DisSolution

by The Fire Horse Collective

astrological framing

A collective formed to realise DisSolution through shared authorship and distributed roles, growing from an initial circle of collaborators into a wider network as the work drew in more artists.
The project unfolds around the Cape of Good Hope area, South Africa.

content

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introduction

DisSolution is an installation structured through astronomical thresholds. The work situates material form within observable celestial cycles, using the relationship between Sun, Earth, and Moon as a temporal framework through which systems of assumed permanence can be examined.

Rather than treating the sky as symbolic projection, the project approaches astronomical events as measurable alignments that organise time. These alignments unfold independently of interpretation. Their recurrence provides a structural rhythm against which human systems — belief, identity, economics, governance, and narrative — may be reconsidered.

Within the installation, spheres function as contained worlds. Each sphere represents a constructed system: a configuration of ideas, structures, and a ssumptions that appear stable through repetition. Spherical geometry suggests completion and continuity. Yet the work proposes that such coherence is conditional.

The installation unfolds through four celestial thresholds occurring between February and March 2026: a Full Moon, a Solar Eclipse, a Total Lunar Eclipse, and the March Equinox. These events function as temporal markers structuring the progression of the work.

Across this sequence the installation traces a movement through illumination, interruption, shadow, and reorientation. The intention is not to dramatise collapse, but to examine how stability depends upon alignment.

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cosmological framework

This project is structured through celestial events that are observable, measurable, and regularly recurring. The work does not treat the sky as symbolic projection but as temporal architecture — a system through which duration, repetition, and interruption become visible.

A lunar cycle unfolds through the changing geometric relationship between the Sun, Earth, and Moon. A Full Moon occurs when the Sun and Moon stand in opposition, with Earth positioned between them, allowing the hemisphere of the Moon facing Earth to reflect maximum solar light. A New Moon occurs when the Sun and Moon occupy approximately the same ecliptic longitude, leaving the illuminated hemisphere of the Moon facing away from Earth and largely invisible from the planet's surface.

These phases belong to the synodic lunar cycle, which lasts approximately 29.53 days and structures the visible rhythm of lunar illumination.

Eclipses require an additional level of geometric precision. The Moon's orbit around Earth is inclined by roughly five degrees relative to the plane of Earth's orbit around the Sun, known as the ecliptic. The two points where these orbital planes intersect are known as the lunar nodes. Only when a New Moon or Full Moon occurs near these nodes can an eclipse take place.

During a Solar Eclipse, the Moon passes between Earth and the Sun, temporarily interrupting solar light reaching Earth's surface. During a Lunar Eclipse, Earth lies between the Sun and Moon, causing Earth's shadow to fall across the lunar surface. These events occur within recurring intervals known as eclipse seasons, which appear approximately every six months when the Sun aligns closely with the nodal axis.

These astronomical relationships form a measurable system of celestial alignment. They do not determine human events, but they structure the timing of observable cycles within which human cultures have historically organised systems of timekeeping.

Human societies have long translated recurring celestial patterns into calendrical systems that structure social, agricultural, and ritual life. The Gregorian calendar, used internationally today, is a solar calendar organised around Earth's orbit around the Sun and calibrated to maintain alignment with seasonal markers such as the equinoxes and solstices.

Other calendrical systems integrate both solar and lunar cycles. The traditional Chinese calendar is lunisolar, meaning it tracks lunar months while periodically adjusting the calendar so that it remains aligned with the solar year. Within this system, the Lunar New Year occurs on the second New Moon following the December solstice, marking the beginning of a new annual cycle.

Chinese cosmology further organises time through the sexagenary cycle, a sixty-year sequence formed by the interaction of ten Heavenly Stems and twelve Earthly Branches. Each year within this cycle carries a combined elemental and zodiacal designation.

The temporal window examined within this installation corresponds to the beginning of the Yang Fire Horse year, a designation within the sexagenary system associated with dynamism, acceleration, and movement. Within the context of this project, such cultural interpretations are not treated as causal forces but as parallel cosmological frameworks through which societies have historically interpreted celestial cycles.

Together, these astronomical mechanics and cultural systems of timekeeping establish the cosmological framework within which the installation unfolds. The sequence of events explored in this work — Full Moon, Solar Eclipse, Lunar Eclipse, and Equinox — therefore operates simultaneously as observable celestial alignment and as a temporal structure through which constructed worlds, represented by the spheres of the installation, become visible under changing conditions of illumination, interruption, shadow, and reorientation.

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The installation unfolds through four astronomical thresholds occurring between February and March 2026. Each event introduces a measurable shift in the geometric relationship between the Sun, Earth, and Moon while also activating specific zodiacal coordinates within the tropical zodiac.

