

Tomás Saraceno

AnarcoAracnoAnacro

29.07.21 | 30.01.22

Area monumentale della Neapolis
Siracusa

Siracusa, 26th July 2021 - Tomás Saraceno, an Argentinean artist of Italian origin who lives and works in Berlin, is considered one of the major protagonists of the international contemporary art scene and one of the most influential activists for the planet, challenging, through his works, dominant ways of living and perceiving the environment. In the exhibition AnarcoAracnoAnacro he presents a multi-media project created specifically for the monumental Area of Neapolis in Syracuse. This is one of the most important archaeological complexes in the Mediterranean, with an area of approximately 240.000 square metres that includes the Greek theatre, the so-called Sanctuary of Apollo Temenite, the Altar of Hieron II, the Roman Amphitheatre, the latomie of Paradise, Intagliatella and Santa Venera, up to the so-called Tomb of Archimedes.

From the 29th of July, 2021 to the 30th of January, 2022, the traditional archaeological tours of the Area will be traversed and interfered by Saraceno's experimental narrative route. Made of different chapters scattered at numerous, distant points, this exhibition constructs its own sensory and semiotic world, evolving like a veritable life form throughout the passing months. As archaeology, ecology, arachnomancy, art and social activism dialogue, new visual poetics are woven. The artist, who is engaging one of the main Italian archaeological sites for the first time, has conceived this project specifically for the Neapolis.

The exhibition, curated by Paolo Falcone, is promoted by Regione Siciliana - Assessorato dei Beni Culturali e dell'Identità Siciliana, Parco Archeologico e Paesaggistico di Siracusa, Eloro, Villa del Tellaro e Akrai. It is produced and organized by Civita Sicilia in collaboration with Studio Tomás Saraceno, INDA - Istituto Nazionale del Dramma Antico and Accademia d'Arte del Dramma Antico.

The exhibition is intended to be a narrative device aimed at multiplying the possible stories contained within the archaeological site, questioning the centrality of human history and in particular that of the West, which finds its founding moment precisely in the classical era. The spider's web, arachnomancy, the evocation and reinterpretation of myths and the concept of metamorphosis become guiding concepts for rethinking and rediscovering the interweaving of life forms, timelines and symbiopoietic networks that animates the park, turning our attention to those that have inhabited it for millions of years, such as the 46 species of spider that have been found there. Arachnochronies and anthropochronies, geo-histories and hydro-histories, hybrid and post-human mythologies tell the urgencies of the present through oracular languages and imperceptible vibrations, asking visitors to pay attention to the webs of life that connect us to our surrounding ecologies and acknowledge the response-ability needed to halt

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the destructive cycle of the Capitalocene.

The exhibition

States of Water, a sculpture resembling the Weaire-Phelan molecular structure of foam, is located in an area of the park that has remained inaccessible to the public until the opening day of the exhibition. Plants, bushes and brambles of the mediterranean scrubs are nested into the ruins of a remote human time, re-appropriating the Latomia, encountering the sculpture, and moving us towards a post anthropocenic future. States of Water offers a multispecies habitat, providing shelter, shade and water - a place where birds, spiders, bees, plants and humans may interact, acting as a liveable cloud. The sculpture evokes the function of clouds as vital interlocutors between Earth, Atmosphere, and Sun, carrying through their various morphologies messages of weather-presents and futures, guiding the fulfilment of our basic needs and shaping the spheres of our social, mental and environmental ecologies.

Near the grave of Archimedes hovers the Augmented Reality installation Floating at the bottom of ocean of air, drawing aeroglyphs, traces of a creative collaboration with the atmosphere. In On Floating Bodies, Archimedes, considered the founder of hydrostatics, developed the principle of buoyancy. Torricelli, a student of Galileo, then stated that "we live at the bottom of an ocean of air ". The artwork pays homage to these thinkers, who gave the Aerocene community the mechanical principles by which its floating sculptures rise into the air, towards a future where we can all move and breathe, free from borders and fossil fuels. Each Aeroglyph builds momentum for the rewiring of our environmental imaginaries, reminding us that the air belongs to everyone and must not depend on any type of sovereignty.

From Arachnophobia to Arachnophilia, a project by Tomás Saraceno with Arachnophilia, with the support of Acute Art, is an experiment in biodiversity and technodiversity (a term coined by the writer and philosopher Yuk Hui) towards a true Augmented Reality. A peacock spider of giant proportions rises up from the bottom of the Roman amphitheatre and dances like an ancestral spirit, a trickster mocking human fears of spiders and other lifeforms, and condemning the past and present violence to which we have subjected other species, whether in amphitheaters' arena where 'fairs' had to be killed, or in the use of pesticides and agrochemicals that are exterminating invertebrates. From Arachnophobia to Arachnophilia subverts the digital to reconnect with the physical and become enmeshed in extended sensitivities of coexistence.

Spider divination practices from Cameroon meet arachnology in the mobile and

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dispersed installation Arachnomancy, which offers oracular readings and invertebrate encounters. The weavers of today, busy forming arachnid ecologies inside the park, unravel a collective quest, as they have for centuries. Guided by the suggestions of the Arachnophilia community and the Arachnomancy Cards, visitors will be led on a tour of the park, their encounters mediated by scientific understandings and the divinatory narratives of the spider/webs who came before. Against the backdrop of the sixth mass extinction, the installation cultivates an 'arts of noticing' arachnid architecture.

Acting as a vibrating web, a performative itinerary realised in collaboration with the Accademia d'Arte del Dramma Antico, INDA's School of Excellence for Young Actors, will assemble webbed reveries, sounding stories of metamorphosis and post-humanist proposals. In weaving this nomadic narrative, non-hierarchical and non-linear dimensions of time emerge, deconstructing phobias and extractivist logics, and acting as an invitation to braid interspecific relationships.

The monumental area of Neapolis, the ideal setting for Saraceno's installations, is a site of Parco Archeologico e Paesaggistico di Siracusa, Eloro, Villa del Tellaro e Akrai. Its fame in the world is linked to the majestic Greek Theatre located inside where, for more than a hundred years, with the performances of INDA - the National Institute of Ancient Drama, the tragedies and comedies that moved and thrilled the ancient inhabitants of the Greek city continue to be re-enacted. Neapolis has been able to preserve and enhance the charm of the natural spaces and man-made artefacts that characterise it, becoming the city's symbol and a destination for visitors from all over the world. It is precisely the visitor route, a continuous combination of history and nature, that inspired Tomás Saraceno's project: the spectacular Altar of Hieron II; the fascinating Grotto of the Nymphaeum, located on the cliff overlooking the theatre building with a breathtaking view of the natural inlet of the Grand Harbour, a sanctuary dedicated to the cult of the Muses,, a source of wealth for the ancient city, and the scene of bloody battles; and the flora, with hundreds of species and true botanical rarities.

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