

I am not greedy but I like to share a lot



An oversized teacup from the 1950s (T.G. Green & Co. Ltd., Church Gresley, England) bears the motto, “I am not greedy ... but I like a lot”, creating an ironic materialised metaphor for conspicuous consumption and relative privilege. The 2023 ceramic/textual artwork *I am not greedy but I like to share a lot* by Helen Ramoutsaki and Anna Guthrie subverts this message with a new form of the materialised metaphor. The cups nest recursively, showing both proportionality of portions when separated and a pooling together of liquid assets when they are nested. The recursive nesting cup concept was elaborated from a dream sequence by Helen Ramoutsaki, who also created the recursive text. The inner and outer texts on the cups combine to form the “I am not greedy but I like a lot” motto and a new motto: “being mindful in consuming, open to serving with heart, to share with others”. Reading each cup in turn from outside to inside, they interweave as the affirmation: “I am being mindful, not greedy, in consuming, but open to serving with heart, I like to share a lot with others”. Anna Guthrie made the cups and teapot, which are hand-painted with plants and a *Nephila pilipes* (Fabricius, 1793), Giant Golden Orb-weaving Spider. The teapot also features a female *Nephila pilipes* as a sculptural form on the lid, accompanied by a playful representation of the male that can be positioned with the female or on the handle or spout. The spiders and plants are taken from photographic images by Helen Ramoutsaki in her ‘Scratch Patch’ garden in Queensland’s Wet Tropics. The spider/web is a bioindicator of a healthy habitat and a connective principle, honouring the intermeshing of life in the tropical ecosystems that produce the tea, coffee and cacao beverages poured from the pot. The work suggests a reframing of contemporary consumption patterns in higher income countries, towards more socially and environmentally ethical practices.