

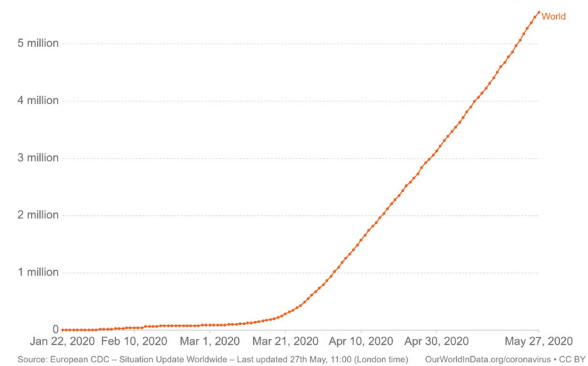
**ARTISTS SURVEY #23:  
Artists in Pandemic Isolation**





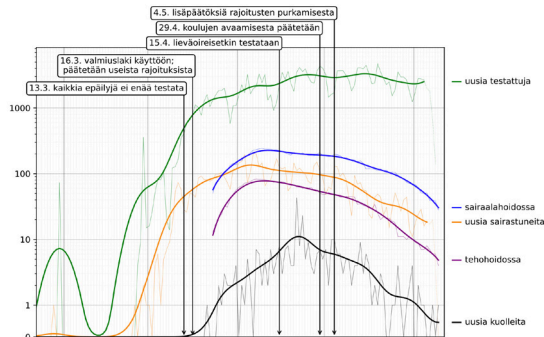
## Total confirmed COVID-19 cases

The number of confirmed cases is lower than the number of total cases. The main reason for this is limited testing.



## COVID-19 Chronology

- **1 December 2019** the earliest known person presented with unusual medical symptoms.
- **31 December 2019**, health authorities in China reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) that a cluster of viral pneumonia cases of unknown cause was being encountered in Wuhan
- **30 January 2020**, the WHO declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. At the time there were 7,818 cases confirmed globally, affecting 19 countries in five WHO regions.
- **11 March 2020** the WHO recognized the spread of COVID-19 as a pandemic.
- From then the pandemic spread rampantly with tragic circumstances.



COVID-19 -epidemiaan eteneminen Suomessa COVID-Suomi-Tmn : CC BY-SA

As of 19 May 2020, more than 5.28 million cases have been reported worldwide; more than 340,000 people have died and more than 2.1 million have recovered.



Julie, Solange, Victoria & Doug in a Facetime meeting

## ABOUT THIS SPECIAL EDITION OF THE ARTISTS SURVEY

The Centre for Regional Arts Practice (acronym C.R.A.P.) was founded during an artist in residence at Arthur Boyd's Bundanon property near Nowra on the NSW south coast. As artists' bookmakers, we saw the opportunity to produce a democratic multiple publication to present our perspective on regional artist experience and to develop C.R.A.P. manifestoes.

All of our C.R.A.P. Artists Survey books draw upon humour and irony of the prosaic routines and events encountered in life of a regional artist. These publications are usually produced in editions of 25 with 5 artist's proofs. They are humble handmade books which are sold to collectors and institutions – most are given away to friends and peers.

The C.R.A.P. and its Artists Surveys have become a vehicle for highlighting, critiquing and questioning many issues both local and global affecting regional artists. Editions have included topics such as Swine Flu, The Global Financial Crisis and Global warming. On 7 occasions collaborative Artists Survey books have been created with a regional artists.

In late March we witnessed Julie Barratt's situation as a participant in an artist's residency in regional Finland. The viral pandemic was closing the world down and cutting off her homeward travel with airlines grounded.

Though Julie seemed unphased by her circumstance we reached out to connect with her and suggested we share isolation experiences as it could be an important commentary on these times. So we proposed to Julie that we make a C.R.A.P. book about Covid isolation.

