A response to Luca Lana’s “Eclipse 1”

The Abrahamic religions – Christianity, Judaism, and Islam – all attach an unrivalled degree of sacredness to the city of Jerusalem. Even today for their followers it remains a symbolic source of theological, scientific and aesthetic purity.

But nothing of religion, science or art is natural – all ideas and institutions are constructed by human society. Put another way, Jerusalem is in a very real sense just another city.

Predictably then, modern scientific sites like Greenwich and the Hadron Collider are beginning to be held in a similar form of spiritual and aesthetic reverence. For in them – like the Egyptian pyramids before them – one can see the very limits of human creation and knowledge.

In Eclipse 1, Luca Lana demonstrates how aesthetic representations of our world produce equally valid ideas as both Religion and Science. He does this through interpreting a solar eclipse in the form of a physical monument, rather than a scientific model or a divine intervention.

Where once the solar system was viewed as a pure act of God’s will, now its beauty is explained away by Science. Lana’s Eclipse 1 seems to me to make the claim that it is the aesthetic arts – not Science or Religion – that is the next frontier of human discovery of our world, and more importantly still, our place in it.

NAJ Taylor
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The following statement was written to accompany a rather novel – meaning tiny – installation by Luca Lana, titled “Eclipse 1”. The installation is set into the wall in the back lanes of Melbourne, and measures just 20x30cm. Showing at TwentyByThirty Gallery, Melbourne @ 20 Presgrave Place, off Little Collins Street. Until 31 March.