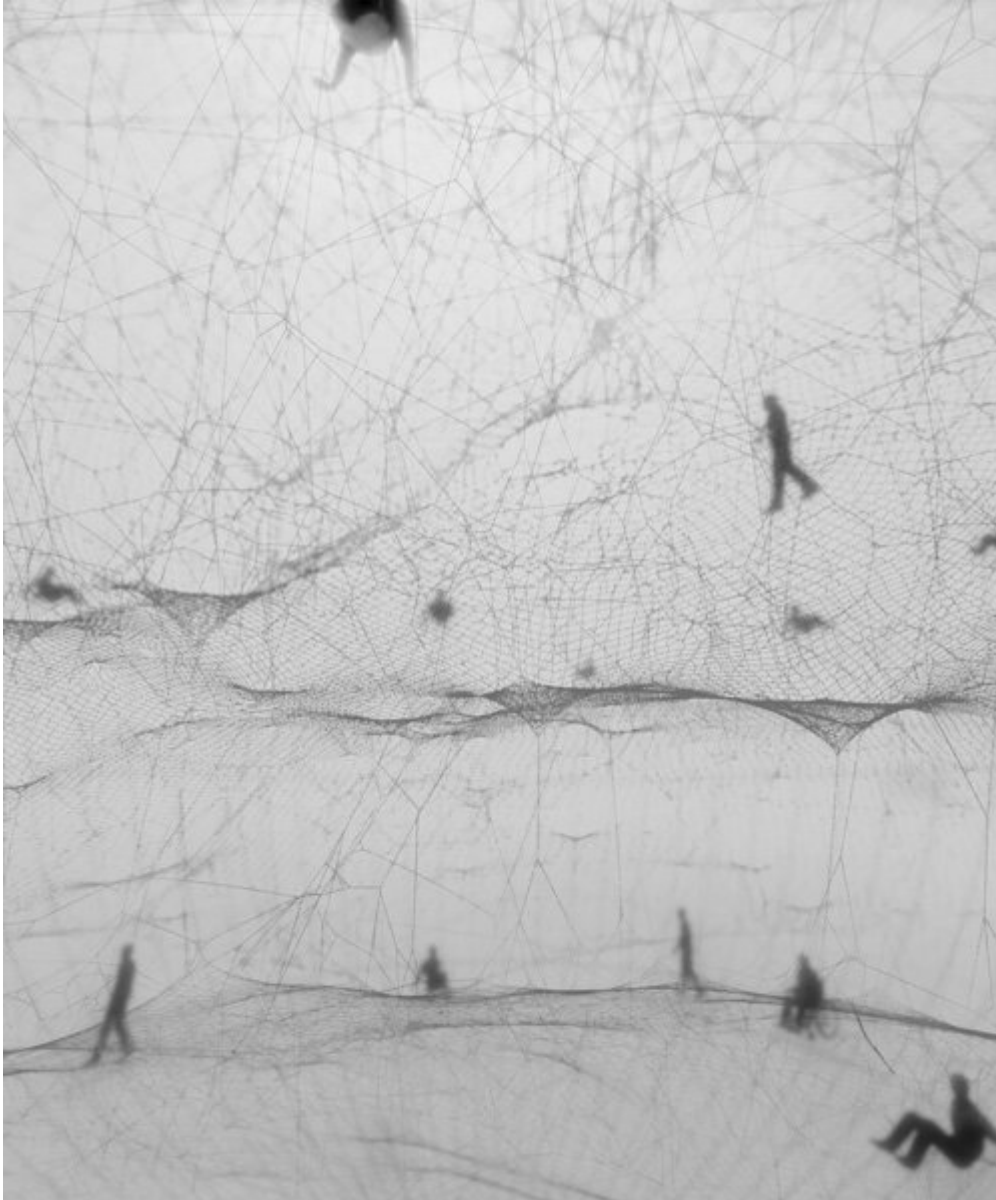


tomás saraceno's arachnophilic installation takes over the SHED in largest US show to date

designboom.com/art/tomas-saraceno-the-shed-sensory-installation-largest-us-exhibition-01-30-2022

