEROCENE FLIGHTS**

The Aerocene Backpack is a portable flight starter kit containing an aerosolar sculpture that can lift with the heat of the sun and the air we breathe. Without the use of fossil fuels, helium, hydrogen, solar panels, batteries or burners, it floats in the atmosphere providing a message of simplicity. The Manifattura Tabacchi, in conjunction with the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi and the Aerocene Foundation host three days of Aerocene Backpack flights, so that all may join the Aerocene epoch. Download the Aerocene App and travel around the world with your imagination, from an idea by the Aerocene Foundation in collaboration with MIT.

Saturday 23 May, 30 May, 6 June from 10.30 to 18.00

Manifattura Tabacchi Via delle Cascine 35

Manifattura Tabacchi also hosts a section of videos and materials dedicated to Aerocene

### **MUSEO AERO SOLAR**

Museo Aero Solar is an ongoing collective project, an open invitation for everyone to turn used plastic bags into a lighter-than-air balloon that floats free from fossil fuels. It is both a floating museum and a solar sculpture. In 2007, Saraceno, in conversation with Alberto Pesavento started collecting plastic bags, and with more friends started to cut them, paste and join them together, before drawing on them, creating a collection of personal stories and friendships.

To date, hundreds of thousands of plastic bags have been rescued from over 50 communities across more than 30 countries. Participate by bringing used plastic bags to Palazzo Strozzi from February to June. In June, the Parco delle Cascine will host a collective workshop to build a new Museo Aero Solar. In this way the public can be part of change and join the movement towards an Aerocene epoch. The workshop is open to all; no reservations required. In collaboration with Aerocene Foundation, IED (Istituto Europeo di Design) and Publiacqua. The students of the three-year courses in Interior Design and Advertising Communication took care of the image of the project and the plastic bag collector installed in the room near the beginning of the exhibition.

Saturday 27 (assembly workshop), 10.30 to 18.00; Sunday 28, (inflation), 7.00 to 9.00 Parco delle Cascine.

## ARIA TALK

### Special Event with Tomás Saraceno at Cinema Odeon Firenze



Fly with Aerocene Pacha. A project by Tomás Saraceno for Aerocene 21-28 January 2020, Salinas Grandes, Jujuy, Argentina  
Human Solar Free Flight as part of Connect, BTS, curated by DaeHyung Lee  
Courtesy the artist and Aerocene Foundation. Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2020.  
Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0 by Aerocene Foundation

**Saturday 22 February 2020 at 15.30**, on the occasion of the first day of the exhibition *Tomás Saraceno. Aria*, Palazzo Strozzi hosts a **special event at the Cinema Odeon** in Florence featuring the screening of the film *Fly with Aerocene Pacha* and a roundtable discussion at the presence of the artist Tomás Saraceno.

***Fly with Aerocene Pacha*** (2020, 28 min.) documents the eponymous project by Tomás Saraceno and the Aerocene community that took place on 28 January 2020 in Salinas Grandes, Jujuy (Argentina), part of the global public art project CONNECT, BTS, curated by Daehyung Lee. For the first time in history a human being, Leticia Marquès, floated into the sky powered only by the sun and the air with an altitude of 176m, a distance of 2.56km and a duration of 37 minutes, without fossil fuels, solar panels, batteries or helium. A synthesis of art, science and environmental activism, this project set **six world records** in the general and women's categories for the height, distance and duration of a free flight accomplished using only the heat of the sun and the air that we breathe.

The screening will be followed by a **public conversation with Tomás Saraceno** debating the themes addressed in the exhibition and his research, which merges art, natural and social sciences. The artist will be in conversation with Arturo Galansino (Director General, Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi), Melisa Argento (political scientist and researcher), Stavros Katsanevas (Director, European Gravitational Observatory), Stefano Mancuso (Director, LINV, International Laboratory of Plant Neurobiology) and Lisa Signorile (biologist and scientific journalist). The panel will be chaired and moderated by journalist and researcher Marco Filoni.

The event is the first in a rich programme of activities and events open to the public and linked to the exhibition *Tomás Saraceno. Aria*, due to be held in Palazzo Strozzi and other venues in the city while the exhibition is running.

**Admission free while places last.**



## **TOMÁS SARACENO BIOGRAPHY**

**Tomás Saraceno** (b.1973, Argentina)

Tomás Saraceno's practice moves toward the entanglement of diverse threads of thought, including art, life science and the social sciences. Enmeshed at the junction of these worlds, his floating sculptures, community projects and interactive installations propose and explore new, sustainable ways of inhabiting and sensing the environment. In 2007 Saraceno activated projects aimed towards an ethical collaboration with the atmosphere, including Museo Aero Solar. These projects grew into the international, interdisciplinary artistic community Aerocene, which seeks to create an environment free from borders, free from fossil fuels. In 2020 as part of *Fly with Aerocene Pacha*, Saraceno and the Aerocene community achieved six world records for altitude, distance, duration (both in the general and female category) for a certified, untethered flight using only the warmth of the sun and the air we breathe. His profound interest in spiders and their webs led to the formation of the Arachnophilia team at Studio Tomás Saraceno, engendering the creation of Arachnophilia.net and the Arachnomancy App. Through these platforms Saraceno invites people from around the globe to weave the web of interspecies understanding and take part in the challenge of Mapping Against Extinction.

In the past decade he has collaborated with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Max Planck Institute, the Nanyang Technological University, the Imperial College London and the Natural History Museum London. With an emphasis on collaborative interaction he also became the first person to scan, reconstruct and reimagine spiders' weaved spatial habitats, and possesses the only three-dimensional spider web collection in existence. Saraceno lectures in institutions worldwide, and directed the Institute of Architecture-related Art (IAK) at Braunschweig University of Technology, Germany (2014–2016). He has held residencies at Centre National d'Études Spatiales (2014–2015), MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (2012–ongoing) and Atelier Calder (2010), among others.