These coordinates correspond to elemental and modal qualities that shape the character of each phase.

astronomical sequence

2 February 2026 — approximately 05:09 SAST

Sun: ~13° Aquarius
Moon: ~13° Leo

Full Moon — Recognition

A Full Moon occurs when Earth stands between Sun and Moon, allowing the lunar surface facing Earth to reflect maximum solar illumination.

This alignment activates the Leo–Aquarius polarity, a relationship between individual expression and collective systems.

Leo belongs to the Fire element and the Fixed modality, associated with identity, authorship, creativity, and visibility. Aquarius belongs to the Air element and the Fixed modality, associated with networks, collective systems, and social organisation.

Fixed modalities correspond to phases of stabilisation within the zodiacal cycle. Structures formed during fixed phases tend to persist because they resist rapid change.

Within the installation this phase corresponds to recognition. The spheres reflect light clearly. Constructed systems appear coherent, stable, and continuous.

Nothing dissolves during this phase. What exists simply becomes visible.

Illumination precedes transformation.

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astronomical sequence

17 February 2026

Sun and Moon: ~28° Aquarius
New Moon near the Descending Lunar Node

Solar Eclipse-Interruption

A Solar Eclipse occurs at New Moon when the Moon passes between Earth and Sun, interrupting the flow of solar light.

This eclipse occurs in late Aquarius, within the Air element and Fixed modality, reinforcing themes of systemic structures and collective frameworks.

Late degrees within a sign often represent points of culmination or transition where existing systems approach structural limits.

Within the installation this moment introduces interruption. The assumed source of illumination becomes unstable. Orientation flickers.

The spheres remain present, yet the conditions sustaining their clarity have shifted.

The eclipse does not destroy systems. It interrupts the continuity that allowed them to appear unquestioned.

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astronomical sequence

3 March 2026
Sun: ~12° Pisces
Moon: ~12° Virgo
Nodal axis Pisces–Virgo

Total Lunar Eclipse-Shadow

A Lunar Eclipse occurs when Earth stands between Sun and Moon, casting Earth's shadow across the lunar surface.
This alignment activates the Pisces–Virgo polarity, introducing a Mutable Water–Earth axis. Pisces belongs to the Water element and the Mutable modality, associated with permeability, dissolution, imagination, and the softening of boundaries. Virgo belongs to the Earth element and the Mutable modality, associated with analysis, organisation, and material refinement.

Mutable modalities correspond to phases of transition within the zodiacal cycle. They introduce adjustment and dissolve rigidity.

Within the installation this phase introduces shadow. The spheres absorb light unevenly. Coherence begins to fracture.

Shadow reveals what illumination alone could not expose. Patterns embedded within systems emerge as visibility shifts.

What appears is not collapse but disclosure.

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astronomical sequence

20 March 2026 — 05:46 SAST (UTC +2)
Sun enters 0° Aries

Equinox — Reorientation

The equinox occurs when the Sun crosses the celestial equator, the projection of Earth's equator onto the celestial sphere. At this moment Earth's axial tilt is oriented neither toward nor away from the Sun, producing nearly equal lengths of day and night across the planet.
Following the March equinox the Northern Hemisphere gradually tilts toward the Sun while the Southern Hemisphere tilts away. The equinox therefore marks the beginning of spring in the Northern Hemisphere and autumn in the Southern Hemisphere.

Within the tropical zodiac this moment corresponds to the Sun entering 0° Aries, marking the beginning of the astrological year.

Aries belongs to the Fire element and the Cardinal modality.

Fire corresponds to ignition, vitality, emergence, and directional impulse. Cardinal modalities initiate movement and establish new cycles.

Aries therefore represents the principle of cardinal fire — emergence following equilibrium.

Within the installation this threshold introduces reorientation. After illumination, interruption, and shadow, the system encounters a shift in alignment.

The axis of orientation relative to the Sun changes.

The equinox does not resolve instability. It establishes the conditions from which a new cycle of alignment begins.

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the spheres constructed worlds

The spheres within the installation function as contained worlds.

A sphere represents one of the most stable geometric forms. Every point on its surface is equidistant from the centre, producing a structure without directional hierarchy.

This geometry suggests completeness and continuity.

Within the conceptual architecture of the installation, each sphere represents a constructed system: belief structures, cultural narratives, economic frameworks, political ideologies, and inherited identities.

These systems appear permanent because repetition stabilises their coherence. Over time they become embedded within collective perception.

Yet permanence is not an intrinsic property of systems. It is a condition sustained through alignment.

