

Largest-Ever Exhibition in Japan for World-Renowned Artist Tomás SARACENO

Arts Towada 10th Anniversary Exhibition: Inter+Play

Season2: October 1, 2021 – January 10, 2022



Tomás Saraceno, *Arachnomancy Cards*, 2019, Photography by Studio Tomás Saraceno
Courtesy the artist and Arachnophilia

“Inter+Play” is Towada Art Center’s ongoing three-part exhibition to celebrate the tenth anniversary of Arts Towada, a city-wide initiative that promotes art throughout the city along its main thoroughfare Kanchogai Avenue. The second season will take place from October 1, 2021 to January 10, 2022, and features the visionary artist Tomás Saraceno, whose work is part of the center’s permanent collection. Visitors will be invited into the floating and interconnected worlds of *Aerocene* and *Arachnophilia*, the artist’s transdisciplinary, open-source, community projects, calling for environmental justices and interspecies cohabitation through renewed relationships with the terrestrial, atmospheric and cosmic realms. Saraceno’s international and interdisciplinary practice challenges dominant ways of inhabiting and sensing the environment, continuously redefining the place of artistic production in the face of destructive habits, subjugated forms of knowledge, and unequal power relations. The artist’s solo exhibition will fill the entirety of the center’s gallery spaces, marking the largest display of his work ever held at a Japanese museum.

Jorōgumo, a Yōkai of Japanese mythology that exists in the liminal space between woman and spider, serves as one of our guides into the web of rhizomatic relations made visible in Saraceno’s exhibition. Featured in two of the artist’s three new *Arachnomancy Cards*, Jorōgumo blurs species boundaries and invites us to attune to a plane of radical interconnectedness, challenging hierarchical, patriarchal, and colonial power structures and celebrating what Marisol de la Cadena calls the “anthropo-not-seen”, those alternative forms of knowing and inhabiting the world that survive and subvert the homogenizing impulse of the Capitalocene, opening spaces for inter-species recognition. An extension of its cognitive system, the spider’s web allows for communication with the greater world through vibration, mapping its consciousness along threads like the neural map of our own brain. The 33 cards that make the *Arachnomancy* deck draw on this extended cognition, transforming it into an instrument of mediation, one of the many ways to consult spider/web oracles, messengers between perceptual worlds, transcending the reciprocal blindness between life forms and inviting us to attune to our sympoietic futures. The oracle in the third *Arachnomancy card* created specifically for this exhibition is *Argyroneta aquatica japonica*, a Japanese subspecies of the water spider *Argyroneta aquatica*, featured in Saraceno’s short film *Living at the bottom of the ocean of air*, also on display at Towada Art Center. The unique behaviour of this spider reveals the capacity of certain species to transform their way of life to adapt to new environments, posing the question: Can the destructive logic of the Capitalocene be altered in response to climate change, zoonosis and species extinction caused by some humans?

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The pandemic has made us more aware of our shared yet unequally experienced fragility, of the exposure inherent to breath. What is floating in the air today? What are we breathing in? And who has the possibility to breathe at all? Today, bad air quality kills a staggering 8.7 million people a year, three times more than the pandemic has in the same amount of time. Particulate matter floats in the air, much of which is the byproduct of human fossil fuel consumption. In *Aerographies*, the exhibition's main room, Saraceno challenges business-as-usual approaches to environmental issues by envisioning a future free from borders and fossil fuels. The *Aerocene Backpack*, a portable flight starter kit enclosing an *aerosolar* sculpture that floats using only the sun and air and is always evolving through a collective and open process of construction, takes the center stage, inspiring us to rethink current ways of moving in and with the planet, towards *Aerocene*, an era where we can all live and breathe.

Throughout the exhibition, Tomás Saraceno's collaborations with spiders and the atmosphere offer a moment of transcendence, celebrating forms of wisdom that subvert the hierarchical relationship through which some organize the world and inviting us to reattune to the web of coexistence as it manifests at Towada Art Center.

SUZUKI Yasuhiro's *Quantum Apples* and art collective 目 [mé] 's space from Season 1 will continue to be on display, and a performance by Problem Behaviour Trio is also scheduled during the exhibition.

Season 2 Artists:	Tomás SARACENO
Year-long Exhibits:	SUZUKI Yasuhiro [exhibited in front of the Towada Art Center] 目 [mé] [exhibited in the city of Towada]
Performance:	Problem Behaviour Trio (NOMURA Makoto, SAKUMA Shin & JAREO Osamu [Scheduled to be held once during each part of the exhibition])

Exhibition Highlights

1. A number of Saraceno's projects on display in Japan for the first time

Some of Saraceno's signature works will be on display for the first time in Japan, such as a Hybrid Web, created as spiders from different species weave freely in the same space, each one of them telling a story of unique relationships, and the *Aerocene Backpack*, a sculpture that floats fuelled only by the sun, carried only by the wind.