His work has most recently been exhibited at the 58th International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia, May You Live In Interesting Times, curated by Ralph Rugoff; the Carte Blanche exhibition ON AIR at Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2018), curated by Rebecca Lamarche-Vadel; A Thermodynamic Imaginary, at Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, Lisbon (2018), curated by Pedro Gadanho; How to Entangle the Universe in a Spider's Web, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires (2017), curated by Victoria Noorthoorn; Stillness in Motion – Cloud Cities, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2016), curated by Joseph Becker; and Aerocene, at Solutions COP21, Grand Palais, Paris (2015). His work is housed in international collections including the Bauhaus Museum, Weimar; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; SFMOMA, San Francisco; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Nationalgalerie, and Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin. Saraceno lives and works in and beyond the planet Earth.





## ACTIVITIES IN THE EXHIBITION AND BEYOND

### PUBLICATIONS

The Tomás Saraceno. Aria catalogue is the first volume, in Italian, entirely dedicated to the artist to be published in Italian, also available in English, and published by Marsilio Editore. It brings together an essay by the exhibition's curator Arturo Galansino and one by the philosopher Emanuele Coccia, as well as texts related to the installations in Palazzo Strozzi's courtyard and exhibition spaces, as well as wider overview of the artist's work. The catalogue is printed on Fedrigoni Ivory Bulk, a completely biodegradable and recyclable natural certified paper, FSC®, Marsilio have also produced a *Guide* to the exhibition, in two editions, which brings together a biography of Tomás Saraceno, the texts in the Palazzo Strozzi exhibition, and the images of the works in the courtyard and in the rooms of Palazzo Strozzi.

### FUORIMOSTRA

Shining the spotlight on its key network of collaborations with local museums and institutions, Palazzo Strozzi offers **FUORIMOSTRA** for *Tomás Saraceno. Aria* an itinerary for visitors to explore cultural organisations throughout Florence and Tuscany to discover more about the region's local cultural heritage.

#### FLORENCE

1. The Hill of Galileo
2. Manifattura Tabacchi
3. Fondazione Scienza e Tecnica Museum
4. Museo Galileo
5. Museo Novecento
6. Museo Salvatore Ferragamo

#### BARGINO

7. Antinori nel Chianti Classico

#### CAPALBIO

8. Giardino dei Tarocchi

#### GAIOLE IN CHIANTI

9. Castello di Ama for contemporary art

#### PISA

10. European Gravitational Observatory (CNRS/INFN) in Santo Stefano a Macerata, Cascina

#### PISTOIA

11. Gori collection

11. Museo del Novecento e del Contemporaneo di Palazzo Fabroni

#### PRATO

13. Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci
14. Museo di Scienze Planetarie

### EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

To tie in with the *Tomás Saraceno. Aria* exhibition the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi's Education Department has once again devised a series of activities for families, schools, universities, young people and adults with a particular focus on the inclusion of people with disabilities. Its tours and workshops are specially designed to make a visit to the exhibition a truly enriching experience.

### ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES

#### Family Kit

The Family Kit is a tool designed for families (with children aged 3 and over) wishing to explore the exhibition in a creative way. The Kit allows visitors to draw, take notes, take the time to observe and discuss art, and discover the great masterpieces of Tomás Saraceno's art. The Kit comprises a book with additional information and a wealth of materials for drawing and experimenting with art, presented in a bag specially designed and made by Wanny Di Filippo – Il Bisonte. The Kit is always available free of charge at the Info Point in the exhibition. For further information: [edu@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:edu@palazzostrozzi.org)



# TOMÁS SARACENO ARIA

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22 FEBRUARY  
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## Workshops for families

Attività pensate per condividere l'arte in famiglia: bambini e genitori partecipano insieme per osservare alcune opere nelle sale della mostra e sperimentare in laboratorio usando la creatività. Activities designed to allow the whole family to share in art, with children and parents joining together to look at some of the works on display in the exhibition and then to complete their shared experience by giving free rein to their creativity in the workshop. For families with children aged 3 to 6: *The fantastic story of the hanging planets*, wednesday 18 march, 8 and 22 april, 6 and 20 may, from 17.00 to 18.30; For families with children aged 7 to 12: *The universe in a spider web*, every Sunday from 10.30 to 12.30. Reservations are required. There is no charge for the activities but a ticket to the exhibition is required. Reservations: tel. +39.055.2469600; prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org

## Special event for families: PALAZZO STROZZI AT THE MERCATO CENTRALE FIRENZE

To tie in with the exhibition, Palazzo Strozzi is organizing two special workshops for families with children aged 7 to 12 at the Mercato Centrale Firenze: *Tomás Saraceno's new worlds*, an activity to discover, experiment and create.

With his works Tomás Saraceno invites visitors to change their point of view on reality and connect with the elements around them, such as dust, insects and plants. Tomás Saraceno's art leads to imagine a new future, where every organism lives in harmony with others. The laboratory is held in the evocative spaces of the Mercato Centrale Firenze, and it is focused on the idea of another way of life: starting from nature and everything around us to create a small imaginary worlds.

Schedule: Saturday 28 March and Saturday 9 May at 16.00. Places are limited; reservations are required: info.firenze@mercatocentrale.it

## ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

### Drawing Kit

A sketchbook, a pencil, an eraser and a suggestion for observing the works of art: the Drawing Kit is designed to help visitors to the exhibition train their eye and express their creativity through the oldest art form: drawing. Drawing is looking, it is a different way of knowing and communicating with a work of art, it is a way of focusing on, and at the same time of losing oneself before, a painting or a sculpture. A drawn image contains within it the experience of observation: translating what we see into a new drawing is our personal effort to shape the world. The Drawing Kit is intended for all those wishing to visit the exhibition and to discover a new way of looking at a great artist's art. The important thing is not to produce a great drawing but to let your eye, hand and pencil work together to carry you into the creative experience. The folder containing the Drawing Kit is designed and made by Wanny Di Filippo –Il Bisonte. and always available free of charge at the Info Point in the exhibition in both Italian and English. For further information: edu@palazzostrozzi.org

### Art Break: 30 minutes devoted to art

Every Wednesday (from 14.00 to 14.30) in the period from 11 march to 24 june, the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi proposes an indepth exploration of the art of Tomás Saraceno, from suspended installations that recall utopian architectural experiments to scientific research through collaboration with spiders in the creation of miniature universes. Visitors are invited to take 30 minute break to discover the art of one of the great protagonists of contemporary art led by the students of the SAGAS (History, Archeology, Geography, Art, Entertainment) Department of the University of Florence (Professor Tiziana Serena and Professor Giorgio Bacci), with the support of Unicoop Firenze.