When alignment shifts — socially, economically, environmentally, or cosmologically — coherence may fracture.

The spheres therefore function simultaneously as symbols of stability and demonstrations of contingency.

Their geometry remains constant. Their conditions change.

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collective field inherited narratives

Constructed systems rarely arise from individuals alone. They are collective architectures maintained through repetition across generations.

Economic models, political systems, cultural narratives, and social identities persist because they are continuously reinforced through behaviour, policy, and belief.

Within the installation the spheres therefore represent not only personal identities but shared frameworks.

Under illumination these systems appear coherent.

Under interruption their stability becomes uncertain.

Under shadow deeper layers embedded within them become visible.

DisSolution does not attempt to dismantle these systems. Instead it exposes the conditions that sustain their appearance of permanence.

What becomes visible is the degree to which stability depends upon shared agreement.

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The sequence culminates at the March equinox when the Sun crosses the celestial equator and enters the first degree of Aries.

Astronomically this alignment occurs when Earth’s orientation relative to the Sun produces nearly equal day and night across the planet. In the Northern Hemisphere this marks the beginning of spring; in the Southern Hemisphere it marks the beginning of autumn.

equinox threshold and reorientation

After illumination, interruption, and shadow, the equinox introduces not another disruption but reorientation.

The system encounters a new directional phase.

Reorientation does not erase what came before. It alters the frame through which continuity is understood.

Systems do not necessarily disappear. They realign.

Continuity emerges not from permanence but from adaptability.

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conclusion permanence as alignment

This project does not argue that celestial events determine human experience. It proposes instead that observable astronomical cycles provide a structural mirror through which systems of assumed permanence can be examined.

Through measurable phases — illumination, interruption, shadow, and equinoctial threshold — the installation situates constructed worlds within larger recurring geometries. The spheres operate as models of coherence, yet their stability is shown to depend upon alignment rather than inevitability.

When alignment shifts, permanence reveals itself as conditional.

Dissolution is therefore reframed not as destruction but as exposure — a phase within cyclical recurrence. What fractures under pressure is not reality itself, but the assumption of fixity.

The equinox does not resolve instability. It introduces reorientation.

Astronomical cycles persist independently of interpretation.

What changes is participation.

astrological framing

Appendix A

astronomical & cosmological terminology

Note

The following terms describe observable astronomical phenomena, coordinate systems, and calendrical structures. In various cultural and astrological traditions these measurable cycles are also interpreted symbolically as frameworks for understanding time, orientation, and cyclical change. The definitions below distinguish physical mechanics from interpretive cosmologies.

Annular Solar Eclipse
A type of solar eclipse in which the Moon passes between Earth and the Sun during a New Moon but appears smaller in apparent diameter than the Sun, leaving a visible ring of sunlight.

Axial Tilt (Obliquity)
The angle (approximately 23.44° in the current era) between Earth's rotational axis and the plane of its orbit around the Sun (the ecliptic). This tilt produces seasonal variation.
Calendars / Calendar Systems
Calendars are systems used to organise and measure time based on recurring astronomical cycles. Different cultures structure calendars according to the motions of the Sun, the Moon, or combinations of both.

Solar calendars track Earth's orbit around the Sun and are aligned with seasonal cycles. The internationally used Gregorian calendar, introduced in 1582, is a solar calendar designed to keep the calendar year aligned with the equinoxes.

Lunar calendars follow the phases of the Moon, with months corresponding to the synodic lunar cycle of approximately 29.53 days.

Lunisolar calendars combine both systems, using lunar months while periodically inserting adjustments so that the calendar remains aligned with the solar year. Traditional Chinese calendrical systems operate in this way and incorporate additional cyclical frameworks such as the sexagenary cycle, formed by the combination of Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches.

Many traditional cosmologies integrate astronomical observation with cultural timekeeping, producing cyclical systems that structure years, seasons, and historical periods.

Celestial Equator
The projection of Earth's equator onto the celestial sphere. The Sun crosses this line at the equinoxes.

Celestial Sphere
An imaginary sphere of arbitrarily large radius centred on Earth onto which celestial bodies are projected for positional reference.

Conjunction
An alignment in which two celestial bodies share approximately the same ecliptic longitude (0° separation), as in a New Moon.

Cosmology
A structured understanding of the origin, organisation, and cyclical behaviour of the universe. In cultural contexts, cosmology may include symbolic interpretations of astronomical phenomena.

Declination
The angular distance of a celestial body north or south of the celestial equator, measured in degrees. It is analogous to latitude on Earth.