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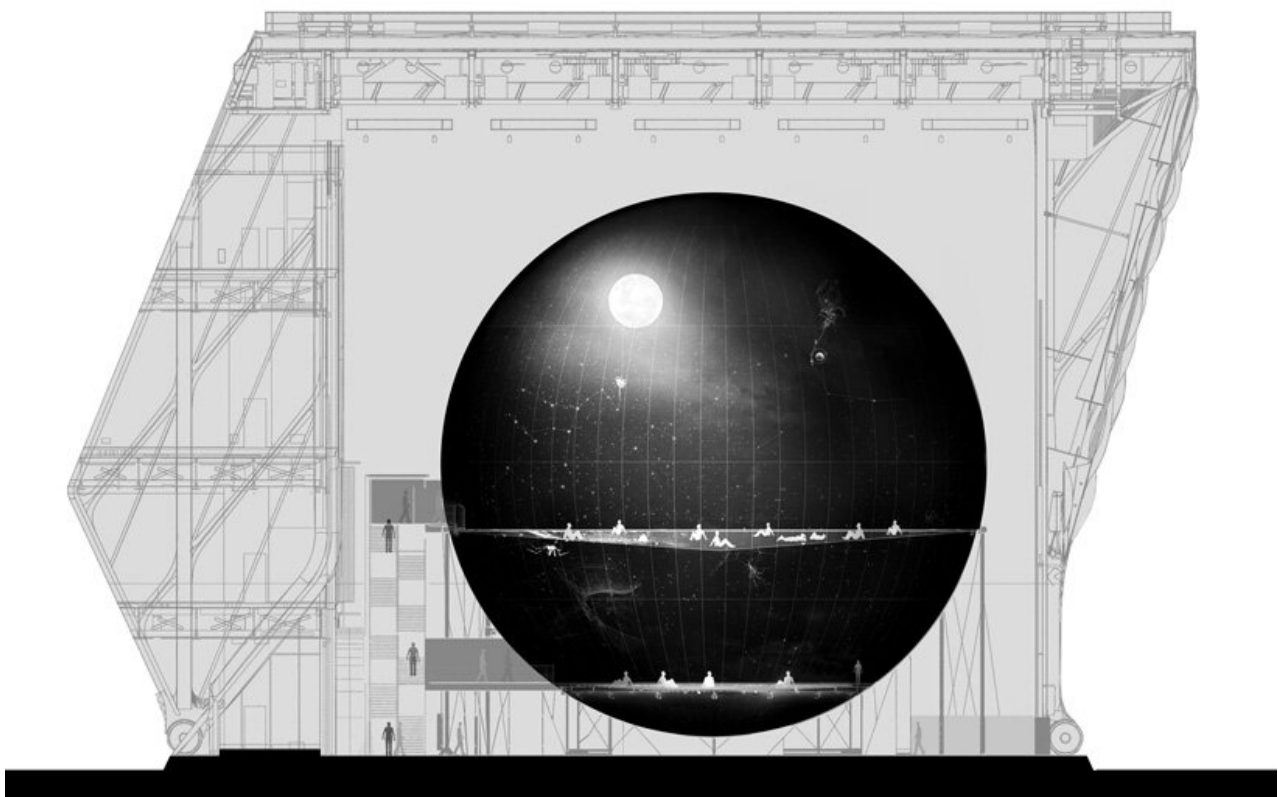


tomás saraceno: particular matter(s)

from february 11 to april 17, 2022, the SHED presents **tomás saraceno: particular matter(s)**, **the artist's largest US exhibition to date**. a highlight of the show is **'free the air: how to hear the universe in a spider/web'**, a 95-foot-diameter (29-meter) sensory installation commissioned by the SHED that will fill the arts center's soaring mccourt space. additionally, an expansive survey exhibition of the artist's works and projects will occupy the level two and level four galleries of the SHED. saraceno's artistic practice encompasses floating sculptures, interactive installations and extensive research focused on environmental justice, as evident in projects such as **aerocene** and

arachnophilia. his process is informed by the various perspectives of human and nonhuman lifeforms that have been disregarded, such as the air, spiders and their webs, and communities impacted by inequitable environmental policies and practices.

