

Studio Saturdays: Geometric Sculpture



Cloud Cities- Nebulous Thresholds Tomás Saraceno

1968

Mixed media, wire, plexiglass

The Alford Collection of Contemporary Art at Rollins College, Gift of Barbara '68 and Theodore '68 Alford, 2017.6.46. Image courtesy the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York.

MATERIALS

- 1 Sheet of Construction Paper
- String
- Gluestick
- Plastic Needle
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Pencil

Tomás Saraceno is an installation and sculpture artist born in 1973 in San Miguel de Tucumán, Argentina. Installations, sometimes called “environments”, are artworks that are made to be walked around, walked through, or otherwise interacted with. Installations are often very large, and can take up a whole room or more in a museum or gallery. Installation artworks can be anything that takes up a space; it could be a transformation of the gallery room into a different place, like a bedroom or garden, or it could be a large sculpture that people can touch and walk through. Installations can include people performing or acting, and special lights and music.

The artwork we are looking at today, Cloud Cities – Nebulous Thresholds by Saraceno, is from his “Cloud Cities” series that combines sculpture and installation. Saraceno is inspired by science and nature; the sculptures in “Cloud Cities”, like these, are meant to look like things found in nature and studied in science, like spiderwebs, water molecules, and plant roots. The geometric sculptures in the installation are made of glass that reflects light in many different colors. Light and color, as they relate to science and how we see the world, are part of the artwork. The light that is thrown around the room by the “cloud city” and all the colors that are reflected by it are part of the installation, and not just an effect of it. In the same spirit of science and nature, Nebulous Thresholds is meant to make the viewer wonder: “How can we make cities in the air? What would homes for humans in the sky look like? How would our relationship to nature change if we lived in the clouds?”

For today’s craft, we’ll be making our own hanging geometric sculptures inspired by Tomas Saraceno’s Cloud Cities.

THINK LIKE AN ARTIST

- 1) If you were going to create an installation, what would it be? How big would you make it? Would it be inside or outside?
- 2) What do you think a city in the clouds would look like? How would your life be different if you lived there?

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Line your ruler up along the long side of your construction paper. Then, mark alongside the paper at each 1 inch point until you have ten marks.
2. Turn your sheet of paper around to the other long side and do the same thing. Then, use the ruler to connect the marks creating twelve long sections.
3. Now, fold your sheet of paper in half long-ways and press the center crease so there will be a visible line left.
4. Use scissors to cut along the middle crease. You only need one half of the paper for this project. Then cut along the lines you made in pencil to make 12 individual sections of paper.
5. To create the paper beads, use an object like a pencil or the head of the plastic needle and wrap it around. Make sure your object is big enough that the needle and string can go through the opening. Then use glue on the end of the paper to keep its shape. Repeat this to create 12 beads.
6. Thread the string through the eye of the needle and then add 4 paper beads to create the base of the sculpture. Keep a little bit of string on one end and then tie the two ends together to create a diamond shape.
7. Thread two beads and loop the yarn across the opposite end of the sculpture and tie it in place. Repeat this step one more time to create 4 sections of the sculpture.

INSTRUCTIONS

8. Thread the string through one of the paper beads to be in the middle of the sculpture. Then thread a bead and tie it in place to the section across from it. Repeat this with the rest of the beads to create a 3D geometric shape.
9. Once the last bead is in place thread the needle through a paper bead so both ends of the string are coming out of the same area. Place the string around your finger and tie a knot to create a loop.
10. Also, if you'd like, you can repeat this process with your other twelve pieces of paper and another piece of string to make a second geometric sculpture!