

Festival

PERTH
INTERNATIONAL
ARTS FESTIVAL



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PERTH INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL & WESFARMERS ARTS PRESENT

THE SENSORY LANDSCAPE OF CITIES

FESTIVAL FORUM 1

AUSTRALIA



At the outset of the 20th century, 10% of the population lived in cities.

In 2000, around 50% of the world population lived in cities.

In 2025 the number of city-dwellers could reach 5 billion individuals (two thirds of them in poor countries).

Cities are one of the major preoccupations of the 21st century. How they develop, what sort of communities they create and how they respond to environmental issues are questions that will touch all of us in some way. Within this there is a role for artists, for the expression of beauty and for devices that satisfy the human desire for connection.

Mirko Zardini writes: 'atmosphere, character, and sensorial qualities are becoming key factors in the definition of a place, even from an economic perspective. All the more reason for us to demand that this attention be turned to public places, and to urban spaces in general. Is it possible to combine the different approaches to contemporary urbanism with a "sensorial urbanism", capable of offering a broader understanding of urban settings ...'

The brief for The Architects Project was simple: design your fantasy building for a site within Perth's city area to be displayed on a billboard for the duration of the Festival. The architects invited to be part of this project are distinctive emerging voices in the world of Western Australian architecture, with one artist invited to give his perspective on what might be. What has emerged are a range of opinions, design and challenges that reflect our unique city environment and the possibilities that lie within it.

Thanks to four architectural practices and to Callum Morton for taking up this challenge and for the vision they have presented. Thanks are also due to the owners of the sites

who have given us the space to play a little within the city landscape.

During the seminar you will see extracts from a programme titled Graphic Cities curated by UK company Onedotzero. These innovative moving image works from around the globe explore the contemporary city experience and show evocative interpretations of the urban environment.

Shelagh Magadza
Artistic Director

Let us know your thoughts and responses to the Architects Project designs in Perth's CBD.
Email architectsproject@perthfestival.com.au

WHERE

Playhouse Theatre

WHEN

Sunday 10 February, 1-3pm

AN ART:CITY EVENT



SUPPORTED BY



Re:interpreting your visual space

This February, Perth International Arts Festival and Wesfarmers Arts present The Architects Project.

Four emerging local architecture firms and Callum Morton, Australia's representative at the 2007 Venice Biennale, reinterpret our city's vacant lots with concepts for fantastical city structures. These unconstrained designs will appear at vacant sites throughout the CBD – challenging and inspiring current perceptions of our city.

Spanning 2008 to 2011, art:city will bring together an array of architects and visual artists from Australia and the world, to reinterpret and transform our city's space with captivating events, installations, projections on city buildings and multimedia works.

art:city

building a new experience





GRESLEY ABAS ARCHITECTS

Just what is it that makes today's home so affordable, so sustainable?

Our city-state is booming, developers are transforming our urban fabric. The rush is on to provide more housing to fill a genuine social need ... but more accurately, to satiate an uncompromising greed. We do not blame developers. Developers merely work within an existing network of regulations and statutory obligations that define the parameters of their speculative endeavours.

This administrative network is a (now) arbitrary set of laws and regulations that date back to principles of the city established from the era of industrialisation in the 19th century. To a large degree, cities of today are built and defined by an anachronistic set of values and legislation that are long past their use-by date. Based on today's current raft of regulations and rules, our proposal is technically illegal: and yet it addresses so many relevant contemporary issues that other 'legal' buildings do not.

We optimistically challenge the status quo with a proposition that exceeds current regulations in the interest of creating a win-win condition between the welfare of the public realm, the economic fundamentals that developers need to make things work, and a logical assortment of very sensible measures to make buildings functional in the current 21st century context of contemporary society and climate change. We believe the current 'struggle' to deliver appropriate responses for our cities are artificially problematic. We propose that with a clear understanding of the fundamentals combined with an informed critical challenge to current regulatory frameworks, a reformatory approach to city-building is the first critical step in creating new paradigms that can guide the evolution of the urban metropolis in the 21st century.

PRACTICE PROFILE

Gresley Abas Architects was established in 2004 by Philip Gresley and Ahmad Abas with a desire to generate an architectural practice committed to the elevation of the cultural and environmental significance of architecture and the built realm. The practice operates across a diverse range of fields informed by the experience and aspirations of its founding directors. These fields include public/institutional buildings, residential projects, major public art commissions, international design and ideas competitions, urban design and masterplan studies.

The practice has grown rapidly since its beginnings, and was recently awarded the inaugural Emerging Practice Award by the Minister for Housing and Works by 'demonstrating an ability to influence the future of architecture in Western Australia'. The practice has repeatedly received commendations and runner-up recognition in several national design competitions.

IREDALE PEDERSEN HOOK

The city we inhabit is a product of the city we choose not to create and the city we choose to demolish, our fantasy city is the city imagined by Perth architects for almost 100 years that remain un-built and the collection of buildings that were built but should never have been demolished ... a collation of the most memorable projects that if built or retained would have resulted in a city very different to the one we currently experience.