The project is hosted by Sara Gavagni, Federica Giglio, Gianpaolo Irtinni, Arianna La Guardia, Marta Lorenzi, Maria Palleschi, Vittoria Rossini, Federica Pascarella, Silvia Villafranca. Art Break is part of the program of activities developed to encourage educational experiences for students through the exhibitions of Palazzo Strozzi.

### Art School

Tomás Saraceno's artistic research unites art, natural and social sciences; his works show how each organism is part of a complex whole made up of infinite connections. In dialogue with the exhibition, the new edition of The Art school offers a series of workshops held by artists and collectives to reflect on the concept of "togetherness" analyzed from several points of view. The workshops are designed for young people (16+) and adults interested in sharing a practical and theoretical experience with the artists, to deepen the themes of the exhibition and rework them in a creative key. Activities calendar: Leone Contini Saturday 14 and 29 March, 10.00-18.00; Wurmko Saturday 18 and 26 April, 10.00-18.00; Elena Mazzi on Saturday 9 and 17 May, 10.00-18.00. On reservation. For information: edu@palazzostrozzi.org

The project is realized with the support of Unicoop Firenze.



#### **Tours for individual visitors and adult groups**

Individual visitors and groups of adults can sign up for tours of the exhibition. For further information and reservations: T.+39.055.2469600 or [prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org)

### **SCHOOLS PROGRAMME**

#### **FOR TEACHERS**

##### **Free Briefing Tour**

The briefing tour allows teachers to preview the content of tours, workshops and activities designed for schools and to select an interpretative key for exploring the works of art in the exhibition. For kindergarten and primary school teachers: Thursday 5 and Tuesday 10 March, at 15.00, 16.00 and 17.00. For lower secondary school teachers: Monday 2, Tuesday 3 and Wednesday 4 March at 15.00, 16.00 and 17.00. For upper secondary school teachers: Monday 24, Wednesday 26, Thursday 27 and Friday 28 February, at 15.00, 16.00 and 17.00. Reservations are required: tel. + 39 055 2469600 - [prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org)

#### **FOR SCHOOLS**

**Exhibition tour.** Tours are tailored to cater for different age groups. The tour, lasting an hour and a half, costs € 52.00 (for groups of max. 25 students) in addition to the cost of admission to the exhibition (€ 4.00 per student). The exhibition tour without workshop package is designed for classes III, IV and V in primary school and for all lower and upper secondary school classes. The tour is available also in English. Reservations are required: tel. + 39 055 2469600 - [prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org)

**Tour + creative workshop** (for kindergarten, primary and lower secondary school). A tour of the exhibition and the observation of exhibits and rooms selected on the basis of participants' age is followed by a workshop allowing each participant to develop his or her personal reaction to the stimuli taken on board during the tour. The activity, which is tailored to cater for different age groups, lasts roughly two hours and costs € 72.00 (for groups of max. 25 students) in addition to the cost of admission to the exhibition (€ 4.00 per student; free for children aged under six). Reservations are required: tel. + 39 055 2469600 - [prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org)

Here are the proposals for visits with workshops related to *Tomás Saraceno. Aria* exhibition and divided according to the age of the participants:

**The thread that binds us all** (kindergarten, recommended for ages 4 and up, and classes I and II of primary school; duration 1 hour and a half / 2 hours). Palazzo Strozzi has expanded its offer by investing in the design of activities dedicated to children. A path with interactive activities in the exhibition and a narrative tailored to the age of the participants, is dedicated to them. The activity aims to make the immersion in Tomás Saraceno's world even more special, where art combines the grandeur of the cosmos with the life of the smaller creatures that inhabit it.

**The Shape of the Future** (primary school classes III, IV and V; duration 2 hours).

The last classes of primary school can choose a visit to the exhibition or a laboratory visit. In the second case, the suggestions evoked by Tomás Saraceno's works such as installations with spiderwebs, or suspended structures, are the starting point to shape a personal and poetic reflection on the ways we can adopt to get in touch with the future through art.

**Cosmic Design** (1st grade secondary school classes; duration 2 hours)

Tomás Saraceno's works combine artistic and poetic research with a scientific and naturalistic attention to the world. The artist's transdisciplinary gaze opens a very profound reflection on reality, understood not only as a subject to be represented but also as a system to be part of as active subjects. The laboratory wants to encourage further reflection on our responsibility towards what surrounds us, shaping it through an artistic and collective operation.

**The Oracle** (2nd grade secondary school classes; duration 2 hours)

The classes will be able to add to the exhibition visit a preliminary part in the laboratory lasting about 1 hour, for a total of 2 hours of activity. This optional part offers a reflection on the ability of art to give shape in a visionary way to other realities that we are called to interpret. The laboratory provides a collective creative action and aims to enrich the reflection proposed by the exhibition on the concepts of system, relationship and future.





## SPECIAL PROJECTS FOR SCHOOLS

### ***Educare al Presente. Contemporary art in schools***

Kicking off the academic year 2019/20, Palazzo Strozzi's new programme for upper secondary schools in Tuscany explores the relationship between contemporary art and topical issues with a specific focus on relations with the territory, the environment and the management of natural resources. At a moment in history in which the balance between civilisation and nature is once again of crucial importance, contemporary artists can contribute with their work to the construction of a critical viewpoint. Classes are run by Palazzo Strozzi educators and experts in natural sciences who, in the course of the three encounters, help to trigger a debate on the relationship between man and the natural environment. The programme is free of charge for schools in Tuscany thanks to the support of Publiacqua. For the scientific part, the project uses the collaboration of Water Right and Energy Foundation, while for the artistic part, Elena Mazzi and Nicola Giorgio contributed to the design of the courses.

