

CALENDARIUM, MARCH 2020 – OCTOBER 2021

As the world turned to chaos during the Covid pandemic I longed deeply for a sense of order in my everyday realm.

Such daily rituals as visits to local cafes took on momentous significance. Confronted by overflowing rubbish bins, manifest by the Covid directive “takeaway only”, I felt compelled to collect each of my used disposable cups during the six Melbourne lockdowns. They became vehicles for contemplation, symbols for the need of social contact, banal routine and mapping time.

While photographing the 263 cups the spirit of Tasseomancy (coffee grounds or tea leaf reading) cast me in the role of ancient diviner conjuring meaning from the patterns of coffee’s residue.

The photographs were then designed as calendric grid, a visual representation of conceptual time merging and lapsing. The grid enabled order and, as Rosalind Krauss terms it, an “infrastructure for vision”, housing abstract imagery that evoke petri-dish microorganisms or cosmic space.

The Long Arc, a sculptural work, furthers the idea of artmaking as performance. Spiking the preserved cups was an intense physical act of rupture that mirrored the erratic feelings during the lockdown period. The ‘rupture dance’ was cathartic as process though the final vision of the scale of one person’s cup usage and its multiplier effect became disturbingly unfathomable.

What began as an introspective project during difficult times, evolved into musing on the creative act itself as space for expanded feeling, thinking and acting. Reflections emerged around the intricacies of inner lives together with our interconnectedness to the outer world, its ecosystems and the universe itself.

I believe that art and design have the transformative power to shift the everyday into the extraordinary and in so doing inspire meaningful connections, hope and healing.

Hedy Ritterman, March 2022