

***Sensing Art in the Atmosphere: Elemental Lures and Aerosolar Practices.*** By Sasha Englemann.

Abingdon and New York: Routledge. 2021. 192 pp. £120 GBP hardback. ISBN 9780367220358.

In *Sensing Art in the Atmosphere* Sasha Englemann explores how meaning is made in the entanglement of elemental, social, cultural, emotional, and political forces. The focus is on the value of the arts as a tool for revealing, negotiating, and challenging these (often hidden) interactions. The term 'aerosolar arts' is used to describe art objects – or encounters – developed through wind and sun– and the effects produced by them. Here, more specifically, the aerosolar artworks in question are *Museo Aero Solar*, *Becoming Aerosolar* and *Aerocene*, the three principal iterations of airborne sculptures by Studio Tomás Saraceno, the name given to the creative collective working with Berlin-based artist Tomás Saraceno.

On one level the book provides a thorough reflective overview of these Saraceno works and the relationships between the different iterations and the contexts in which they were produced. However, the book goes beyond a survey, using particular aerosolar works as a window through which to explore approach broader creative relationships with air, each focusing on a different theme: shared atmospheres; the lures of wind and weather; air currents in relation to regulated air spaces; clouds and the sun.

Throughout, there is an attention to detail in language. Phrases are sensitively selected to create poetic resonance and evoke nuanced meaning – my artist's mind is sent racing by the statement geography is 'haunted by air' (Engelmann, 2021: 11). It is worth noting the careful choice of words in the title. 'Atmosphere' in referencing both elemental and socio-spatial relationships, neatly aligns the two. Read as a noun, 'sensing art' denotes a sentient artform; as a verb it also denotes the process of becoming sentient of the artistry within elemental forces.

A core term is 'lure' and Englemann takes care to articulate its nuance, differentiating her usage from Graham Harman's 'allure.' Instead, she draws on Isabel Stengers' interpretation of Alfred North Whitehead's 'lures for feeling.' Lures, for Englemann, are better conceived as a force forged within us, as opposed to an external pull. As a reader we experience the lure of being within something, through the eyes of the author. As Englemann neatly puts it; 'This book is not a distanced account of these three strands of the aerosolar arts. Rather, from my position within these collective spaces, I trace how they intervene in air and atmosphere and lure bodies into different forms of elementally engaged practice and politics' (p. 9).

This overlap between the elemental and the human is made vivid in the preface, which opens with the narration of the shocking childhood experience of a violent act, highlighting that the fine balance of atmospheric conditions can be a line between story and tragedy. This is one the strengths of the book – Englemann is no distant narrator drily reporting on research, we follow her progress as the research develops and she becomes ever more central to the Saraceno project, from observer ethnographer , to active participant and member of Studio Tomás Saraceno. In her account of being lifted in the air by a sculpture, we feel there with her; equally we feel a sense of deflation – both physical and emotional – as a launch on a cold Berlin airfield fails to take off.

This embodied situated approach does not diminish the sense of research rigor, which is situated on the cusp of geography and art practice drawing on literature across the arts, humanities, social and environmental sciences. As such, *Sensing Art in the Atmosphere* will be relevant to a wide range of researchers within these fields, as well as a wider interdisciplinary community around sociology,

mobilities studies and the geohumanities. The objective is less to examine how the artworks function, or what is gained within art, but to reflect upon impact and significance of the aerosolar arts as a method within a wider cultural milieu of social sciences and humanities. It offers a call to arms to establish a new field of 'elemental geohumanities' and to embrace the potential of the arts to contribute to geohumanities research.

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