### ***Plurals- Path for transversal skills and orientation (ex Work-School Alternation)***

For the academic year 2019/20 the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi will be cooperating with two local upper secondary schools to develop a year-long cooperation project for the fourth year running. The project is part of the programme for training in businesses and in the workplace previously known as Work-School Alternation (now the Pathway for Transverse Skills and Orientation). This year the project's renewed formula provides for the involvement of fourteen year four students from two upper secondary schools, the Liceo Artistico in Sesto Fiorentino and the Liceo Scientifico Ernesto Balducci in Pontassieve. The formative experience allows the students involved to gain first-hand experience of some of the main aspects involved in the organisation of Palazzo Strozzi's exhibitions and ends with a series of events organised and run by the students themselves.

### ***Vagabondi efficaci***

The Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi is part of a group of players involved in the development of the Vagabondi Efficaci scheme, the product of a cooperative venture involving over twenty institutions and associations working in the cultural and training spheres in Tuscany. The project is coordinated by Oxfam Italia and with the patronage of the Regione Toscana. The scheme, which has won funding earmarked under the "With the Children" project, provides for the development of activities devoted to combating educational poverty throughout activities addressed to 12-16 age groups. The activities conducted by the operators and artists appointed by the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi will take place throughout the region with particular attention to the most peripheral areas. The activities that got under way in autumn 2018 are due to continue until October 2021.

## UNIVERSITIES AND ART ACADEMIES

### ***Free briefing tours for Academic Staff***

The Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi will be holding four introductory tours of the Tomás Saraceno exhibition for university lecturers and education coordinators interested in building guided tours and workshops in the exhibition into their courses. During the briefing tour, academic staff will visit the exhibition with the Palazzo Strozzi Education Department staff, who will accompany the group and provide an interpretation useful for drawing closer to and exploring the content of the exhibition. The tours are designed exclusively for academic staff and education coordinators from Italian and foreign universities, academies and higher education institutions: Tuesday 25 February, at 17.00 and 18.00; Friday 6 March, at 16.00 and 17.00. Duration of the tour: 75 minutes. Meetings are held in Palazzo Strozzi. Reservations are required: [edu@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:edu@palazzostrozzi.org)

### ***Exhibition Tours***

Designed to enhance personal skills and the ability to analyse and interpret the works of art on display. The activity costs € 72.00 (for groups of max. 25 students) in addition to the cost of admission to the exhibition (€ 4.00 per student), to the advance booking fee (€ 1.00 per person) and to hire of the radio-guide system (€ 1.00 per person). Admission free for accompanying teachers. The activity lasts 90 minutes. Reservations are required: tel. + 39 055 2469600 - [prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org)

### ***Language through the Art***

A workshop devoted to learning Italian as a second language and held inside a Palazzo Strozzi exhibition. Visiting an art exhibition offers participants an opportunity for group discussion and debate, for expressing feelings and getting to grips with a foreign language. The tour costs € 52.00 per group (max. 10 students), in addition to the price of admission to the exhibition



(€ 4.00 per student) and the advance booking fee (€ 1.00 per person). Admission free for accompanying academic staff. The tour lasts 90 minutes. Reservations are required: tel. + 39 055 2469600 - [prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org)

### **Complex Systems**

The *complex systems* project is dedicated to students of art academies in Florence (Italian and international) and was created with the aim of using the *Tomás Saraceno Aria* exhibition as a research area on the issue of interdependence in the scientific, social and cultural fields. The project has a four-month development and allows students to approach the theme through a series of appointments (lectures, talks with artists and scientists, visits to the exhibition, working groups) and stimulates the younger generations of artists to produce new art works. In the second phase of the project, to complete the work, an exhibition will be organized by the students themselves at the spaces of Manifattura Tabacchi, (June 18-28), Via delle Cascine, 33-35, Florence. Tomás Saraceno's works suggest a change of perspective: from a vision in which man is at the center of the world to a vision in which man is part of a complex universe that constantly reformulates his balance. The *complex systems* educational project starts from the encounter with Saraceno's work and opens up to the different forms of contemporary artistic production by offering students a field of analysis and research. The project is carried out in collaboration with the Academy of Fine Arts of Florence, California State University, Fondazione Studio Marangoni, LABA Free Academy of Fine Arts, IED Florence, with the support of Manifattura Tabacchi. More information: [edu@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:edu@palazzostrozzi.org)

## **ACCESSIBILITY PROJECTS**

### ***With Many Voices. A project for people with Alzheimer's and their carer***

With Many Voices is the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi's scheme for people with Alzheimer's, their families and the professionals who care for them. The scheme is conducted in conjunction with expert geriatric educators, offering participants the opportunity to express themselves through art. Using the imagination rather than the memory and inventiveness rather than logical or cognitive faculties stimulates each participant's talent for communication. Since 2016 several artists have been invited to develop a proposal, taking their inspiration from the works of art on display in the Palazzo Strozzi exhibition. Introductory encounter: 25 february at 15.00. For further information and reservations: [edu@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:edu@palazzostrozzi.org)

### ***Free Flowing. Experiencing Art with Parkinson's***

The project got off the ground in autumn 2018 thanks to interaction with the experience built up by the Parkinson's Centre at the Villa Margherita (Kos Care) in Vicenza and in the city of Bassano del Grappa. In the course of the exhibition *Tomás Saraceno. Aria*, a cycle of encounters will enable participants to relate to the works of art on display. Every Thursday during exhibition opening hours, a group of people will be invited to experiment with different ways of interacting with the exhibition spaces and with the works on display in the rooms using the language of words, movement and dance. Tomás Saraceno's installations thus become the starting point for a physical and emotional journey in which people are invited to observe, hear, listen and listen. The initiative was made possible and developed in dialogue with the Fresco Parkinson Institute, an international excellence for research and treatment on Parkinson's and movement disorders, and in collaboration with Dance Well - movement and research for Parkinson's.