2. art collective 目 [mé] present *movements* inside installation space in downtown Towada

For Season 2, art collective 目 [mé] will present *movements* inside of their installation space. A stark-white gallery embedded in a building in downtown Towada, space features different artworks for the first and second half of the exhibition. *movements*, on display for the second half of the exhibition, may look like a swarm of countless black creatures when viewed from above, but upon closer inspection, these little creations each move mechanically, noisily ticking away with the movements of the clock.



目 [mé], *movements*, 2019
"Obviously, no one can make heads nor tails." (Chiba City Museum of Art)
Courtesy of the artist

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Season 2 Artists

Tomás SARACENO



Tomás Saraceno
© Alfred Weidinger, 2015

Born 1973 in Tucuman, Argentina, Tomás Saraceno lives and works in Berlin. His practice is informed by concepts that link art, life science, and the social sciences. Enmeshed at the junction of these worlds, his floating sculptures, community projects, and interactive installations propose new, sustainable ways of inhabiting and sensing the environment.

Saraceno's interdisciplinary community projects include *Museo Aero Solar* and *Aerocene*, which aim towards an ethical collaboration with the earth's atmosphere. With *Aerocene*, Saraceno launched *Fly with Aerocene Pacha*, the world's first piloted fully solar free flight in a fully certified balloon sculpture. For the first time in history, a human being, *Aerocene* pilot Leticia Marqués, floated into the sky using only the warmth of the sun and the air that we all breathe for fuel, setting 32 world records, making it the most sustainable human flight in the history of aviation.

In another thread of his practice, Saraceno's profound interest in spiders and their webs led to the formation of the *Arachnophilia* community- Through *arachnophilia.net* and the *Arachnomancy* App, Saraceno invites people around the world to weave the web of interspecies co-existence and take part in the challenge of *Mapping Against Extinction*.

Saraceno most recently exhibited his work at Palazzo Strozzi in Florence for "Aria" (Italy, 2020), the 58th Venice Biennale as part of "May You Live In Interesting Times" (Italy, 2019), and at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris for his *Carte Blanche* exhibition "ON AIR" (France, 2018).



Tomás Saraceno, *Aerocene Backpack*, 2016
Photo: Didzis Grodz
Courtesy of the artist and Aerocene
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Tomás Saraceno, *On Clouds (Air-Port-City)*, 2008
Photo: Oyamada Kuniya

On Clouds (Air-Port-City), Towada Art Center Permanent Collection

Saraceno's *On clouds (Air-Port-City)* is part of the permanent collection at the Towada Art Center. It is an illustration of symbiosis in nature, as well as a reminder of the permeability of scale, the inevitable connection of even that which seems most separate. Transparent spheres bound together by a web of cord resemble magnificent cloud-like formations, perhaps a floating city, a Cloud City –one whose size and shape is never fixed and which displaces our conventional notions of boundaries and territories.

Year-long Exhibits

SUZUKI Yasuhiro



photo: Nakagawa Masako

Artist. Born in Shizuoka Prefecture in 1979.

Suzuki Yasuhiro's works add new dimensions to familiar objects as he continually asks questions about how we see things and how we perceive the world. He has held solo exhibitions at The Mito Art Museum (2014) and the Hakone Open Air Museum (2017). He garnered attention for his *Zipper Boat*, which debuted at the 2010 Setouchi Triennale, when it was displayed on Tokyo's Sumida River in 2018. His work was exhibited at the fourth Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art in 2011, and in 2016, he represented Japan at the inaugural London Design Biennale. In 2014, he received the Mainichi Design Award. Suzuki is a professor at Musashino Art University and also works in the Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology at the University of Tokyo.



Suzuki Yasuhiro, *Quantum Apples*, 2020
"Arts Towada 10th Anniversary Exhibition: Inter+Play"
Photo: Oyamada Kuniya

目 [mé]



photo : Tsushima Takahiro

Art collective founded in 2013.

目 [mé] comprises artist KOJIN Haruka, director MINAMIGAWA Kenji, and production manager MASUI Hirofumi. They value teamwork that utilizes the individual strengths of each member, which allows them to develop works that attract us to the endless uncertainty of the real world, placing an emphasis on exhibition spaces and the role of the visitor, regardless of any specific genre or methodology. Their major works include *Unreliable Reality - The Where of This World* (2014, Shiseido Gallery, Tokyo) and *Elemental Detection* (2016, Saitama Triennale).



目 [mé] , *space*, 2020
"Arts Towada 10th Anniversary Exhibition: Inter+Play"
Photo: Oyamada Kuniya

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Performance

Problem Behaviour Trio (NOMURA Makoto, SAKUMA Shin & JAREO Osamu)

Behaviour Problem Trio was formed in 2018 when two classically trained dancers visited a large welfare facility for people with disabilities in Hong Kong where Nomura Makoto was working as an artist in residence. In 2019, they held Nomura, Jareo & Sakuma's Behaviour Problem Show: Practice Pieces for Becoming an Outsider at the Toyonaka Performing Arts Center.

Season 2 performance : November 6 and 7, 2021

NOMURA Makoto



Composer and pianist. Born in Nagoya in 1968.

