

Tanya Leighton

CURA.

Aleksandra Domanović
WORLDOMETERS

Text by Carson Chan



Installation view, 2021

At the start of the pandemic in 2020, Aleksandra Domanović joined poet Ariana Reines's online group reading of Rainer Maria Rilke's *Duino Elegies* (1923). For Reines, reading Rilke's existential monologue together with people from around the world was "a way to face death and life and give shape to our days under COVID-19 lockdown." Rilke's poems, which famously contrast angelic transcendence with earthly suffering, gave impassioned form to questions of human mortality. Through Rilke, the vast and ineffable became lines of poetry.

In their own way, the works in Domanović's exhibition *Worldometers* – named after a website that aggregates live tickers for various real-time statistics, including coronavirus data – give form to things that are difficult to imagine. Understood by the artist as hybrid image-objects, they consist of rotating LED fan-displays affixed to lathed pillars. Like clay on a potter's wheel, for both the LED fans and their solid bodies, form materialises through spinning.

During the exhibition, the works on the gallery floor will display the R-value, number of positive cases per 100,000 people in the past week, and the ICU occupancy rate in Berlin. These numbers, updated daily during the 25 days of the exhibition, give shape to a lethal, evolving phenomenon we are all currently living through. At the end of the show, the data will be archived, transforming these works into a memorial to a particular moment. Manifesting the fraught encounter between humans and SARS-CoV-2 in Berlin

CURA, May 2021

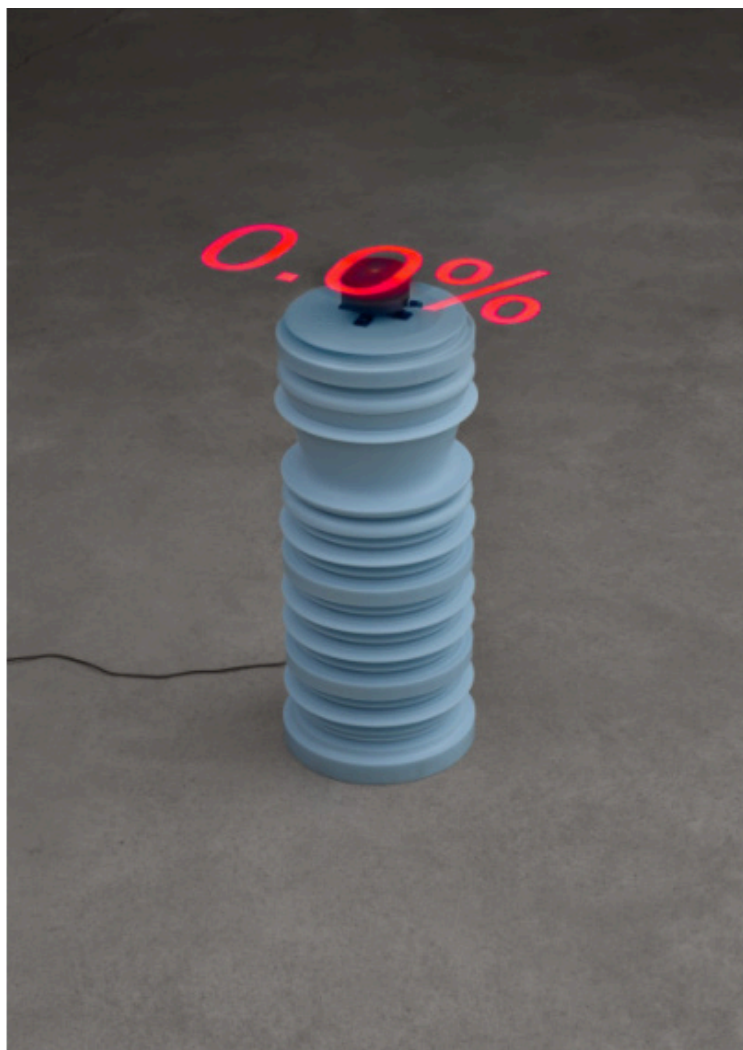
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through spinning, Worldometers shows the proximity between life and its absence, and the porosity between these conditions. The question of whether viruses are alive is still very much an open one. Life, as vitalists once saw it, was expressed through movement. Objects that spin into being to show the spread of a virus embody the some essential questions about life and mortality, of humans and viruses, at the core of the pandemic.

The pandemic – spread unevenly across humanity; mutating, erupting, and subsiding in unpredictable ways – is what philosopher Timothy Morton would call a hyperobject, a thing so expansive and unstable in scope, so vast and ineffable, as to escape easy figuration. Articulating the streams of data that have emerged from the pandemic, Domanović's new works don't formally encapsulate this pathogenic hyperobject so much as allow us access to the nature of its deadly vitality through an interpretative, perhaps poetic, representation. These works can be said to be revolutionary, at once because they were manifested by the forces of axial spinning, and that they signal our current moment of epochal change.



Worldometer 3, 2021

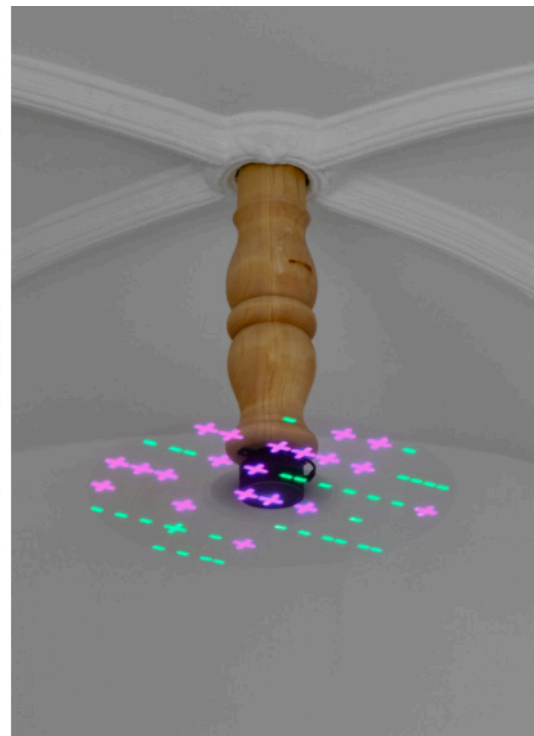
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Installation view, 2021



Worldometer 5, 2021



Worldometer 4, 2021