For information: [edu@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:edu@palazzostrozzi.org)

### ***Nuances. A project for young people suffering from autistic spectrum disorders***

Nuances is Palazzo Strozzi's new project for young people aged 15 to 20 on the autistic spectrum disorders. Every month a meeting is steered by museum educators and professional education specialists who accompany participants to discover some of the works of art on display in the exhibition. The activities and stimuli proposed in the exhibition rooms are devised in conjunction with users and educators from the Centro Casadasé (Associazione Autismo Firenze). For further information and reservations: [edu@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:edu@palazzostrozzi.org)

### **Connections**

Palazzo Strozzi's project devised to make its exhibitions accessible also to groups of visitors with disabilities (physical, psychic or cognitive health issues), consists of conversational tours of the exhibition tailored to cater for each group's specific characteristics. The tours include the observation of a selection of works on display with participants' active involvement. At the beginning and end of each exhibition the Education Department holds two meetings open to all health and social workers (educators, psychologists and therapists) to introduce the scheme in relation to the current exhibition and to share and assess experiences and plan for the next exhibition. Before the activity the Education Department meets with the group's



accompaniers to discuss the timing and method of the tour. Reservations are required to take part in the scheme and places are limited. Introductory encounter: 5 march at 15.00. For further information and reservations: [edu@palazzostrozzi.org](mailto:edu@palazzostrozzi.org)

#### **PALAZZO STROZZI AT THE OBLATE AND IN FLORENCE'S LIBRARIES**

On the occasion of the exhibition, Palazzo Strozzi organizes a series of presentations and the *Art in Book* cycle of workshops for family books at the Biblioteca delle Oblate and in the other municipal Libraries in Florence.

##### ***Presentations***

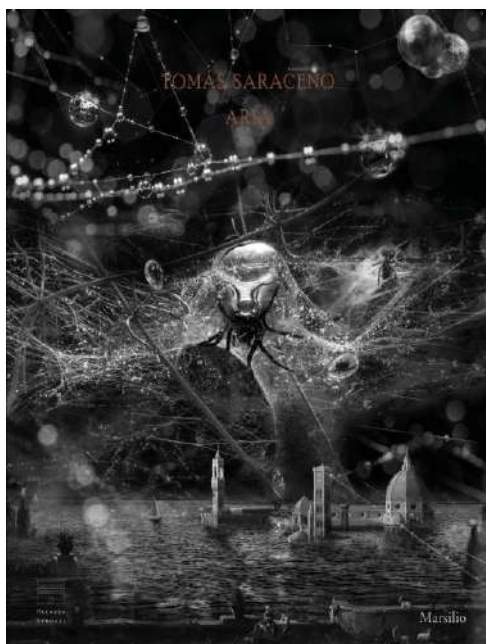
Presentations of the exhibition: Tuesday 3 March, at 18.30 at the Biblioteca delle Oblate Conference Room, via dell'Oriuolo 24 with Arturo Galansino and Ludovica Sebgondi; Tuesday 17 March, 18.00 at Biblioteca Filippo Buonarroti, viale Alessandro Guidoni 188; Tuesday 24 March, 6.00 pm, Biblioteca Villa Bandini, via del Paradiso 5; Tuesday 31 March, 18.00 at BiblioteCaNova Isolotto, via Chiusi 3/4; Tuesday 7 April, 6.00 pm at the Biblioteca Mario Luzi, via Ugo Schiff 8 with Martino Margheri. Admission free while places last

##### ***Art in Books***

An activity dedicated to families with children aged 5 to 10, developed to activate creativity, play with art and take advantage of all that is available in a library as a source of inspiration for the creation of a work of art. Free activity, reservations required at libraries.

Schedule: Saturday 28 March, at 11.00, Biblioteca delle Oblate; Saturday 18 April, at 16.30, Biblioteca Pietro Thouar; Monday 27 April, at 17.30; sosta Bibliobus Anconella; Saturday 16 May, at 16.30; BiblioteCaNova Isolotto; Saturday 23 May, at 16.30; Biblioteca Orticultura; Saturday 30 May, at 10.00, sosta Bibliobus Stadio .





## CATALOGUES

### Tomás Saraceno

#### *Aria*

edited by **Arturo Galansino**

format 21 x 25 cm

pp. 200 with 136 ill. (col. and b/w)

€ 40.00

in bookstores from March 5

The first large-scale monography on Argentinian artist Tomás Saraceno, published for the exhibition *Aria*, curated by Arturo Galansino, General Director of the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi, and produced and organized by the Fondazione in collaboration with Studio Tomás Saraceno (Florence, Palazzo Strozzi, February 22–June

19 2020).

*«Saraceno's quest implies an innovative interaction between artistic expression and philosophy, biology, ecology and engineering, by means of a well thought-out interdisciplinary approach, with the aim of cancelling any contrast between aesthetic and scientific dimensions and instead giving rise to a fruitful integration.»* **Giuseppe Morbidelli, President of the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi, 2020**

A leading figure on the contemporary scene, the Argentinian Tomás Saraceno, born in 1973, is a versatile and highly visionary artist. His works constantly surprise viewers for the depth of the concepts at which they hint through a playful and interactive approach. This interactivity is a key feature in his work, also taking on meaning through the rapport with visitors, who become co-authors of his work, transforming it through body movement.

Saraceno moves through art, science, ecology and architecture, and this richly illustrated volume documents and investigates his personal and professional path by means of iconic images of his works and stagings, models, notes, studies. For the first time, however, this volume also analyzes and widely illustrates the literary, poetic and iconographic inspirations that intersperse Saraceno's artistic quest, building up an additional (spider) web that helps us explore his many expressive paths.

**Essays by:** Arturo Galansino, Emanuele Coccia.

**Tomás Saraceno** (1973) is an Argentinian artist. After studying architecture in Buenos Aires, Frankfurt and Venice, he settled permanently in Berlin in 2012. Within just a few years, he has become one of the most sought-after artists in contemporary art exhibitions the world over, taking part with his installations in the 2001, 2003 and 2009 editions of the Venice Biennale and the 2006 São Paulo Biennale. His works are displayed in various international museums, including the Bauhaus-Museum in Weimar and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York.