‘at the heart of tomás saraceno’s work is a new way of inhabiting and experiencing the world, one that centers on an ecologically post-fossil fuels future,’ says emma enderby, the SHED’s curator-at-large. ‘tomás presents the necessity to reevaluate how we perceive and operate in the world and what to expect from it, which he achieves through interconnected, nonhierarchical collaborations across the human and nonhuman. the air and the particles that define it, spiders and their webs, and our visitors are all protagonists in particular matter(s) at the SHED’



tomás saraceno, collage towards free the air: how to hear the universe in a spider/web, 2022, courtesy the artist

saraceno’s monumental sculpture debuts at the shed

bringing together new and recent work, **‘particular matter(s)’** builds upon **tomás saraceno’s** platforms and projects that invite visitors to deeply understand and celebrate the radical interconnectedness of all things. for more than a decade, the artist has been imagining a world free from borders and fossil fuels. his work addresses environmental racism and justice, envisions alternative ways of engaging with earth’s atmosphere, and deepens an understanding of interspecies cohabitation and communication. for his SHED commission, saraceno is creating a monumental sculpture, ‘free the air: how to hear the universe in a spider/web’, which will debut inside the 17,000-square-foot mccourt space.

the installation will house an orchestrated sensory experience—a concert of vibrations emitted by the movement of particles in the air and spider’s entangled terrestrial and cosmic webs. this woven ensemble is composed of and performed by arachnid players, spider diviners, and atmospheric and cosmic matters, captured via recording devices in collaboration with the arachnophilia community and amplified in the installation.

‘this will be tomás saraceno’s first major survey exhibition in the united states, a multidisciplinary exhibition that showcases saraceno’s visionary, decades-long practice, dedicated to imagining sustainable futures amid our worsening global climate emergency,’ notes alex poots, the SHED’s artistic director and CEO. ‘spanning three-quarters of our building, saraceno’s exhibition explores ways of witnessing the environment through ecology, interspecies communication, and environmental justice. we very much look forward to welcoming audiences to experience this new show.’



tomás saraceno, collage towards free the air: how to hear the universe in a spider/web, 2022, courtesy the artist

