

# ***Fabricating Blackness:*** **Aboriginal identity constructs in the production and authorisation of architecture**

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## **Abstract**

*The architect and writer, Fantin concluded that, 'Aboriginal identity is not separate from external forces and influences and architecture is one of those influences. The difficulty in evaluating Fantin's assertion of the power exerted by architecture is firstly due to a lack of any convincing documented measurement of supposed forces, and secondly there is a relative absence of Indigenous voices in the discourse; so it becomes problematic to conclude the extent architecture exerts this presumed power. Another view presented, is that architecture incorporating Aboriginal themes derived from cultural and totemic references, reinforces identity stereotypes. Leading to the conclusion that several of the completed works consciously and deliberately represent Aboriginality as a primitive and romanticised concept. This latter view poses a contradictory perception that contemporary Indigenous client groups or individuals who participate in projects are passively or naïvely complicit in endorsing regressive, essentialised notions of identity.*

*The current paper considers alternate viewpoints on identity formation by exploring the complex nuances of public and private ethnicity marketed to national and global audiences. Multiple tensions underlie the fixed state inherent in architectural representations. Such buildings are expected to bridge inter-cultural domains, each with competing agendas put forward by various authorising agents and players who impose differing manifestations and influences on identity. Of the productions completed to date, is it really so, that they perform to preconceived notions of Aboriginality and identity or is it possible such buildings regardless of their intent generate unfulfilled expectations and unsatisfying explorations of ethnicity, unable to deliver all things to a segmented and divided audience?*

## Introduction

This paper will attempt to gauge the varied fabrications of Indigenous public identities expressed within architecture, through unraveling the cultural, political, and social characteristics bearing upon one specific case study, the Musgrave Park Cultural Centre (MPCC), an unbuilt project within Arts Queensland's Millenium Arts (MAP). The MPCC (1999-2005) proposal occurred during a decade of proliferation of cultural facilities on the national and international stage. Some of these productions emerged from tainted historical settings where attempts were made to meld deliberate, self-conscious gestures and expressions of identity to create new typologies of representation<sup>1</sup>. Other examples, laden with cultural symbolic references were subsumed into the architectural program, materiality and landscape. The use of expressionist sentiment made some of the buildings of this decade the subject of politico-cultural debate<sup>2</sup>.

The architect and writer, Fantin concluded that 'Aboriginal identity is not separate from external forces and influences and architecture is one of those influences'<sup>3</sup>. The difficulty in evaluating Fantin's assertion of the power exerted by architecture is firstly due to a lack of any convincing documented measurement of supposed forces, and secondly there is a relative absence of Indigenous voices in the discourse; so it becomes problematic to conclude the extent architecture exerts this presumed power. Another view presented is that architecture incorporating Aboriginal themes derived from cultural and religious references, reinforces identity stereotypes and that several of the completed works consciously and deliberately represent Aboriginality as a primitive and romanticised concept<sup>4</sup>.

The current paper considers alternate viewpoints and explores the complex nuances of public and private ethnicity marketed to national and global audiences. Multiple tensions underlie the fixed state inherent in architectural representations. Such buildings are expected to bridge inter-cultural domains, each with competing agendas put forward by various agents and players who impose differing manifestations and influences on identity. Of the productions completed to date, is it really so, that they perform to preconceived notions of Aboriginality and identity or is it possible such buildings regardless of their intent are unfulfilled expectations and unsatisfying explorations of ethnicity, unable to deliver all things to a segmented and divided audience?

MPCC was to be located at a key, though not prominent inner metropolitan location in South Brisbane. It was designed by Richard Kirk Architects (RKA) and Innovarchi (1999-

2004), in consultation with the Musgrave Park Cultural Centre Incorporated (MPCCI),<sup>5</sup> as a viable proposition of Aboriginal place (Figure 1). MPCC was originally envisioned as a mixed-use Aboriginal cultural facility for the display of art, a performance space, a café/retail service, a keeping place and foremost a meeting place<sup>6</sup>. The design approach by RKA-Innovarchi rejected the idea to infuse cultural meaning as an overt expression of architectural identity. They dismissed the architectural strategy incorporating references to symbolic cultural elements and historiographies in cultural centre and museum precedents, like the Brambuk National Park and Cultural Centre (formerly Brambuk Living Cultural Centre) (1990), Uluru Kata Tjuta Cultural Centre (1995), Centre Culturel Tjibaou (CCT) (1998), the Jewish Museum (1999) and the National Museum of Australia (2001)<sup>7</sup>.