**Arturo Galansino** was appointed General Director of the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi in Florence in 2015. An art historian and curator, he studied in Turin, Milan and Paris, and



has worked for the Louvre in Paris, the National Gallery and the Royal Academy of Arts in London. He has curated several exhibitions ranging from ancient – including *Giovan Battista Moroni* (2014), *Rubens and His Legacy* (2015) and *In the Age of Giorgione* (2016) at the Royal Academy – to contemporary – including *Ai Weiwei. Libero* (2016) and *Bill Viola. Rinascimento Elettronico* (2017) at Palazzo Strozzi – art.

*Further information:*

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FONDAZIONE  
CR FIRENZE

The issue of environmental sustainability has never been as pressing as it is today. This, by the way, is exemplified by *Time* magazine's nomination of the young Greta Thunberg as "2019 Person of the Year": the acknowledgement that the planet's health and its survival are dependent upon the behavior of all of us is in fact gaining traction, especially amongst the younger generation. The environmental challenge lies at the core of the work of Tomás Saraceno—a surprising, utopian, visionary artist of international fame, who in his pieces erases the discord between disciplines, to facilitate a dialogue between architecture, art, science and philosophy, transforming them into visually powerful, absorbing, installations, in which the interaction with the public is indispensable. In the exhibition *Tomás Saraceno: Aria*, at Palazzo Strozzi, an original dialogue between Renaissance and modern times takes place in the inner court with the site-specific installation *Thermodynamic Constellation*, which is entirely supported by the Fondazione CR Firenze as part of several events focusing specifically on environmental sustainability. These are grand, poetic, reflective spheres— that remain suspended thanks to the warm air contained within them, heated with solar power— which allow the artist to imagine a future world devoid of borders, and free from its dependence on fossil fuels. Art and science are no longer separate but united, helping to shape a new humanism.

Through the exhibition's title, *Aria*, Saraceno reminds us that this element is a precious, common asset that is shared with all living beings; his hope is a shift in values that sees humans no longer at the center of the world, instead finding a new balance as part of the universe. In the same way in which a spider weaves its web, the artist is inspired by his own visionary pieces, seeking new models for coexistence and social living.

The show and the installation, therefore, perfectly match the wishes behind the work of the Fondazione CR Firenze, both in the sectors of art, events and cultural heritage as well as environmental protection, which as part of its programs' objectives intends to "promote environmental awareness in youths and the community by contributing to disseminate and adopt sustainable behaviors, to inspire the community to seek new solutions for protecting the environment." These words almost sound inspired by Tomás Saraceno.

*Luigi Salvadori*

*President Fondazione CR Firenze*

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## TERNA AND PALAZZO STROZZI: TOGETHER FOR CULTURE AND THE TERRITORIES.

In 2020, Terna is also transmitting its energy to the Palazzo Strozzi Foundation, renewing its support by sponsoring the "Aria" exhibition of Tomás Saraceno and confirming its involvement in the Palazzo Strozzi Partners Committee. This partnership is solidified under the increasingly important shared goals of enhancing the value of Italian territories as global cultural points of interest in order to produce economic and reputational benefits and to formulate real and true "cultural brands" in the name of growth for the country and its citizens.

## OUR MISSION.

To take a leading role in sustainable energy transition, using our unique innovations, capabilities and technology to benefit all stakeholders.

## OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS.



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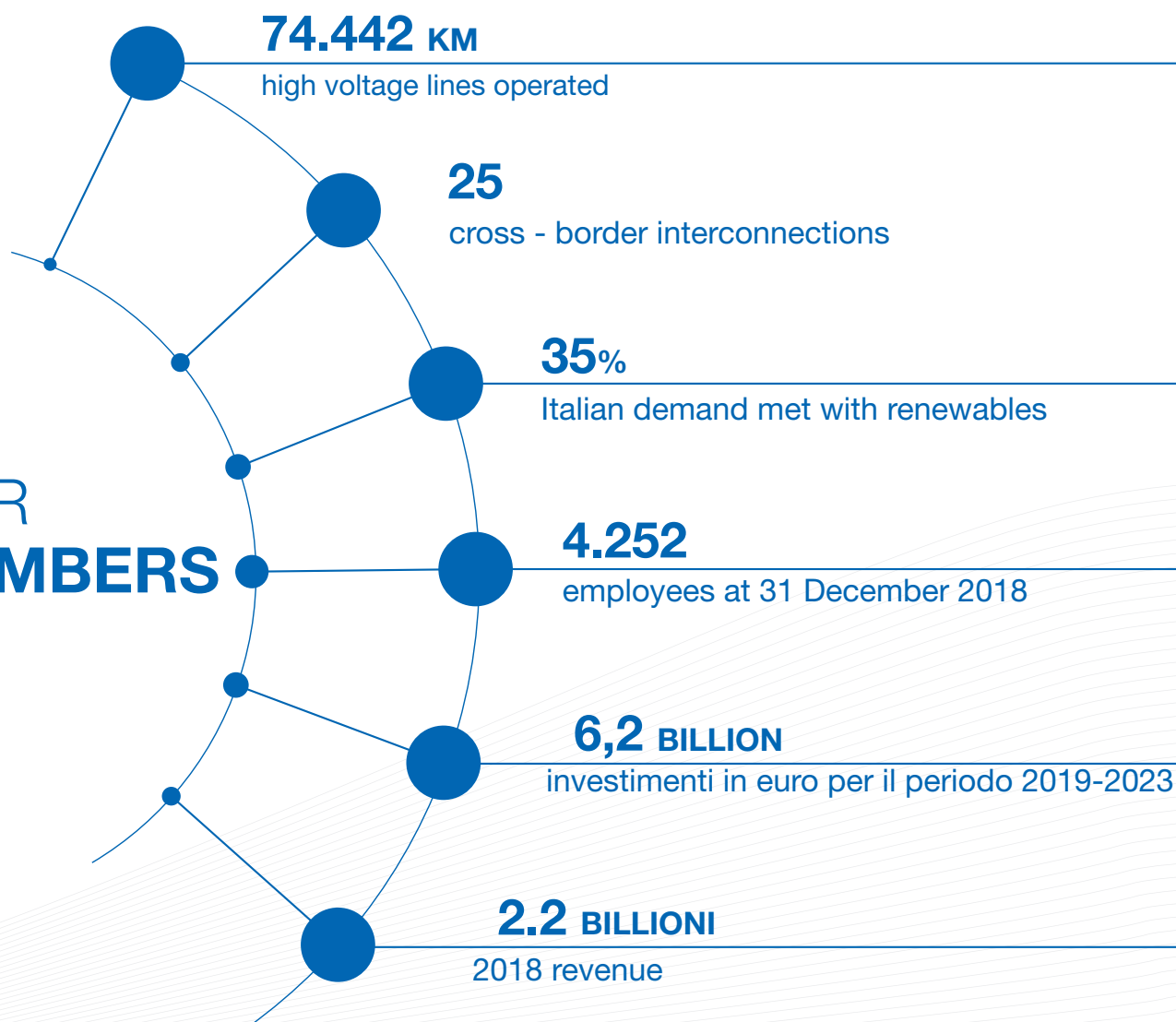