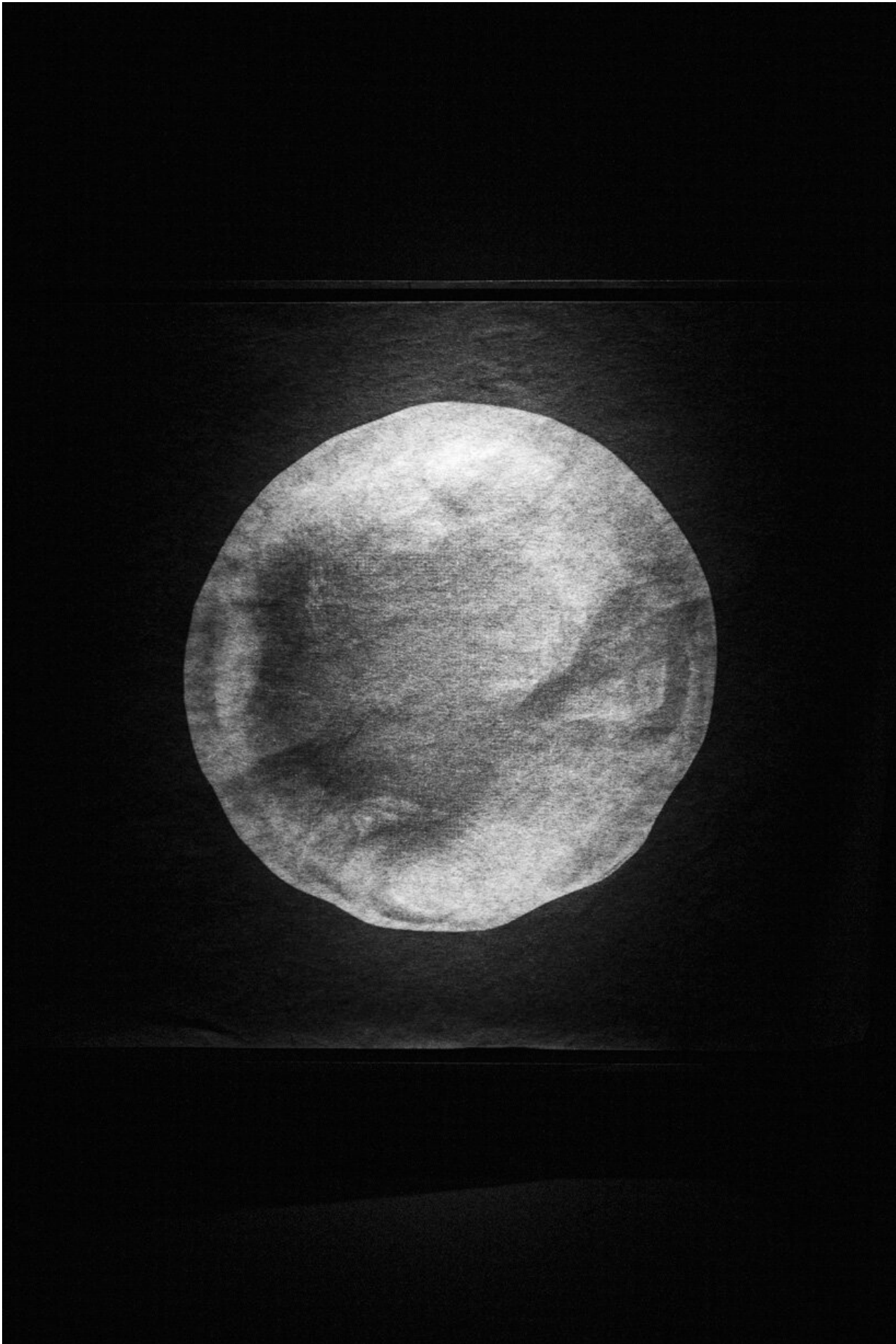
for **particular matter(s)**, new affiliates (see more [here](#)) advised on the design of the main gallery show on the second floor and the sequencing around the ‘sensory experience’ held in the mccourt. given the nature of saraceno’s works, which are typically viewed in black-out conditions with carefully calibrated lighting, and in conversation with the artist, the design produced a series of voids that were both easily navigable and facilitated a sense of disorientation. new affiliates designed a series of differently-scaled rooms that, while dark, still create a rhythm of expansion and contraction, of intimacy and openness.

the works, varying from ethereal webs encased in massive vitrines to nearly imperceptible dust particles, occupy these rooms differently, from the single piece to the collection. the sequence around the main experience has a similar 'otherworldly' quality. for this, new affiliates laid out the waiting area (including seating, lockers, and circulation) in a series of circular arrangements meant to evoke a sense of collective, set in serene neo-futurism.