**Figure 1.** Computer Generated Image of Musgrave Park Cultural Centre. Note the Aboriginal Flag Pole. Source: Richard Kirk Architect, August, 2002.

At the time, the MPCC concept was deliberately and self-consciously out-of-step with the architectural rhythms of the era. For this reason alone a study of its procurement and background is even more compelling to relate. Yet there are even more alluring reasons to probe the buildings failed realisation. Apart from the solitary flag pole flying the Aboriginal flag, the final unbuilt product denuded of any referencing to Aboriginal culture, appears to passively reinforce the building's neutral stance on identity ideology and it curiously stands apart from other built contemporaries. Architecture based around ethnicity appears to demand high visibility and accurate portrayal, often expressed figuratively, where subtlety is often not desired, nor necessarily an option. Despite being promoted as the flagship Indigenous project under the Queensland Government's MAP, the MPCC has languished due to political inertia from all sides. The project has been undermined by a lack of State commitment to actively support the projects procurement from its inception.

This paper is structured around the consideration of a series of three identity fabrications generated from a number of sources. Scant information exists about MPCC, largely due to the fact that it is an unbuilt project. However, key promotional documents about the MAP under the direction of Arts Queensland, provide us with some understanding of MPCC's position under the program. Other selected architectural projects discussed, are drawn from academic and architectural works, including references from a national broadsheet newspaper. Identity theories derived from the social sciences assist in our understanding of the politicisation and commodification of ethnicity, in the post-colonial Australian context.

The production of architecture is examined through reflecting on how governmental agencies are active participants in utilising identity ideology. They employ multiple policies to garner identity for market consumption. Governments of all persuasions are equally concerned with accountability and efficiency, but also monitor how procured products conform to dominant ideologies of the ruling party. Additionally, government agencies appear to unevenly support program objectives, where unparalleled energy and resources are devoted to completing particular projects, whilst in the case of MPCC, it still remains a diminished and unrealised proposition.

By way of introducing the central theme, the term 'fabricating' is woven into this exploration about representation and the reception of identity architecture. The dual meaning of 'fabricate' is deliberately employed, where in one sense identity is constructed through careful planning and yet in another, it is the objective to concoct with deceitful intent. This enquiry commences with **Fabrication One** - which largely centres on the construction of public ethnicity as lived and imagined. After laying the groundwork of how identity is constructed by and about Aboriginal people in Fabrication One, **Fabrication Two** – seeks to draw from textual readings and interpretations of identity devised in the media. Finally, **Fabrication Three** – explores the interplay of mythologies and place, based on a layering of activities where myth, text and lived experiences have merged into a politicised narrative. I attempt to demonstrate their bearing on Musgrave Park, and inter-related topics of historiography, urban Aboriginal place values, identity constructs, and governance as a performance of identity, in the public realm.

#### **Fabrication One – Between Lived and Imagined Public Identity**

The assumption and expectation that ethno-awareness and practice were supposed to disappear once modernity and the mass market impinged their presence has not

eventuated. Rather, in a global era of superpower politics, transnational communication and mass culture, we have seen the fabrication of identity multiply. Public identity constructs are supported by differing ideologies and mythologies<sup>8</sup> materialising across variegated social, political and cultural terrains, each contribute to contradictory readings of Aboriginal representation and place values. In contemporary Australia, place values are in a constant state of tension from intersecting and overlapping assertions within and outside Aboriginal groups, as competing Native Title groups vie for access rights, recognition and ownership<sup>9</sup>.