Within a short time Julie's compatriot in isolation Argentinian photographer Solange joined the project. We formed a Facebook group and held online meetings to talk over the concepts – we shared work, discussed design ideas and quickly our isolation had a creative purpose.

You are now holding in your hands one of the special edition of 40 book sets that share the experiences of the 4 artists' Covid-19 enforced isolation.

Victoria Cooper + Doug Spowart  
Founders: Centre for Regional Arts Practice



### **SOLANGE BAQUÉS:**

Is a photographer from Buenos Aires Argentina. In her work she explores identities through memories and family albums. Her images are subtle and intimate.

The “Through the Window” series included in this collaborative artists’ book was born as a part of the self-isolation program at *Arteles Creative Center*.

Solange arrived in Finland on March 2nd to participate in the program “Silence Awareness Existence” as an artist in residency with 13 fellow artists at the *Arteles Center*, which is located in a rural area near Tampere. Her project was to include visiting Valmet Oy plant and doing some research on the pulp and paper industry but due to the lockdown, this was not possible.

Within a short time of the growing worldwide shutdown of entry to countries 10 of the 13 artists in residency left Finland to return to their home countries. However by March 16 three remained.

Solange was not able to return home as the Argentine borders were closed and the only airline allowed to bring back Argentineans was Aerolíneas Argentinas. Around the world there were more than 20,000 citizens trying to get home with only 400 people allowed to arrive every day.

As of May 3rd Solange was waiting for the embassy to contact her and on May 9th she was finally able to leave Finland. She made it back to Argentina on May 11 and out of quarantine to her family on May 25!

[www.solangebaques.com](http://www.solangebaques.com)

*Arteles Creative Center* <https://www.arteles.org/residents.html>



### **JULIE BARRATT:**

Is an Australian visual artist and arts producer whose mixed-media practice encompasses printmaking, photography, artist books, installation and performance.

Julie arrived at the *Arteles Creative Center* in the beginning of March for a 1-month residency. As the worldwide lockdowns were initiated she experienced difficulty in getting flights back to Australia and her residency became an extended period of creative production.

Having this extra period of time in rural Finland has kept Julie just about as far from the grips of Covid-19 as you can imagine. And being distant from family and friends having little access to the Internet or the outside world for that matter was quite surreal!

Although she arrived without a clear project in mind Julie’s work became a visual diary of this period of isolation rendered through the mediums of photography, stitching, mixed media and hand stamping.

This work in this collaborative artists’ book relates to her experience of spending the Covid-19 period of isolation far from home in rural Finland!

By the 4th May she was still there! Cancelled flights, border closures and local transport collapses meant that options for getting home are all but non-existent. Finally Julie was able to get a direct flight from Helsinki to Sydney on May 10. On her arrival in Sydney she was escorted by Federal Police and Army personnel to 2 weeks forced isolation in a Sydney hotel. She arrived home in Rockhampton on May 24!

<https://juliembarratt.wordpress.com/gallery/>



### **VICTORIA COOPER:**

Victoria's early career in science and microbiology is influential in much of her arts practice. Engaged in experimental photographic processes from pinhole to digital photomontage,

she creates visual narratives, in the physical form of the book, exploring the human-non-human relationships of Place.

I began with energy for our collaboration across the ISO CO-void... This seemed a good time to explore new work informed by my past experience with pathogenic microorganisms. But I was unsettled in this COVID space -- challenged by the consequences of being in familiar places that now were significantly altered by unseen entities. Continuity of creative thought was becoming increasingly more difficult under the existential struggle as sharp highs and lows destabilized every aspect of daily life.

During this time I utilised the social space of Instagram to break away from the silence of isolation. I captured and collected moments as they presented themselves and then instantly shared their potential to evoke memories and dreams with others. Over the next few weeks, my Instagram archive of isolated and unconnected fragments grew into a poetic narrative.

In this collaborative book with Doug there is no intended theme, our Instagram images present the fractured moments of our shifting altered reality.

### **DOUG SPOWART:**

Is an Australian artist with a practice encompassing storytelling media.