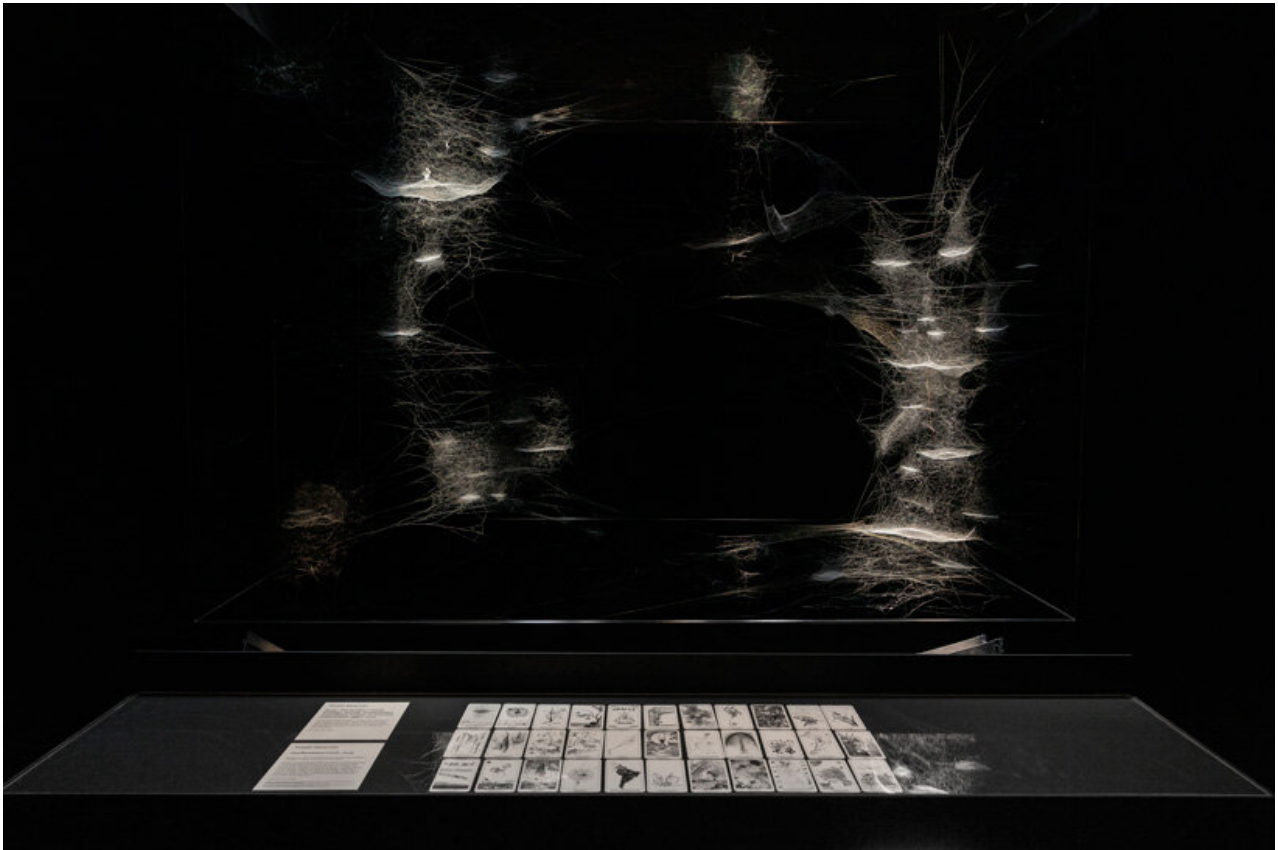
this continued into the darkened scaffold-stair, with its dramatic ultra-thin lighting tracks that highlighted the structure as a familiar/unfamiliar environment preparing visitors for their time in the installation. the design, which was ultimately adapted as the content changed, established a tone to the exhibition that helped disorient the work from the pedestrian experience of the city outside and create a self-contained environment.