We collectively desire a city different to the one we inhabit, a city that is more vibrant, exciting, outlandish, friendly, memorable, provocative but we fail to realise that it already exists in the minds and memories of many citizens, living and deceased.

IPH architects' merry-go-round on the lawn reminds us of these past proposals and existences as an opportunity to reflect on our current environment and contemplate what was, what could have been and, most importantly, what can still be ... 'time present and time past are both perhaps present in time future, and time future contained in time past. If all time is eternally present all time is unredeemable. What might have been is an abstraction remaining a perpetual possibility only in a world of speculation. What might have been and what has been point to one end, which is always present. Footfalls echo in the memory down the passage which we did not take towards the door we never opened into the rose-garden. My words echo thus, in your mind' (TS Elliot, *Burnt Norton*)

PRACTICE PROFILE

Iredale Pedersen Hook are an emerging Australian architecture practice with offices in Perth and Melbourne and a rapidly expanding body of work scattered throughout Australia. From the winery region of Victoria's Yarra Valley, to the North Kimberley desert, through the suburbs of Melbourne and Perth, from Sydney's urban centre to the far reaches of Christmas Island the projects are as diverse and eclectic as the landscape they occupy. There is no house style. The firm is dedicated to the pursuit of appropriate design of effective sustainable buildings with a responsible environmental and social agenda.

The practice operates around three very different individuals with three very different approaches to their work, however it proves to be a complementary assemblage due to the collaborative skills of all the partners. Iredale is the conceptual artist-architect who draws incessantly and produces compelling watercolours of the ideas within each project; Pedersen provides the social conscience for the team as his strong environmental bias is underpinned by a functional elegance; Hook is direct and pragmatic and seeks clarity in each scheme.

IPH have exhibited in Tokyo, Barcelona, Berlin, Patras, London, Vancouver, Melbourne and Perth and continue to lecture locally, nationally and internationally. They have received numerous international, national and state awards.



JONATHAN LAKE ARCHITECTS

The project is based on the intention to create a work that suggests an alternative approach to architecture in Perth. Its ambition is to create a stronger relationship to site and location by being a metaphor for many possibilities of how this architecture could occur. It is a response to the lack of depth and connection of current city buildings to the site and location. Buildings are currently considered in terms of floor and profit with a then glazed skin on the exterior.

I think architecture in Perth has a significantly more important role to play in the city. Why can't buildings be designed to reveal the uniqueness of our climate, culture and location? What would our city sound like if you could hear the sea breeze amplified as it passed through a building? Why couldn't a building have large cellular holes for nothing at all, except the collection of sunlight? Why are there only public spaces on the ground floor of our buildings?

This project explores the idea of elevating the experience of our city through the proposal of a sponge-like form that can absorb the unique qualities of site and location and, like a sponge, it can be squeezed to reveal them. The solid form and its perforations of cells create the space for these qualities to be collected and revealed. Like a sponge you cannot separate the exterior. Either you have a sponge or you don't.

Either you have a city or you don't.

PRACTICE PROFILE

Jonathan Lake graduated with Honours from Curtin University of Technology in 1995 and was awarded the EG Cohen Medal and the WH Robertson Memorial Travel Prize. He spent 1995–2004 working for some of Perth's leading architectural practices: Cox Architects, Overman and Zuideveld Architects and Donaldson + Warn Architects.

In 2004 he formed Jonathan Lake Architects, a practice that has produced formally and spatially distinctive buildings that have a strong connection to the Western Australian suburban and urban landscape. The practice has been enriched by Jonathan's role as a lecturer in Architectural Design at Curtin University.

Jonathan is interested in work that reveals something about the specific aspects of the environment within which it is located. These aspects are the daily conditions of our built environment: a combination of natural and built elements such as topography, context, climate, light and form. Through his work, Jonathan looks at how these aspects of architecture can be used to elevate the everyday experience.

SIMON PENDAL ARCHITECT

Architecture as I see it deals primarily in fostering delight and intrigue. The task is to work in a deeply immersive world of beauty, lucidity and poetic resonance. Making architecture is to do so within a tradition that has a lineage of many thousands of years. I take delight in avoiding the lure of invention. I try to use duration as a way of looking both backward and forward in an attempt to make potent and direct forms of experience.

This project is intended to investigate these ideas in a city hell-bent on renewing itself every 30 years. The medium of the billboard, a large flat surface, devoid of physical depth, material presence and light was hugely confronting and strangely liberating. The intent was to make a project open to interpretation, but paying dues to serious architectural enquiry. I sincerely hope that while this is a serious work it is also one to be enjoyed as fantasy.

I will avoid explaining the various sources of the work in detail so as to invite personal attitudes to be invested by the viewer. Having said this, some starting points might be found in the ideas of Arcadia and Paradise, the city of slow accretion and intrigue that I find in the work and drawings of John Soane, and the manner in which we may look at a place or scene and be able to make something else of that scene through the use of the imagination.

