

Waterfall
Yun Zhang
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Through a naturalistic exploration of the *Terzo Giardino*, the artist creates an impressive installation dedicated to the white willow (*Salix alba*), which is strongly present along the banks of the Arno river. Also known as the “pole willow”, it is a member of the Salicaceae family, with an open canopy and thin, flexible branches. Its bark, usually yellowish or gray-red, is often used to soothe inflammatory conditions in the body, demonstrating the incredible vitality that animates these familiar plants.

A long-standing symbol of rebirth, the willow is rooted in both western and traditional chinese cultures, offering a deep and multifaceted understanding. This species reflects the artist’s dual social identity, forging a profound connection between two ancient civilizations that may seem distant from each other, such as asian and european ones.

Waterfall aims to be an imaginative reminder of the tragic event that struck Florence in 1966. Through careful research on the flood that devastated the city, the artist offers a sensory dialogue with the sounds of wind and water in this site-specific installation. It inhabits a singular space with a large window, almost as if it were a living entity interacting with its surroundings.

In line with environmental sustainability principles, the work uses hemp ropes instead of branches and special rice paper to recreate the leaves, incorporating natural elements that respect and protect the environment, through a long, almost ritualistic creation process. This choice of materials and artistic approach is meant not only to evoke the memory of a painful past but also to offer a contemporary reflection on nature and our relationship with it, emphasizing the importance of conservation and resilience.

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