

RAFFAELE SALVOLDI

Artist

**“The fragility of beauty
generates responsibility.”**

100+ ephemeral installations **13m** maximum height reached

10M+ digital viewers IT · ES · AU · EU

T H E C O N C E P T

The beauty that surrounds us — a historic building, a natural landscape, a human relationship — is never permanent. It exists only as long as someone chooses to care for it. It is fragile by nature, and for that very reason it generates responsibility.

Raffaele Salvoldi's ephemeral architectures are imaginary urban landscapes: tens of thousands of modular wooden elements, stacked without glue or supports, held together by gravity alone. Spires, domes and towers evoke a timeless architecture — from Antonelli's soaring structures to minarets, from Gothic cathedrals to the great constructions of the East — as if centuries of history had settled into a single imaginary skyline.

Each structure is born without a predetermined design. A sketch suggests the silhouette, but it is the dialogue with space, light and material that decides the final form. The audience witnesses the construction, feels its silent tension, and understands — before even drawing close — that what stands before them is fragile.

Before entering, every visitor is informed of the nature of the installation. From that moment on, the survival of the work becomes a shared responsibility. Beauty requires care. And every gesture — even the smallest and most involuntary — can have consequences.

T H E D R A M A T U R G Y O F T H E F O R M A T

Every installation follows a structure in four acts.

- **The birth:** the first structure emerges behind closed doors, in silence, before the audience enters. Those who arrive find something that already exists, that already has a history.
- **The growth:** the landscape expands day by day throughout the exhibition period. The work is never finished until it is finished.
- **The life of the work:** the installation becomes a living backdrop for concerts, lectures, theatrical performances, educational workshops. The fragile structure cohabits with the world.
- **The fall:** the domino collapse is the most anticipated moment of the entire cycle — the most spectacular, the most attended. It is the instant when the audience is at its largest and most emotionally present. That occasion is not wasted: the fall becomes the moment in which the message of the project finds its most powerful and direct expression. The fragility of beauty, and the responsibility it generates, manifest in a single irreversible gesture.

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B I O

The first artist in the world to develop a format of monumental ephemeral architecture inspired by the Tibetan mandala tradition.

Raffaele Salvoldi grew up in Valsesia, Piedmont. After a long career as a director of photography in the audiovisual field, in 2021 he discovered in Kapla planks an unexpected medium: one capable of generating monumental architectures, visual tension and performative processes that deeply engage those who witness them.

Since then he has created over 100 installations across Italy and Europe — France, Portugal, Poland, Luxembourg, the Czech Republic — and as far as Spain and Australia, gaining growing international recognition. His work has been featured in Domus, Wallpaper, Designboom, Colossal and My Modern Met.

C O L L A B O R A T I O N S A N D P R O J E C T S

Kapla (since 2021)

Structural partnership with the French modular wooden construction brand. Kapla supports the artistic production while leaving full creative and curatorial independence.

Architect@work (since 2023)

Ongoing collaboration with the international trade fair dedicated to architecture and design. 4–6 events per year across Europe.

Salvatori — Milan Design Week 2023

Site-specific installations using Carrara marble blocks made from reclaimed stone offcuts: Brera showroom, the Mastallone river in Valsesia, and a 7-metre Christmas tree.

Castello di Agliè — Polo Museale del Piemonte (2024)

First presentation of La Città Immaginaria in the Hall of Honour of the Royal Residence. Beginning of an ongoing collaboration with the Savoy Royal Residences.

El Hormiguero — Antena 3, Spain (2025)

An 8-metre installation demolished live on Spain's most-watched talk show. Over 4 million unique viewers.

Kidwonder — Sydney Opera House and Royal Botanic Garden (2025)

Two artistic residencies in Australia: at the Centre for Creativity at the Opera House and at the Botanic Garden Gallery. Ephemeral installations and workshops for children and families.

Listone Giordano — Milan Design Week 2026

Project Build Un-Build: a Kapla installation coexisted with a large work table where architects and designers were invited to freely experiment with construction using analogous oak elements — an invitation to build, play and reflect on the value of making.

L A C I T T À I M M A G I N A R I A A P S — M I S S I O N

Founded in 2024, La Città Immaginaria APS is the non-profit organisation through which Raffaele Salvoldi brings ephemeral installations and educational programmes to museums, schools and cultural spaces. The association is supported by donations from companies, private donors and public institutions, with the aim of making the artistic experience accessible to all.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

La Città Immaginaria APS intends to develop the project along three main directions.

The first is the progressive increase in the scale of installations, with structures of ever greater dimensions capable of inhabiting large architectural spaces.

The second is the extension of the exhibition period towards a horizon of 4–6 months, transforming the installation from a punctual event into an enduring presence — almost a living creature — within a place.

The third is the deepening of the immersive quality of the experience: the work as a living backdrop that can be integrated into the existing cultural programme of its host venue — concerts, lectures, theatrical performances, artistic residencies — in a continuous dialogue between the ephemeral structure and the life that surrounds it.

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