



El Santuario del Agua Salinas Grandes, 2026
© Photo: Studio Tomás Saraceno



El Santuario del Agua Salinas Grandes, 2026
© Photo: Studio Tomás Saraceno



El Santuario del Agua Salinas Grandes, 2026
© Photo: Studio Tomás Saraceno



Tomás Saraceno
The Sanctuary of Water, 2026
© Photo: Studio Tomás Saraceno

"The Sanctuary of Water" was conceived by artist Tomás Saraceno, following a direct request by the Indigenous Communities of Salinas Grandes and Laguna de Guayatayoc, northern Argentina, for a permanent sculpture to facilitate community-based rural tourism. It is being constructed with the support of Studio Tomás Saraceno, The Aerocene Foundation, Red Atacama, Haus der Kunst in Munich, and many more, among them Lisl Schöpflin, Stefan Vilsmeier and Sergio Linhares, and Freunde Haus der Kunst.



Tomás Saraceno
The Sanctuary of Water, 2026
 © Photo: Studio Tomás Saraceno

Conceived by artist Tomás Saraceno with the 11 indigenous communities of the Red Atacama network, Salinas Grandes, northern Argentina. With the generous support of Haus der Kunst München, The Aerocene Foundation, Studio Tomás Saraceno, and many others. Courtesy the artist, Red Atacama and The Aerocene Foundation, as well as the art galleries neugerriemschneider, Berlin, Tanya Bonakdar, Los Angeles, Pinksummer, Genova, Andersen's, Copenhagen and Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires.

"The Sanctuary of Water", Salinas Grandes, northern Argentina. Organized around a circular pool that reflects the sky, surrounded by orbital paths of light and reflections, The Sanctuary of Water consists of five salt apachetas, from two to twenty-four meters in diameter and up to twelve meters in height, some with viewpoints accessible by stairs. Born from a community dialogue, it will be owned and managed by the communities themselves as a space for sustainable tourism, honoring Pachamama and strengthening just cycles of water, life, and memory.



Tomás Saraceno
endless big, 2006
 Courtesy the artist, neugerriemschneider, Berlin, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York; Andersen's Contemporary, Copenhagen; Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires, and Pinksummer Contemporary Art, Genoa.
 © Photo: Studio Tomás Saraceno

In the heights of the Northern Andes, where the sky touches the earth and time expands like salt, the Sanctuary of Water will emerge as a gesture of gratitude. An unfinished form that is complete only when the water –mother, mirror, memory – returns its hidden half. A community project for the art of Good Living in complementarity.



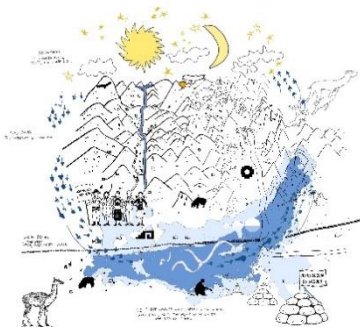
Apacheta, northern Andes
© Photo: Inca Glossary

Across the high passes of the Andes, apachetas rise slowly from the earth as small cairns of stone marking the movement of locals and travellers alike. Each stone is an offering: to the mountain (apu), to the path, to those who came before, and those yet to come. Over centuries, these gestures have accumulated into living monuments of care, maintained not through ownership but through participation. "The apachetas not only mark the path; they bless it. They are our spiritual beacons." – Red Atacama



Tomás Saraceno
Fly with Aerocene Pacha, 2020
Salinas Grandes and Laguna de Guayatayoc, northern Argentina
Image courtesy of the Aerocene Foundation
© Photo: Studio Tomás Saraceno

Human Solar Free-Flight for Aerocene as part of "Connect, BTS", floating with the message written by the Indigenous communities of Salinas Grandes and Laguna de Guayatayoc, Jujuy, Argentina: "Water and Life are Worth More than Lithium", 2020.



Tomás Saraceno
The Three Worlds of Pacha, 2026
© Photo: Studio Tomás Saraceno

In the Andean understanding of the three worlds of Pacha, existence is woven through three interconnected realms. Hanan Pacha is the world above, where the stars dwell and celestial forces move. Kay Pacha is the world of here and now, the earthly realm of human life, relationships, and daily experience. Ukhu Pacha is the deep, inner, moist, fertile world – a hidden realm of origins, seeds, ancestors, and transformation beneath and within the earth. These worlds are not isolated layers but living dimensions that continually interact. They cross, speak, and touch one another through water, which flows between sky, land, and underground – falling as rain from above, moving across the surface, and nourishing the depths below. Through water, the three realms remain in dialogue, sustaining life and balance.



Aerocene Community

Fairclouds drawing, Salinas Grandes, northern Argentina, 2023

© Photo: Studio Tomás Saraceno

Can digital and physical clouds come together in life-giving water cycles? This is an invitation to join an alliance of Cloudstewards to bring financial and ethical support to the Indigenous Communities of Salinas Grandes in the fight against lithium extraction on their ancestral lands. Fairclouds is a digital platform for regenerative eco-social justice that builds a model for the repayment of ecological debt. Centred around an intergenerational artwork and a reparative economic model for its collective stewardship, the platform unites a transnational community who pledge, through their stewardship of geolocated digital artworks, a financial and ethical commitment to the Indigenous Communities of Salinas Grandes, a region of rich biodiversity and high-altitude andean wetlands in northern Argentina. Guardians of an ecosystem of great complexity and fragility, these communities have been engaged in a process of resistance to industrial lithium extraction since mining exploration first began over a decade ago in 2010.



Tomás Saraceno

When the Llama Drinks from the Stars and the Spider Weaves Cycles of Life, Where the Sky Touches the Earth and Time Expands Like Salt, the Sanctuary of Water Are Fair Clouds on the Horizon, 2025

© Photo: Studio Tomás Saraceno

“Our community, our elders, have possessed since ancient times the knowledge of observing the cosmos, how it moves throughout the year, and how it rotates. For example, from the months of April/May to August are the best months to observe the universe, the sky itself. And there lies the legend of Yacana, the dark llama seen in the Milky Way, accompanied by the fox. The llama is with its young, and also in some petroglyphs, it appears with a shepherd who is behind her. There is the fox, the snake, the partridge, the toad, all of which have meaning. But the most important is Yacana. During those months, the elders say, she walks from the Andes towards the Pacific to drink the waters of the sea, so that the sea does not flood the land. And afterwards, she returns it in the form of rain, of dew. They also say that if one, if the shepherd, is out in the field and finds a fleece of wool full of water, that is a sign that his herd will do well, or that he will have good livestock; it is a sign of good luck.” – Interview with Juan Carmelo Ramírez, February 2026