Nomura Makoto's solo exhibitions include *Organic Vegetable* (Art Space Niji, Kyoto), and he has participated in a number of group exhibitions, including "Textures" (Aomori Contemporary Art Centre, Aomori), "Archway Sound Symposium" (Five Years Gallery, London), "Makoto Nomura's Music Room" (Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima), and "Notations21" (Jeanie Tengelsen Gallery, New York). He currently serves as director of community programs for the Japan Century Symphony Orchestra.



Behaviour Problem Trio, Summer Night Festival, 2021
"Arts Towada 10th Anniversary Exhibition: Inter+Play"
Photo: Oyamada Kuniya

SAKUMA Shin



Photo : Toshie Kusamoto

Traditional Japanese Dancer. Born in Osaka in 1968.

Sakuma Shin has been involved in projects that promote collaboration, improvisation, and communication. These include *Body Talk*, a clinical philosophy project initiated by Osaka University, and *Hiru no Dance*, a new kind of dance between dance and people with disabilities created together with Tanpopo-no-ye in Nara. He is also the co-author of *Social Art: How Art and People with Disabilities Can Change Society* (Sōsharu āto : shōgai no aru hito to āto de shakai o kaeru) (Bungeisha Co., Ltd.).

JAREO Osamu



Photo : Hiroyuki Miura

Choreographer and dancer. Born in Osaka in 1965.

In 1991, Jareo Osamu formed a dance unit with Misako Terada. But in recent years, he has focused on solo work as well as projects for people with disabilities, the elderly, and displaced persons, working to develop a practice that connects art with society.

In 2016, he published his first book, *Dancing in the Nursing Home: Choreography, Care, and the Birth of Totsu Totsu Dance* (Shobunsha). Jareo serves as a specially appointed professor in the Department of Body Expression and Cinematic Arts at Rikkyo University.

Events

Performance by Behaviour Problem Trio

Date : November 6 and 7, 2021 / Time : 13:30 – 15:30

Location : Around the Towada Art Center, In the city of Towada / Admission : TBD

Exhibition gallery talk by curator

Date : October 10, November 10, December 10, 2021 and January 10, 2022 / Time : 11:00 – 12:00

Location : Around the Towada Art Center, In the city of Towada / Admission : Free with exhibition ticket

*Additional events will be held throughout the exhibition period. Details will be announced at a later date.

*Content of the events above are subject to change. We update our website regularly, so please check there for the latest information.

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About the Exhibition

Title :	Arts Towada 10th Anniversary Exhibition: Inter+Play Season 2
Date :	Oct 1, 2021 - Jan 10, 2022
Hours :	9:00–17:00 (Last admission 30 minutes before closing)
Closed :	Mondays except for National Holidays, in which case the museum is open on the holiday and closed the following Tuesday *Closed December 27, 2021 through January 1, 2022 for year-end holidays
Location :	Towada Art Center
Admission :	Exhibition only: 800 yen 100 yen/ticket discount for groups of 20 or more High school students and younger: Free
Organized by :	Towada Art Center
Endorsed by :	Embassy of the Argentine Republic, The To-o Nippo Press, The Daily-Tohoku Shimbun Inc., Aomori Broadcasting, Corporation, Aomori Television, Broadcasting Co., Ltd., Asahi Broadcasting Aomori Co., Ltd., & Towada City Board of Education
In Cooperation with :	Goethe-Institut Tokyo
Curators :	KANAZAWA Kodama, WASHIDA Meruro
Assistant Curators :	MITOME Sayaka, NAKAGAWA Chieko, SATOMURA Mari, TOYAMA Aruma



What is Arts Towada?

Towada City has been promoting the Arts Towada initiative to beautify its main thoroughfare of Kanchogai Avenue as part of its urban planning for the future. This, in effect, transforms Kanchogai Avenue into an open-air museum with a variety of artworks adorning the entirety of the avenue. The boldness of such a project is rare even when considered on a global scale. Towada strives to be a city of the arts, one that inspires creativity in visitors and residents alike. The city's strong art scene, rich history, and natural beauty all work to intensify the local vitality of the area. At the heart of the Arts Towada initiative is the Towada Art Center, which opened its doors in 2008. The art center was followed by the Art Square, an outdoor space located across from the art center and filled with iconic outdoor artworks completed in the spring of 2010.

Towada Art Center

The Towada Art Center opened in 2008 as the first contemporary art museum in Japan's Tohoku region. The museum's permanent exhibition includes works by world-class artists, including Kusama Yayoi, Nara Yoshitomo, and Ron Mueck. The collection expands beyond the museum to the Art Square, a park-like area where children and adults alike can stroll, relax, and interact with the outdoor artwork.

Towada Art Center

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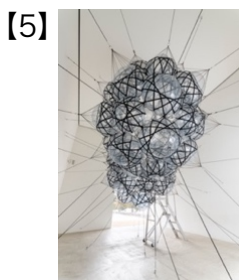
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