The desire to convey meaningful statements of group identity through portraying subjective notions of Indigeneity, was perceived as an opportunity by those represented to structurally shift power from objects to level players directing subjective representations. Although, Aboriginality is viewed as a post-colonial construct, several analysts have observed consistent public manifestations of persistence, resistance, shared-contact history and pan-Indigenous expressions<sup>10</sup> employed by Indigenous people. These cultural representations were initially seen as a powerful counter statement against undifferentiated or essentialising versions of Aboriginality in the public domain, but the outcomes were considered equally fraught, idealised, and self-conscious<sup>11</sup>. The underlying assumption that insightful constructions of identity are an automatic by-product of ethnicity was not borne out in evidence. For example, in the context of cinematic and other media representations about Aboriginal people, Langton<sup>12</sup> challenged that not all Aboriginal people are alike and that attempts to portray a 'true representation of Aboriginality' was not achievable.

If authentic Aboriginality is questionable in film, surely the abstract production of architecture may suffer greater inherent limitations through attempting to convey a perpetually shifting notion of identity. Deciphering identity for consumption can suffer translation errors, but equally, the expectation that abstract representations be precise, such as those conveyed in architecture, may be problematic, as Stead<sup>13</sup> concludes, '...architecture could never have the specificity of meaning of written or spoken language.' Despite varied architectural outcomes with questions raised about genuine branding, there is somehow an unfulfilled expectation for Aboriginality, to be without myth as voiced by Russell, Mallie and Ostwald<sup>14</sup>, who override personal-subjective constructions with intellectual interpretations and misinterpretations of identity and representation. Yet, when public constructions of identities are surveyed, it seems that

the identity game and its constituent components with its win/lose ideologies, appear to be politically contested grounds between subjectivity and objectivity.<sup>15</sup>

The complexity of comparing or grading representations against idealised forms is not easily resolvable or controllable for that matter. Some have found it useful to conceptualise fields or arenas in which identity is conveyed between Indigenous and non-Indigenous spheres, as domains of interaction. The literature presenting this view is briefly considered in the following discussion.

### **Domains and Intercultural Fields**

Langton's<sup>16</sup> anti-colonial critique describes Aboriginality or public ethnicity in film and literature, as an abstract gap between 'cultural and textual constructions of things 'Aboriginal' and lived experiences. The anthropologist Beckett<sup>17</sup> observed that, 'Aboriginality within the public arena is subject to socio-political forces, where private ethnicity, although sustaining political action in the wider arena, is in the shadow of public ethnicity'. It is within this variegated terrain that the rest of the world perceives Aboriginal people through mediated representations<sup>18</sup>. Both Beckett<sup>19</sup> and Langton<sup>20</sup> recognised that the private domain is a sustaining source of public identity, but once representation enters the public realm it is beyond the control of any media. This was recently illustrated by the twittersphere impropriety by a prominent Indigenous academic, feeding mainstream media controversy that reduced the debate to intra-Aboriginal identity differences between urban and remote town dwellers<sup>21</sup>. Beckett and Langton concede it is impossible and even unrealistic for any player/s to demand control of representation through censorship. The diversity of Aboriginal cultures characterised by distinct differences according to geography, history, politics, culture and demography within Australia prevents such censorship. It would appear that moderating contemporary representations of identity is a carefully-tread thin line between censorship and constructive critical views on the aesthetic and political content of representation<sup>22</sup>.

By dispensing with dichotomous views of public/private, Indigenous/non-Indigenous realms, Moran<sup>23</sup> surmises that projects regardless of their origins, operate within politicised arenas and are more accurately conceptualised as an 'interethnic social field between two domains' where complex ideologies unequally interplay. Yet, identity ideology is drawn from diverse, performative expressions or lived experiences of Aboriginal people, and can be either by or about Indigenous people,<sup>24</sup> with incompatible contributors from different social, political, economic and ethnic backgrounds. Each play

out separately or concurrently in intercultural domains marketed to a diverse and divided audience with a mixed reception, that have branded architectural outcomes in prominent locations, as exemplar or regressive representations of Aboriginality. This is further complicated by the internal and external communal politics of ethnicity.<sup>25</sup>

