

**Tomás Saraceno**

March 26 – May 2, 2015

Opening Reception: March 26, 2015; 6-8pm

Conversation with the Artist and guests Leila W. Kinney and Molly Nesbit: March 28, 2015, 11am

***the voice is dim... your ears like brooms... reverberate in your eyes... timed air moves the room... galaxies appear...*** **-Tomás Saraceno**

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new large-scale installation, sculptures and works on paper by Tomás Saraceno. For this fifth solo show with the gallery, Saraceno will further develop his investigation of mapping societal complexities and possibilities with a presentation of new hanging sculptures and a major installation that transforms the ground floor gallery space into an immersive universe.

Saraceno's multidisciplinary artistic practice takes inspiration from a variety of sources ranging from architecture and space exploration to science fiction and geometries found in the biological sciences. Among these subjects, Saraceno has long included arachnology as a tool for the investigation of alternative constructions, forming the basis for recent exhibitions such as *Cosmic Jive: Tomás Saraceno* at Museo di Arte Contemporanea di Villa Croce (2014), *14 Billions [Working Title]* at the Bonniers Konsthall in Stockholm (2010), and the artist's 2009 presentation at the Venice Biennial *Galaxy Forming along Filaments, like Droplets along the Strands of a Spider's Web*. For Saraceno, spider webs spark inquiry into possible modes to redefine relationships between humans and nature, proposing utopian conditions for sustainable societies. Entering into Saraceno's installation on the ground floor of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, perception is reoriented in a darkened environment dotted with glowing sculptures articulated in silvery spider silk. Formed of complex interwoven geometries suspended in air, each piece appears as a unique galaxy floating within an expansive, infinite landscape. The works' titles reveal the technical basis for each sculptural element, like the genus and species of the spider collaborators and the amount of time needed to construct their webs. During the building period of each sculpture, each cube is turned onto its various sides, dislodging gravity and interweaving concepts of freedom and control within the work. This action is reminiscent of inverting an hour glass, like the object-cum-constellation "horologium" referred to in the title *Hybrid solitary semi-social musical instrument Horologium: built by Argiope anasuja- one month- and a small community of Cyrtophora citricola -two weeks*. And yet, the objects themselves defy the framework of their titles, as the intricate web formations in each crystalline cube are clearly not of human logic nor would they exist in nature.

Within this cosmological construction Saraceno presents *Cosmic Jive*, a sound installation that contrasts our manmade system of language with the language of spiders, where words are replaced by an alternative vocabulary of vibrations. Many works in Saraceno's oeuvre are the product of collaborations with astrophysicists, biologists, arachnologists, engineers, and other specialists. For the sound installation in particular, Saraceno worked with sound experts and the Museum of Natural History Hemiptera Research Group, Leibnitz Institute for Evolution and Biodiversity at the Humboldt University, Berlin to capture the ultra low frequencies that render spider webs akin to musical instruments. The multivalent nature of the metaphor proposed by the installation probes ideas of collectivity and evolution - on micro and macro levels - in order to examine as-yet untapped potential within our society.

Upstairs, Saraceno presents an elaborate cosmos of hanging sculptures that includes models and architectural proposals, further expanding the artist's inquiry into how various assemblies and compositions of natural phenomena can serve as adaptable models for how we live and interact. The project space hosts *Space Elevator*, a work that will evolve over the course of the exhibition with the active contribution of a live spider. Accompanying works in the main gallery expound upon Saraceno's continued engagement with the concept of "cloud city" that explores the possibility of a future airborne existence within and beyond the "spaceship" Earth. Other works like *Foam 48B/15p* are composed of complex geometric structures of transparent foil that suggests the cell-like membranes of bubbles that emerge when oil is shaken with water. Like a biological microcosm, each work is composed of many similar building blocks that come together to render singularly distinct forms. The interconnected elements of these works capture the iconic and intricate complexity of Saraceno's oeuvre.

A selection of Tomás Saraceno's important solo presentations include *Cosmic Jive, Tomás Saraceno: The Spider Sessions*, curated by Luca Cerizza at the Villa Croce in Genoa, Italy (2014), *Tomás Saraceno* at HfG Karlsruhe in Karlsruhe, Germany (2014), *In orbit* at Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen K21 in Düsseldorf (2013-2015), *On Space time foam* at Hangar Bicocca in Milan (2012-13), *Tomás Saraceno on the Roof: Cloud City*, a site-specific installation commissioned for The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (2012), *Cloud Specific* at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in St. Louis (2011-12), *Cloud Cities* at Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2011-12), *14 billion*, which opened at Bonniers Konsthall in Stockholm in 2010 and traveled to the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead, UK through 2011, and *Lighter than Air*, a travelling exhibition at the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis and Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston (2009-10).