*'Life is what happens to you while your busy making other plans'* John Lennon



About 5 years ago Victoria Cooper and I sold our home in Toowoomba and headed out on the road in search of work opportunities, a new place to live, and connections with friends.

In early March we were on the beach in northern NSW at Wooli and were planning our next foray into the real estate scene in Victoria. We were just about to head south when we recognised that the expanding threat of Covid-19 was something that could not be taken lightly.

Considering our options we decided to head back to the familiar location of Toowoomba. We have our doctor and family there. Importantly we have storage sheds with our art, library and personal effects. We saw isolation as an opportunity to review and downsize our stored possessions.

Within a week we were back in Toowoomba and had viewed possible rental units, made a selection and had paid the first rental instalment. Next was the setup of a home, which at the time of the Covid-19 grocery purchasing frenzy and store closedowns was most stressful.

We exhumed from our storage a large quantity of important things that included for me a selection of boxes containing some of my photobook purchases.

My contribution to this Artists Survey #23 is a collaborative concertina book with Victoria telling our story of these times in small glimpses – As Lennon says, 'Life is what happens ...'

THIS SURVEY BOOK IS ABOUT  
REGIONAL ARTISTS IN FINLAND & AUSTRALIA IN

## PANDEMIC ISOLATION

THIS SURVEY HAS BEEN PREPARED BY:

*Self Bliss*

Salonge BAQUES +

*Julie Barratt*

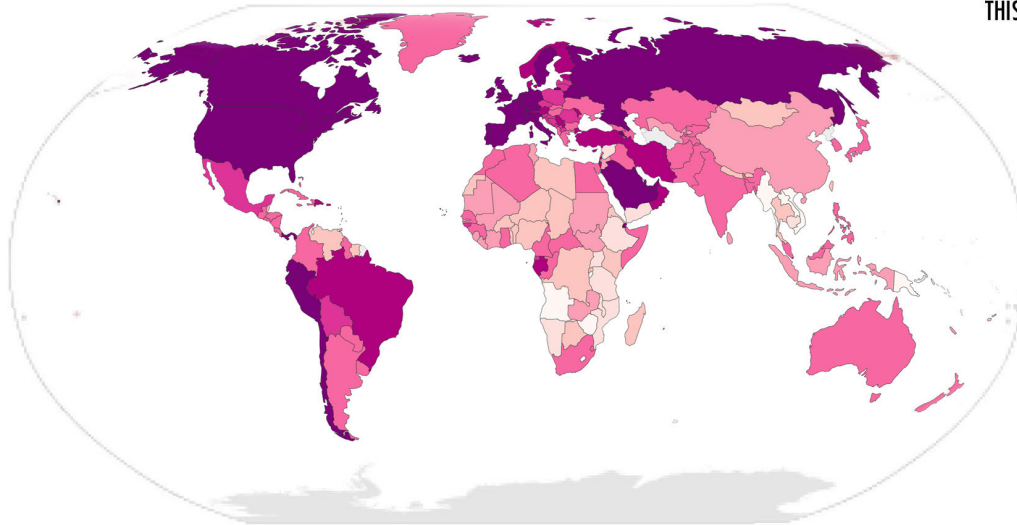
Julie BARRATT +

*Victoria Cooper*

Victoria COOPER +

*Doug Spewart*

Doug SPURWART



Total confirmed COVID-19 cases per million people, May 27, 2020  
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EDITION: 40. This book is #

Produced under the aims and objectives of:

**C.R.A.P.**

Centre for Regional Arts Practice (AUSTRALIA)

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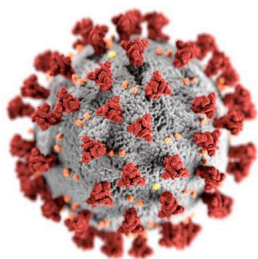


Image: CDC/Alissa Eckert and Dan Higgins

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