Identity ideology although conceived as an extraction of lived experience, can include imagined worlds that occur in film and television. Healy<sup>26</sup>, considers fictionalised reconstructions of pre-contact existence fabricated or narrated for audience consumption in the 1962 television series *Alcheringa*<sup>27</sup>, as idealised imaginings of differentiation and otherness<sup>28</sup>. Healy concludes such representations convey the 'central tensions between the 'archaic Aboriginal being' and 'pure white modernity' ...of an imagined precolonial Aboriginal world'<sup>29</sup>. Yet, the emphasis on tensions between so called civilised and uncivilised worlds are difficult to separate from the self-reflective, contemporary values Healy (2008:44) espouses in his condemnation of *Alcheringa*'s investment in primitivism. This example however, usefully illustrates, that fictionalised or imagined constructions can contribute to public fabrications of ethnicity, the question being, is architecture such a contributor?

For this paper's purposes, the MAP becomes a useful case study to examine how identity diversity manifests in shared interethnic domains, and operates to achieve political, social or economic outcomes. The MAP program of which MPCC became a central focal point of packaging cultural identity in the context of consumption of the arts, highlights the duality of identity, as both 'the object of choice and self-construction'.<sup>30</sup>

### **Public Identity and the Millenium Arts Project (MAP)**

In an attempt to crystallise a plethora of objectives commodifying cultural diversity overlaid by the arts, the \$260 million MAP, announced in May 2000, became absorbed under the umbrella of the Beattie Labor cultural policy, promoted by twin brands titled, 'Creative Government', 'Creative Queensland' (2002). Whilst encapsulating inclusivity, as well as respect for Indigenous culture and identity, the policy also acknowledged the separateness and uniqueness of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories. Indigenous Queenslanders were proclaimed as essential and equal participants of the State's arts and cultural activity. This was expressed by attempts to merge arts policy with socio-economic policies of reconciliation, wellbeing, strengthening community and economic opportunity. Indigenous participants were assured that the State could comfortably straddle these seemingly incongruous policies.

They were, however, simultaneously reminded of their dependence upon the State's benevolence and also confronted with the public perception of a socially dysfunctional culture. This was at a time when the Queensland State Government viewed active promotion, leadership and participation in Indigenous reconciliation as key elements to achieve symbolic unity. The commodification of culture and the arts were desirable and effective media to realise an ambitious infrastructure program, spearheaded by the lead agency, Arts Queensland (AQ)<sup>31</sup>.

In less than a decade, the MAP program mushroomed Brisbane's cultural portfolio with an impressive list of projects that included new premises for the Qld Theatre Company, the Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts, the Qld Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA), the State Library of Qld (SLQ) Redevelopment - the Millenium Library Project (MLP) and the Musgrave Park Cultural Centre (MPCC). Both GOMA and SLQ-MLP emerged as significant architectural contributions, to servicing the State's cultural, technological and tourism aspirations, whilst their reception divided architectural opinions<sup>32</sup>.

A short distance away, located on the suburban edge of West End, lies the site of Musgrave Park, asserted to have more cultural significance than any other known Aboriginal site in the area. MPCC was a small, yet integral part of the MAP vision. It was touted as the key facility linking the arts with cultural tourism as well as economic prosperity<sup>33</sup>. Key supporters of MPCC from within the Brisbane's Aboriginal community had heightened expectations that the building would materialise long held symbolic attachments of place. All projects earmarked under the MAP have been completed with the exception of MPCC. Why then has the project lagged behind other leading facilities and remained the only incomplete component of the \$291.3 million<sup>34</sup> MAP investment?<sup>35</sup> I will return to answering this question in its entirety in due course, but at the time, inner-city Brisbane had no dedicated cultural facility, that was either exclusively operated or dedicated to Aboriginal art and cultural activity, and the MPCC proposal seemed the likely vehicle.

The preceding question is partially answered by unraveling what has now become a diluted vision for MPCC, and its revelation lay in tracing contemporary architectural projects of the MPCC to review textual readings and interpretations devised in media. The lack of any significant architectural commission tackling Australian Aboriginal identity prior to the 1990s provided a unique opportunity for architects to explore new typologies,



reflecting international shifts in post-modern expressionist architecture and tackling innumerable historiographic themes with implications for national identity<sup>36</sup>.

