



## SIGNS

### Alice Edy

*BELOVED* is both a durational performance piece and an archive of found text. Using *frottage* (the practice of rubbing graphite on paper across a textured surface), the word “*beloved*” has been taken from hundreds of gravestones in the Melbourne General Cemetery. This piece began during the first prolonged lockdown in Victoria last year, as part of my (Unofficial) Artist Residency at the MGC. When walking the grounds, I was struck by how this word is – by far – the most repeated descriptor in the epitaphs.

The work operates at the intersection of the Concrete Poetic and the performative, expanding on my practice by exploring notions of touch, time, ritual and labour with regards to text. The process was originally informed by my background in hand-lettering; before photography, typographers used *frottage* as a common method of “lifting” different letterforms from signage when they travelled. Here, the performance of collecting text seeks to complicate the binaries of authorship and plagiarism. The physical gesture is part of a long genealogy of expressive mark-making, however it is also a deeply uncreative act; stealing the word/image from the surface below.

This archive is a work in progress (currently consisting of over 400 rubbings). The collection constitutes an experiment in writing a book with only one word.

Photo Documentation by Lucy Foster