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# MANIFATTURA TABACCHI

## ARTE CONTEMPORANEA IN MANIFATTURA TABACCHI

Manifattura Tabacchi si propone come un **centro di sperimentazione nel contemporaneo a Firenze**, attraverso l'attivazione progressiva di un **progetto di arte contemporanea** sul territorio. La vocazione internazionale e multidisciplinare di tale progettualità si articola in diverse forme, quali residenze d'artista, spazi indipendenti, laboratori e mostre che connotano Manifattura Tabacchi come un polo di attrazione e produzione di attività rivolte agli artisti e alla comunità che la anima.

Primo progetto attivato nel campo dell'arte contemporanea, nel 2018, il **programma triennale La cura, La meraviglia, L'armonia**, ideato e curato da Sergio Risaliti, accoglie ogni anno sei giovani artisti internazionali in residenza presso gli spazi di Manifattura Tabacchi. Un percorso di ricerca artistica che prevede visite mirate a spazi e istituzioni del territorio toscano, una serie di laboratori tenuti da artisti affermati a livello nazionale e internazionale, che si conclude con una mostra finale. Nel 2019, nasce **Toast Project Space**, uno spazio indipendente di 4m<sup>2</sup> aperto al confronto e alla sperimentazione delle pratiche artistiche contemporanee, dove gli artisti sono invitati a produrre un progetto "site specific" con cadenza bimestrale. Fondato da Stefano Giuri, artista che ha partecipato al primo ciclo di residenze, lo spazio si inserisce a pieno titolo nel network delle realtà indipendenti italiane, tramite un continuo dialogo e collaborazioni ad hoc.

Manifattura Tabacchi prosegue la sua attività attraverso il coinvolgimento di artisti di diverse generazioni e provenienza, come, tra gli altri, **Andreas Angelidakis** e **Micheal Nyman**, a fianco di progetti costruiti di volta in volta con partner dedicati, secondo una visione che vede la cultura come catalizzatore per il cambiamento e l'evoluzione di ogni quartiere, in ogni città, ovunque nel mondo.

## LA COLLABORAZIONE CON PALAZZO STROZZI

**Palazzo Strozzi** rappresenta un punto di riferimento nel panorama locale e nazionale dell'arte contemporanea, grazie al prestigio del programma espositivo e alla produzione di attività culturali che coinvolgono la collettività estesa. **Manifattura Tabacchi** supporta l'attività della Fondazione proponendosi come spazio complementare per iniziative di ricerca e laboratorio, agevolando l'incontro tra due capolavori della storia dell'architettura, l'una di natura razionalista, l'altra rinascimentale.

L'inaugurazione di questa collaborazione in occasione della mostra dedicata a **Tomás Saraceno** non è casuale: quelli toccati dall'artista-architetto sono temi in cui Manifattura Tabacchi si riconosce, sensibile alle tematiche della **sostenibilità**, della **relazione tra uomo e natura** e della **costruzione di comunità e di forme alternative di abitazione e di interazione**. Il nuovo spazio di sperimentazione dedicato all'arte contemporanea di Manifattura Tabacchi intende attivarsi come medium creativo per ripensare a temi sociali, politici ed ecologici, offrendo forme sperimentali e innovative non solo nella produzione dell'arte, ma anche nella sua fruizione. Per questo motivo il legame con Tomás Saraceno non si verifica solo in termini tematici, ma anche nella condivisione del processo, costituito dal superamento delle barriere, dal coinvolgimento fisico e concettuale del pubblico e dall'integrazione di diverse discipline, interne ed esterne all'arte.

Manifattura Tabacchi

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[www.manifatturatabacchi.com](http://www.manifatturatabacchi.com)

# MANIFATTURA TABACCHI

Quella tra Manifattura Tabacchi e Palazzo Strozzi è una collaborazione che realizza **un ponte tra centro storico e periferia**, rinascimento e contemporaneo, mettendo in atto uno scambio di intenti tra le due istituzioni che compiono in questo modo il primo passo di un percorso teso a stabilire connessioni di valore tra i diversi attori che popolano la scena dell'arte fiorentina. Manifattura Tabacchi costruisce così con Palazzo Strozzi una relazione multidimensionale che si concretizza nell'ospitalità e co-creazione di progetti pivotali del programma espositivo declinati durante tutta la durata della mostra.