Aboriginal identity as a contributing theme in Australian architecture gathered momentum and by the decades end, culminated in the National Museum of Australia (2001). A small body of high profiled buildings, including major components of building complexes emerged with overlapping elements drawn from several identity constructs. Often such buildings occurred in prominent locations in the form of museums, cultural and tourist information centres. They mediate knowledge and operate as an interface between cultural consumers and distinct Aboriginal language groups or groupings at specific geographic location/s<sup>37</sup>. These near contemporaries of the MPCC are worth briefly surveying, as they have confused the architectural discourse and poorly constructed interpretations of the primitive and historiography.

### **Fabrication Two – Text and Interpretation of identity in the Media**

Spivak<sup>38</sup> reflects that interpretation is bound up with ideology in pursuit of the proper or true intention of the thing examined. In following on from this conclusion there are several of ideology markers in public ethnicity and they appear inherently contradictory. When such ideology is coupled with the lack of any uniformity of views held by Aboriginal participants, this ensures ongoing tensions between the abstract discourse and concrete<sup>39</sup> representations of identity in text.

By way of exploring the connection between ideology and textual critique, I refer to the Brambuk Cultural Centre, where the architectural critic, Dovey<sup>40</sup> grappled with the agency of procurement and ideology, when architecture ‘becomes a gesture of reconciliation which is at odds with the unresolved conflicts it represses.’ Dovey’s critique of symbolic reconciliation in a post-colonial context, pondered the deference for persistence identity constructs in Brambuk, in the sense that they appeared to subvert the oppression of contact history, yet concurrently, join ‘expectations for an architecture of liberation’. Simultaneously in another worldview, post-colonial persistence has become politically appropriated as a statement of resistance ideology, echoed in the anthem of the Aboriginal band, No Fixed Address chorus, ‘we have survived the white man’s world’.<sup>41</sup> Amongst some Aboriginal participants, connection to country through exercising the choice of expressing persistent elements reframed as resistant identity, powerfully and politically reinforces Aboriginal place values to internal and external audiences.<sup>42</sup>

Though contradictory readings about persistence ideologies in building have frequented discussions, the debate over representation has not subsided when overtly politicised themes of resistance and shared-contact-history are symbolically encoded in buildings. The National Museum of Australia's pluralist agenda contentiously confronted history and Aboriginality-as-resistance themes and is a suitable case in point worth considering. The NMA was conceived and procured at the height of in the 'History Wars', so infamously dubbed by journalist, Paul Kelly in 1992, when the then Prime Minister, Paul Keating sought to divert national attention from a looming economic recession, by invoking a bipartisan view of history in order to reshape Australian identity<sup>43</sup>.

### **The History Wars and the National Museum of Australia**

The content of key proponents' assertions and the equally forceful counter arguments in the 'History Wars' have played out in the Australian media and academic press for almost two decades. Fuelled by competing methodologies and ideologies, with Australian national identity at stake, the battle was fought over whose version of history would prevail. The unwinnable war about black and white versions of history was entrenched in heated debates about unresolved methodological and ideological issues that continue to shadow post-colonial inter-racial discourse in Australia<sup>44</sup>.

Dawn Casey, (2003:11) the former Aboriginal Director<sup>45</sup> of the National Museum of Australia (NMA), reluctantly weighed into the debate, when it shifted from a heated textual discourse to materialise at the NMA site, later threatening aspects of the landscape design memorialising sites of Aboriginal massacres.<sup>46</sup> Casey attempted to quell the inflamed oppositional ideologies by appealing to multiple versions of history, one inclusive of diverse views. In particular, Casey wanted both sides to acknowledge that contact history was shared, and it was not exclusively owned by either side, it was neither black nor white, 'black armband' or 'white blindfold'<sup>47</sup>. Casey's<sup>48</sup> efforts to neutralise the NMA's position failed to convince a skeptical Howard Government that its pluralist agenda was not skewed towards a less than heroic portrayal of the Nation's colonial beginnings.