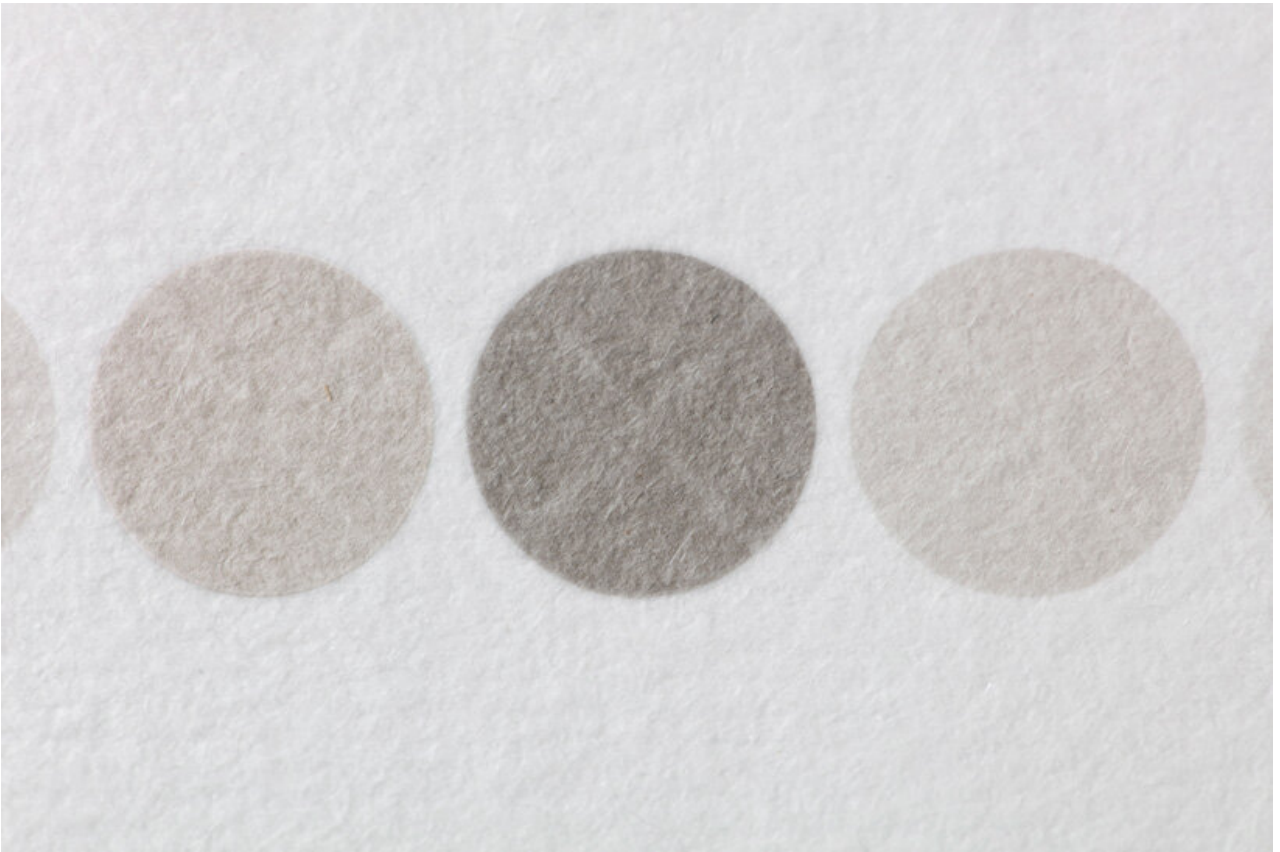
courtesy the artist



tomás saraceno, printed matter(s), 2018, courtesy the artist; andersen's, copenhagen; ruth benzacar, buenos aires; tanya bonakdar gallery, new york/los angeles; pinksummer contemporary art, genoa; neugerriemschneider, berlin



tomás saraceno, spider/web pavillion, 2019, la biennale di venezia: 'may you live in interesting times.', courtesy the artist; andersen's, copenhagen; ruth benzacar, buenos aires; tanya bonakdar gallery, new york/los angeles; pinksummer contemporary art, genoa; neugerriemschneider, berlin



tomás saraceno, we do not all breathe the same air (detail), 2019-2022, with special thanks to harriet washington and the shed. courtesy the artist; andersen's, copenhagen; ruth benzacar, buenos aires; tanya bonakdar gallery, new york/los angeles; pinksummer contemporary art, genoa; neugerriemschneider, berlin



spider silk acts as an active archive of particulate matter, its silvery strands thickening with carbon dust. courtesy tomás saraceno with thanks to arachnophilia