## AEROCENE FLIGHTS

Considerata l'emergenza ambientale, legata all'era geologica attuale, l'Antropocene, Tomás Saraceno conduce il pubblico all'interno di una nuova epoca, tutta incentrata sull'aria: **Aerocene**. Intesa come un contesto di sviluppo dell'umanità, Aerocene è una ricerca in costante crescita e una pratica sperimentale, open-source e collaborativa, formata da una comunità globale, dedicata e diversa, di persone che collaborano per promuovere la consapevolezza ambientale e gli esperimenti di rilevazione dell'atmosfera. Le sue attività si manifestano nei test e nel lancio di sculture aerosolari che sono in grado di librarsi in aria grazie al calore del Sole e alle radiazioni infrarosse della superficie della Terra.

È in questo contesto che si inserisce il programma degli *Aerocene Flights*, parte integrante del Fuorimostro di Palazzo Strozzi, di cui Manifattura Tabacchi si configura come unico partner. Le *Aerocene Sculptures* sono oggetti volanti che incarnano un nuovo modo di pensare le risorse energetiche: aria, calore e cooperazione tra persone sono gli elementi necessari per far fluttuare nel cielo queste grandi sculture poligonali. Niente combustibili, niente pannelli solari, niente motori, né batterie: solo la forza del pianeta.

A partire dal 21 febbraio e per tutta la durata della mostra *Tomás Saraceno. Aria*, Manifattura Tabacchi accoglie uno spazio dedicato all'approfondimento del tema dell'Aerocene, attraverso la proiezione di video, materiali e pubblicazioni a esso collegati e all'esposizione dell'*Aerocene Explorer Backpack*, lo starter kit di volo. Allo studio e alla contemplazione segue la pratica, nel corso di tre appuntamenti che si svolgono **il 23 maggio, il 30 maggio e il 6 giugno**. La comunità è infatti invitata a far volare le *Aerocene Sculptures* negli spazi ex industriali di Manifattura Tabacchi, secondo uno spirito collaborativo di cui Aerocene, come Manifattura Tabacchi, si fa promotrice.

## PROGETTO SISTEMI COMPLESSI

Dedicato agli studenti delle accademie d'arte di Firenze, il progetto *Sistemi complessi* nasce con l'obiettivo di usare la mostra *Tomás Saraceno. Aria* come ambito di ricerca sul tema dell'interdipendenza in campo scientifico. Manifattura Tabacchi sostiene l'iniziativa e mette a disposizione i propri spazi per lo sviluppo del progetto espositivo, offrendo l'opportunità ad artisti di nuova generazione di lavorare su diversi aspetti che riguardano la produzione, l'organizzazione e la comunicazione di un progetto artistico nella sua interezza.

Il progetto è realizzato in collaborazione con Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze, California State University, Fondazione Studio Marangoni, LABA Libera Accademia di Belle Arti, IED Firenze.

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# MANIFATTURA TABACCHI

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### A FIRENZE IL PIÙ IMPORTANTE PROGETTO DI RIGENERAZIONE URBANA IN ITALIA

Manifattura Tabacchi è un ex stabilimento industriale situato a ovest del centro di Firenze che si compone di sedici edifici in stile razionalista, costruiti nel corso degli anni '30, elegantemente disposti su circa 100.000 mq di superficie a creare una varietà di piazze, strade e passaggi.

## IL PROGETTO DI RIQUALIFICAZIONE

Dopo la chiusura, avvenuta il 16 marzo del 2001, e oltre settant'anni di attività produttiva in cui Manifattura Tabacchi è arrivata a dar lavoro a oltre 1400 dipendenti, nel 2016 è stato avviato l'ambizioso progetto di riqualificazione che si propone di dar vita a **un nuovo quartiere per la città e un centro per la cultura contemporanea, l'arte e la moda che sia complementare al centro storico, aperto a tutti e connesso col mondo.**

Promotore della riqualificazione dell'area è una joint venture costituita nel 2016 dalla società immobiliare del Gruppo Cassa depositi e prestiti e dal fondo di investimento PW Real Estate III LP che fa capo a Aermont, al suo primo progetto in Italia. MTDM Manifattura Tabacchi Development Management Srl è la società di project management appositamente creata per gestire questo processo.

Dal 2018 Manifattura Tabacchi promuove un intenso programma di attività temporanee in spazi appositamente recuperati in attesa della loro destinazione finale.

## IL MASTERPLAN

Realizzato nel corso degli anni '30 su progetto di Pier Luigi Nervi e attivo fino al 2001, il complesso sarà recuperato secondo un masterplan che si propone di preservare lo spirito industriale dell'architettura storica con interventi di carattere contemporaneo capaci di valorizzare la monumentalità degli edifici e la qualità unica degli spazi e dei materiali. Particolare attenzione è posta nella progettazione del verde, inteso come dispositivo di rigenerazione che si riappropria dello spazio nell'ex fabbrica di sigari per creare aree comuni accoglienti, confortevoli e favorevoli all'aggregazione.

A ottobre 2019 è stato completato l'edificio B6, affacciato sulla Piazza dell'Orologio, che, a partire da gennaio 2020, ospita oltre 800 studenti internazionali di Polimoda, prestigiosa scuola di moda fiorentina, mentre nel corso del 2021 è prevista l'apertura degli **edifici della Factory** (che indica il complesso degli edifici B4, B5, B6 e B11), cuore pulsante di Manifattura pensato per accogliere concept store, atelier, laboratori e spazi espositivi: un luogo dove moda, arte e artigianato contemporaneo, lifestyle e cibo possano creare una destinazione unica nel suo genere, attraente per la comunità internazionale di professionisti e creativi interessati a lavorare e vivere a Firenze.

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Entro il 2023, Manifattura ospiterà 28.000 mq dedicati a formazione, uffici e spazi di co-working; 30.000 mq di residenza; 24.500 mq di ospitalità e co-living; 15.300 mq di atelier e laboratori.

Situata a 15 minuti di auto dall'aeroporto, a 10 minuti di autobus dalla stazione e a 5 minuti a piedi dalla linea T2 della tramvia, la Manifattura Tabacchi entro il 2022 sarà collegata al centro con la linea T4 della tramvia (attualmente in fase di progettazione esecutiva).



## Ufficio Stampa Manifattura Tabacchi

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