Under such close scrutiny, the NMA's bombastic presence was hard to ignore. Macarthur<sup>49</sup> pronounced it 'as an evocative and loud rendition of Australia' with a 'cacophony of national sentiment and national identity'. The NMA's heavily laden agenda of multi-faceted cultural identities, also presented localised, persistent themes about the rainbow serpent that were drawn from the Gulf language group, the Lardil of Mornington

Island. They were reapplied as a pan identity theme and merged with resistance symbols of the Aboriginal flag encoding the building in red, yellow and black<sup>50</sup>. The NMA's candid statements about Australian historiography made it an easy target for political interference by a government that supported a monumental and centralist notion of history<sup>51</sup>. The building' discourse with numerous voices from the mundane to privileged was reflected in Jencks<sup>52</sup> observation, 'we are engaged in more than a dialogue here, something between a debate in parliament, a shouting match in a pub, and a Sermon on the Mount.'<sup>53</sup>

When viewed through an international lens, Stead<sup>54</sup> observed that many works pursuing 'contested historical themes', with 'unsavoury' topics become embroiled in unresolved public debates about representation. The case in point was prominently and publically played out in the Howard appointed governmental review panel of the museum's exhibits and programs. The review panel headed by Dr John Carroll, presumptuously chose to make recommendations outside its brief, including a remaking of the Garden of Australian Dreams (GOAD) undermining inherent ideas mapping well known massacre sites. Keniger<sup>55</sup> assessed Carroll's suggestions, as an 'emaciated vision of landscape'. The NMA's headlong attempt at sectarian representation, challenged a defensive nationalist dialogue of an imagined Australia as historically untainted. It achieved what no other building of its prominence dare overtly pursue, by permanently enshrining some views of the subjugated minority, and this was viewed by some in power as an unwelcomed and unauthorised version of Australia's history.<sup>56</sup>

Jencks,<sup>57</sup> after Chomsky, notes that there are several convergences between so-called western liberal political democracies and totalitarian regimes; specifically that western democracies hide totalitarian political objectives behind veneers of review panels and government enquiry. Government reviews, can be thus used as a mechanism to subvert and undermine architectural accomplishments, particularly, when their ideology is contrary to the dominant ideology of the ruling party.

The post-occupancy angst concerning the NMA is starkly contrasted by a lack of political attention towards two prominent, seemingly benign architectural examples of publically and politically digestible representations of Aboriginality, specifically, Brambuk Cultural Centre in Western Victoria and Uluru Kata Tjuta Cultural Centre, Central Australia. Both Centres broadly appealed to a growing curiosity about ethnicity and were dominated by localised Aboriginal cultural themes, at a time when architectural regionalism was

employed as a strategy to counter the forces of globalisation. The non-confrontational content of persistent identity expressions and representations, centring on totemic references, made their consumption by national and international audiences palatable<sup>58</sup>. But the application of zoomorphic symbolic references has been received with unease and attracted some misguided criticism aligning totemic expressions with primitivism, mistakenly conflating religious belief systems with derogatory labelling<sup>59</sup>.

There is a simplistic and ill-founded presumption underlying reading and applying the primitive label on works authorised by Aboriginal participants. Such a view carries the condemnation of restrictive essentialism by assuming that the authorisers lack mainstream sophistication to realise regressive notions of their own identity are caricatures. Clearly, the perception is not so straightforward, and there is more to identity and the actions of the authorisers than what is being interpreted *prima facie*. Such an adverse view can only prevail if it is derived from externalised perceptions of the production. However, a more complex interior ethnic view is illuminated when the motivations of authorisers is considered. The failure to elicit or interpret why Aboriginal participants are not offended by representations that appear to symbolically disempower them has not been adequately answered. Comaroff and Comaroff, present an alternative perception about ethnic groups who commodify their ethnic nature, in that they do so with a "measure of critical and tactical consciousness".<sup>60</sup>

