

Tomás Saraceno

(San Miguel de Tucumán, Argentina, 1973)

Saraceno's is a visual art that feeds off the input from other fields of knowledge: from architecture to the natural sciences, from astrophysics to anthropology, and from engineering to ecology. Supported by multidisciplinary staff in his Berlin studio, the artist favours a collaborative approach to the research and production of his works. Split into series that repeat over the years, his work is made up of large immersive installations with a playful and spectacular appearance, in the form of flying cities or spider webs, which the audience then interacts with, modifying them with the weight of their own bodies.

Drawing on his training as an architect in Argentina, Germany and Italy, Saraceno was part of the movement towards radical and utopian planning of the 1960s. Among the figures who most influenced his thought were Peter Cook, his teacher at the Städelschule in Frankfurt and founder of the British group Archigram; the American visionary Buckminster Fuller, inventor of the geodesic dome; and the Hungarian Yona Friedman, promotor of a mobile architecture capable of adapting to the needs of its inhabitants. What Saraceno proposes are not finished or permanent dwelling models: as a visual artist, he only wishes to suggest perfectible future scenarios with the help of technology, allowing man to live in a low-impact manner and in full respect of the environment. The search for sustainable forms also led him to study innovative solutions for the application of aerogel, the ultralight transparent material that he uses in his airborne constructions. Known as *Air-Port-Cities*, they are self-sufficient biospheres capable of rising off the ground in order to increase the inhabitable surface without the further consumption of land resources. His *Cloud Cities* work in a similar fashion, being made up of modular units, the shape of which is vaguely reminiscent of Fuller's sketches. *Museo Aero Solar*, on the other hand, is a collaborative project staged in various parts of the world since 2007, which consists of sewing together thousands of recycled plastic bags in order to create an air balloon fuelled by solar energy. Lastly, from the desire to direct the public towards actions that are more respectful of the environment and uncoupled from the use of fossil fuels comes the term *Aerocene*, which Saraceno uses to reference the new era which will auspiciously replace the Anthropocene that we are currently living through. The work in the collection *Radio Galena* (2018) is inspired by the radios built in the early days of electronics: without the need to be linked to an energy source, it makes use of a very common mineral such as galena in order to receive a signal. The sound comes from a radio station of the Mapuche, a native population from the south of Argentina that for years has tried to claim its ancestral rights over its territory, threatened by the presence of a major European company.

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