2026 Preface

Public Research Edition

The Rivera Rhizomatic Construction Method was first articulated in 2014 as a way to give structural language to an embodied and ecological practice that had been developing for several years prior. Initially conceived as an internal research framework and shared selectively with curators and collaborators, the method clarified the spatial, biological, and philosophical foundations of the work.

Over the past decade, the practice has expanded across diverse landscapes, institutions, and cultural contexts. As its visual language has circulated more widely, it has become increasingly important to articulate the structural logic that underlies it. This public edition is therefore released as a philosophical contribution, not as a fixed doctrine, but as an evolving framework.

The method positions construction as emergent rather than imposed, distributed rather than hierarchical, and relational rather than dominant. It integrates biological observation, embodied tension calibration, ecological co-production, and site-responsive experimentation into a cohesive system.

This document serves as a shared reference point for curators, researchers, institutions, and collaborators seeking to engage the work at conceptual depth. Like the structures it describes, the method continues to adapt and grow.

Lua Rivera
2026

Rivera Rhizomatic Construction Method

The Rivera Rhizomatic Construction Method is a research-based spatial framework developed through ecological observation, material experimentation, and embodied construction practice.

Its theoretical articulation first emerged during Lua Rivera's Master's research and was presented publicly at the MaPA Colloquium in 2013. In 2014, the method became materially embodied through the realization of the first large-scale tensile installations, marking its transition from conceptual framework to spatial practice.

In 2017, the methodology was institutionally consolidated through the exhibition Nature Nurture at the Cuernavaca City Museum (Morelos, Mexico), where eight works were first installed in natural environments before entering the museum space. This dual positioning: nature first, institution second, established ecological co-production and spatial transposition as central principles of the method.

Grounded in close study of non-human construction systems: bird nests, spider webs, mycelial networks, and connective tissues. The method understands structure as adaptive negotiation. Architecture is approached not as a predetermined form, but as an emergent condition shaped by gravity, material resistance, environmental forces, and bodily limits.

Rather than imposing structure, the method initiates conditions for emergence. Rather than centralizing authorship, it redistributes agency across human and non-human participants.

The Invisible Half of the Practice

The practice operates across two interdependent ecosystems: institutional and ecological.

Within museums, biennials, and festivals, the work becomes visible, funded, and discursively positioned. These contexts sustain the continuation of research.

Parallel to this visible production, approximately half of the practice unfolds outside institutional circulation. These site-responsive interventions are presented directly to forests, fields, coastlines, and remote landscapes. They are not always preserved or exhibited. They function as embodied inquiries rather than display objects.

Within these environments, plants appropriate tensile structures as scaffolding; roots interlace with fiber systems; moss embeds within woven membranes. Animals inhabit, adapt, and occasionally extract materials for their own shelter-building practices. Installations become hybridized organisms co-produced through human and non-human agency.

These are not symbolic gestures but material collaborations. The work extends from representation into participation within living systems.

Embodied Construction: Building a New Body

The building process may be described as the construction of a new body, built by the body and for the body.

While tools are employed, the primary instrument of construction is the artist’s own body. Vision regulates gradients and density; hands calibrate tension; the back absorbs load; feet assess structural equilibrium through direct contact with woven membranes.

Over years of sustained tensile engagement, the body adapts materially. Calluses form, muscles strengthen, bones adjust to directional strain. This adaptation constitutes a form of embodied research accumulated through repetition, fatigue, recalibration, and negotiation with resistance.

Each installation becomes a corporeal extension, an externalized tensile organism shaped by muscular memory and environmental response. Structure emerges through continuous calibration rather than rigid calculation.

The sculpture is not conceived as an object, but as a constructed body mediating future interactions between human presence and environmental forces.

Site-Responsive Research & Ecological Logic

Prior to design, in-person site investigations are conducted. Each location is studied as a field of pre-existing information: climate conditions, wind patterns, soil composition, structural possibilities, and ecological systems.

Materials may be collected and integrated when appropriate. Conceptual development emerges from environmental research, historical context, and study of native or invasive species. The resulting structures function as translations of place, generated through attentive observation rather than imposed design.

Tensile weaving operates as one primary manifestation of this approach. Through distributed tension and layered accumulation, soft materials perform architectural functions without reliance on rigid frameworks.

Color, pattern, and material variation function not as decoration but as sensory regulators. They shape perception, movement, and emotional resonance within the spatial organism.

Alternative Architectures & Conceptual Integrity

Situated at the intersection of art, biology, philosophy, and spatial practice, the Rivera Rhizomatic Construction Method proposes alternative architectural paradigms grounded in interdependence rather than dominance.

It advances inhabitable systems that privilege softness over rigidity, resilience over monumentality, and relational adaptation over hierarchy. Structure and surface are inseparable: what appears as texture is

load-bearing; what appears as gradient is tension distribution; what appears as ornament is organ.

Language operates as structural reinforcement. The articulation of terminology — Rivera Rhizomatic Construction Method, Rivera Tensile Weaving System, Living Tensile Layers, Human & Environmental Experience — clarifies the embodied and ecological foundations of the practice and prevents reduction to purely aesthetic outcomes.

Each installation exists as a temporally situated organism: a living spatial system capable of adaptation, transformation, and cohabitation.

Authorship & Dialogue

First articulated in 2014.

This document is shared as a public philosophical framework to support curatorial dialogue, academic inquiry, and collaborative development.

For research conversations or institutional partnerships:
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The method continues to evolve.