Pearson's<sup>61</sup> (2010) emerging work on Pacific narratives in film, however does provide one possible explanation after Munoz<sup>62</sup>, through applying disidentification as a theoretical framework to describe how ethnic minorities excluded from mainstream power structures perceive subjective representations as empowering. The permission by Indigenous groups to allow multiple public representations that are not accurate from the ethnic worldview, was reinforced in a public lecture by Emmanuel Kasarhérou, Curator of Centre Culturel Tjibaou, Noumea<sup>63</sup>. Kasarhérou in presenting the case study of Tjibaou, noted that the traditional owners endorsed Renzo Piano's interpretation of traditional architecture and planning as, 'it is us and it isn't'. This view highlighted that there is more to identity and negotiation with the dominant culture than those presented in textual debates in the media. Minority groups use opportunities to strategically position themselves ambiguously neither with the mainstream culture nor in opposition to it, transforming outcomes for their own cultural purposes. This effectively counters the view that modernity is incompatible with persistence or the other myth perpetuated, that it is untouched by modernity<sup>64</sup>. What has been found in practice is persistent beliefs and

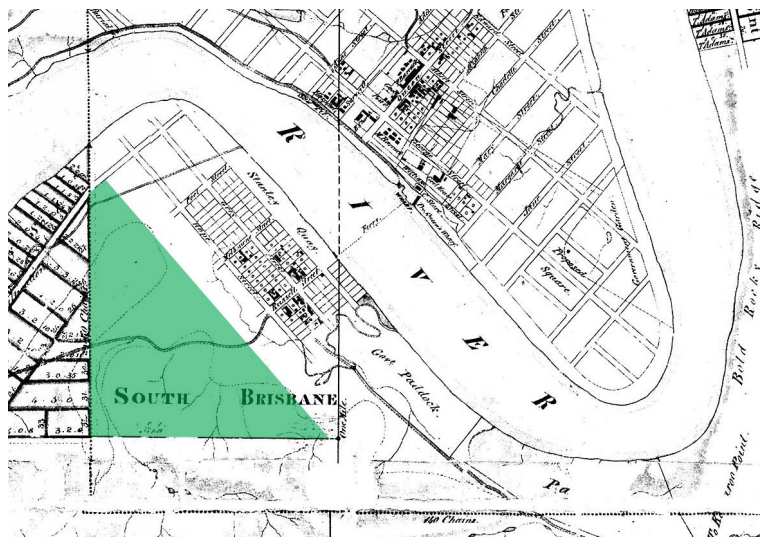
dogma coexisting and merging with new technologies adapted from the worldview of the recipient culture<sup>65</sup>.

The previous two fabrications demonstrate how Aboriginal people identify and disidentify with physical and textual constructions of public ethnicities by transforming them into objects of meaning from their own cultural perspective. They have generated a mixed dialogue, traversing such topics as regressive identity constructs, authorisation, architectural expression and constrictive essentialism, all largely perceived as negative impediments to contemporary public identities<sup>66</sup>. The third and final fabrication about mythologies and place is an example of the disparity and contradictions within governance structures that predominate projects funded by the state.

### **Fabrication Three – Mythologies and Place**

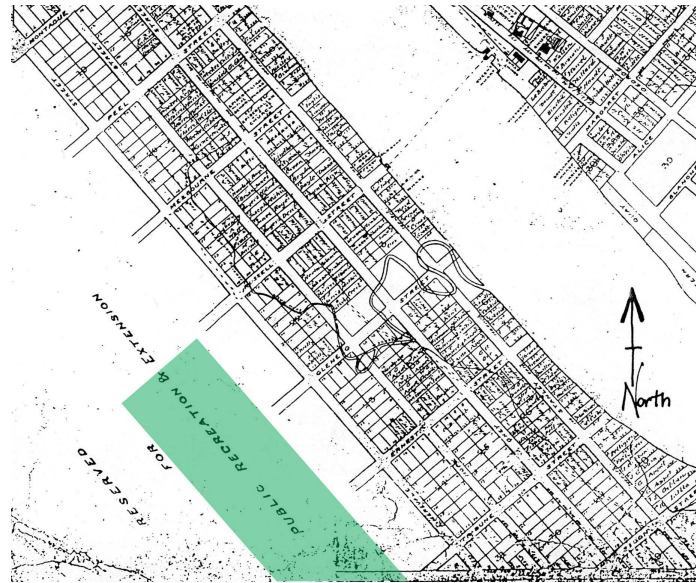
The focus here narrows to public ethnicity founded upon myth and how it reinforces actual and imagined place values. Aboriginal place values have played an important and defining role in a number of architectural productions to date, yet they have manifested differently according to geographic location and history. Of the list of precedents, particular attention has been paid to not only their varied reception, but, the contribution they have made to settler and Indigenous identities. This line of enquiry continues in the study of Brisbane's past that has been subjected to divisive, racialised versions of historiography<sup>67</sup>.