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Ecliptic
The apparent annual path of the Sun across the celestial sphere, corresponding to the plane of Earth’s orbit around the Sun.

Eclipse Season
A period occurring approximately every six months when the Sun lies sufficiently close to the lunar nodes to allow eclipses to occur.

Earthly Branches
The twelve cyclical markers in the Chinese calendrical system traditionally symbolised by animal designations (for example Horse, Dragon or Tiger). These combine with the Heavenly Stems to structure the sixty-year sexagenary cycle.

Equinox
The moment when the Sun crosses the celestial equator, resulting in nearly equal day and night worldwide. Occurs twice annually in March and September.

Full Moon
Occurs when the Sun and Moon are approximately 180° apart in ecliptic longitude, with Earth positioned between them. The lunar hemisphere facing Earth is fully illuminated.

Gregorian Calendar
The internationally adopted civil calendar introduced in 1582 to correct inaccuracies in the Julian calendar. It is solar-based and linear in structure.

Heavenly Stems
The ten cyclical designations in the Chinese sexagenary system associated with the five elements (Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water) expressed in yin and yang polarity.

Line of Nodes
The imaginary line connecting the ascending and descending lunar nodes. Eclipses occur when the Sun lies near this alignment.

Lunar Cycle (Synodic Month)
The approximately 29.53-day cycle between successive New Moons, determined by the relative positions of the Sun, Earth and Moon.

Lunar Eclipse
Occurs when Earth passes between the Sun and Moon during a Full Moon, casting Earth’s shadow onto the lunar surface.

Lunar Nodes
The two intersection points where the Moon’s orbital plane crosses the ecliptic. Eclipses occur only when New or Full Moons align near these points. In astrological systems they are often associated with directional or cyclical symbolism.

New Moon
Occurs when the Sun and Moon are in conjunction (approximately 0° separation). The illuminated hemisphere of the Moon faces away from Earth and is not visible.

Opposition
An alignment in which two celestial bodies are approximately 180° apart in ecliptic longitude, as in a Full Moon.

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Orbital Inclination
The angle between a celestial body's orbital plane and a reference plane. The Moon's orbit is inclined approximately 5° relative to the ecliptic, which is why eclipses do not occur every month.

Penumbra
The partially shaded outer region of a shadow where light is only partially obscured.

Perigee and Apogee
The points in the Moon's orbit where it is closest to Earth (perigee) and farthest from Earth (apogee). These distances affect the Moon's apparent size and influence whether a solar eclipse appears total or annular.

Precession (Axial Precession)
The gradual wobble of Earth's rotational axis over approximately 25,772 years, causing the equinox points to shift relative to the fixed stars.

Rahu and Ketu
Terms used in Vedic astronomy and astrology for the ascending (north) and descending (south) lunar nodes. Astronomically they are orbital intersection points. In Vedic interpretation they function as eclipse-related shadow points within symbolic cosmology.

Right Ascension
The celestial equivalent of terrestrial longitude, measured eastward along the celestial equator from the March equinox point.

Saros Cycle
A period of approximately 18 years, 11 days and 8 hours after which similar eclipse geometries repeat.

Sexagenary Cycle
A sixty-year calendrical cycle formed by combining ten Heavenly Stems with twelve Earthly Branches.

Sidereal Zodiac
A zodiacal system anchored to fixed stellar reference points. Due to axial precession it gradually shifts relative to the tropical zodiac. It is used primarily in Vedic (Jyotisa) astrology.

Solar Eclipse
Occurs when the Moon passes between Earth and the Sun during a New Moon, temporarily obscuring solar light.

Solstice
The moment when the Sun reaches its maximum declination north or south of the celestial equator, producing the longest and shortest days of the year.

Total Lunar Eclipse
A lunar eclipse in which the Moon is fully immersed in Earth's umbral shadow (umbral magnitude greater than 1.0).

Tropical Zodiac
A zodiacal system anchored to the March equinox (0° Aries). It measures the Sun's position relative to seasonal reference points rather than fixed constellations and is used in most Western astrological practice.

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Umbral Magnitude
A measure of how deeply the Moon enters Earth’s umbral shadow during a lunar eclipse. Values greater than 1.0 indicate totality.

Umbra
The fully shaded inner portion of a shadow where light is completely blocked.

Vernal Point (0° Aries)
The intersection of the ecliptic and celestial equator where the Sun crosses northward at the March equinox. This point defines the starting position of the tropical zodiac.

Yang Fire Horse
A designation within the Chinese sexagenary cycle combining Yang polarity (active), the Fire element and the Horse branch. It describes a cyclical temporal quality within that calendrical structure rather than a predictive event.