PRACTICE PROFILE

Simon Pendal graduated from Curtin University of Technology in 1994 and has worked in respected practices in Perth, Sydney and London, winning awards via the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

He has held numerous teaching positions within the Department of Architecture at Curtin University, across most aspects of the course. Over the last 13 years Simon has produced, and continues to produce, a steady output of work via international, national and local competitions and has received a number of commendations as a result.

The practice of Simon Pendal Architect was formed in 2005 to combine the complementary aspects of both teaching and practicing architecture. The practice's current work addresses conceptions of beauty, and investigates an architecture of poetics, the enriched interior, and the potential of precedent and history. The idea of invention is suppressed, in a sense, in favour of what the American architect Louis Kahn once said ... 'what was has always been, what is has always been, and what will be has always been'.



CALLUM MORTON

Callum Morton studied Architecture and Urban Planning at The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) before completing a BA in Fine Art at Victoria College Melbourne in 1988 and an MA in Sculpture at RMIT in 1999.

He has been a lecturer and instructor at numerous institutions since 1996 including The Art Center College of Design in Pasadena in Los Angeles, Deakin University, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, The University of Melbourne and The Victorian College of the Arts.

His work has been exhibited in solo shows at the Santa Monica Museum of Art, Los Angeles (1999), Tommy Lund Gallery, Copenhagen (2000), Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery (2001 and 2007), Karyn Lovegrove Gallery, Los Angeles (2002), Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne (2002 and 2006), The National Gallery of Victoria @ Federation Square (2003), The Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney (2003), Gimpel Fils, London (2004) and at The Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (2005).

His work has also been included in Australian Perspecta (1995); *The Queen is Dead*, Stills Gallery Edinburgh (1998); *Signs of Life: The Melbourne International Biennial* (1999), *Bittersweet* at the Art Gallery of NSW (2002), *Fieldwork: Australian Art 1968–2002*, The National Gallery of Victoria at Federation Square, Melbourne (2002), *Face Up* at the Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin (2003), *Architypes* at the Charles H Scott Gallery in Vancouver, *Public/Private: The Auckland Triennial*, Auckland, New Zealand (2004) and *The 2nd Istanbul Pedestrians Exhibition* (2005) in Istanbul. In 2004 he represented Australia at the Indian Triennial in New Delhi, India where he won a gold medal and in 2006 was included in *Everywhere*, *The Busan Biennale* in South Korea, *High Tide: Currents in Contemporary Australian Art* at the Zacheta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw Poland and Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius, Lithuania. He was a recipient of the Monash University Inaugural Art Award in 1995, a finalist of the Seppelt Contemporary Art Award in 1997 and a Samstag Scholar at the Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles, Pasadena in 2004. In 2007 he was one of the artists representing Australia at the Venice Biennale.

Morton is currently designing a pavilion for the Fundament Foundation in the Netherlands to be opened this year.

STRUCTURE AND SADNESS – LUCY GUERIN

The West Gate Bridge in Melbourne collapsed during its construction in 1970, killing 35 workers.

Structure and Sadness examines the vulnerability of the human form in the built environment and the relationship between the body and the dynamics of a structure and its materials. The dance movement for the piece is based on principles of tension, torsion, compression and tensile strength, all physical principles used in the construction of bridges.

The bridge is a symbol of human achievement, of our strength and mastery of our environment. Its collapse exposes our humanity, not just that we are fallible but that we grieve and suffer. We can't always maintain control and the form of our lives can be reduced to chaos in seconds by circumstances.

For many people the West Gate is a connector between the city and the western suburbs of Melbourne, but for others it is a reminder of a tragedy which reinforces our tenuous connection to life and those we love.

LUCY GUERIN PROFILE

Born in Adelaide, Lucy Guerin graduated from the Centre for Performing Arts in 1982 before joining Dance Exchange and later Dance Works. In 1989 she moved to New York, where she danced with Tere O'Connor Dance, the Bebe Miller Company, Sara Rudner and began her own choreography as an independent artist. In 1996 she returned to Australia and in 2002 she formed Lucy Guerin Inc.

Guerin has been commissioned by Chunky Move, Ros Warby, Woo Co (Denmark), Ricochet (UK), the Berlin Literature Festival, Dance Works Rotterdam, JCDN/Hirano (Japan) and Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project (USA) among others. Her works have toured to Europe, the USA, Canada, Singapore, China and Korea.

Awards include the Sidney Myer Performing Arts Award, the Prix d'auteur from the Rencontres Choregraphiques Internationales de Bagnolet in France and several Green Room awards. In 1997 her piece *Two Lies* won a New York Bessie Award for choreography. In 2006 and 2007 she won a Green Room Award for Best Choreography and a Helpmann Award for Best New Dance Work for *Structure and Sadness*.

Works include *Plasticine Park* at ACMI screen gallery, *Firebird* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, *Baroque Masterworks* for the Australian Opera under the direction of Patrick Nolan, *Love Me*, *Aether* and *Structure and Sadness*.