Wade's (1844) survey records Brisbane's transformation from a site for penal expansion to one of free settlement<sup>68</sup> (Figure 2). The subdivision of South Brisbane into large allotments for sale near the river's edge played a pivotal role in marking a notable shift in frontier aspirations from a locale for punishment to one of capitalistic opportunity. Dodson's<sup>69</sup> reflections on the politicisation of Aboriginality, asserts that establishing a new nation with a European base effectively was a fabrication founded on colonial mythology of a place imagined free for settlement. This acquisition, according to Greenop and Memmott's<sup>70</sup> recount of early Brisbane occupation proceeded in the knowledge that regional lands were subjected to the considerable forces of resistance by preexisting traditional owners.



**Figure 2.** South Brisbane Area, note the area in green that became the future reserve for public recreation. Source: Henry Wade, Map of Environs of Brisbane Town, (QDNR MT12) (1844).

In order to attract future citizens, large “gardens” featured in a newspaper advertisement of what would become, the public recreational reserve for North Brisbane. This assisted in portraying the emerging township as a cultivated, cleared and well-resourced outpost<sup>71</sup>. At the time the southerly reaches of free settler expansion excluded plans for public recreation. But, in order to service the growing needs of an expanding South Brisbane population, the absence of a bridge traversing the northern and southern banks of the Brisbane River, ensured that a future reserve was imminent<sup>72</sup>. Wade<sup>73</sup> defined the boundary perimeter of Brisbane town, reflecting the intention at the time to use it as a mechanism to secure sufficient territory for settler spread within and to protect its residents from resistance actions by Aboriginal owners who had relocated to territorial domains outside. The town plan of c.1850 shows that an area to the south of Merivale Street was set aside for ‘public recreation and extension’ marking the beginnings of what would become a smaller reserve (Figure 3)<sup>74</sup>.



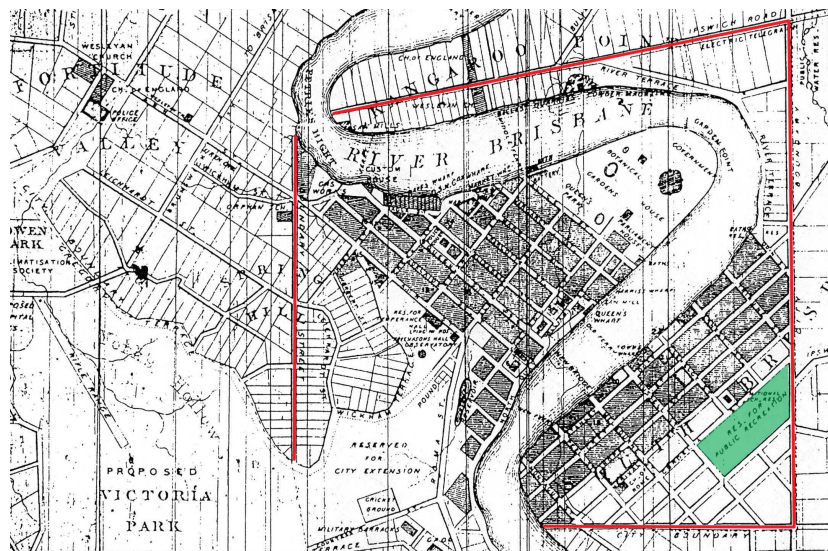
**Figure 3.** Extract of Survey Plan showing Reserve for Public Recreation and Extension. (QSA AIA Series c1850]. Note the area in green indicating the location of the future Musgrave Park and Brisbane State High site.  
Source: Brisbane City Council: Musgrave Park Conservation Study, Figure 3.1, (1996), 39.

Countering the juggernaut of unfettered settler opportunism was the fierce, but futile Jagera/Yagera/Ugarapal/Turrbal action to curtail their cultural, social and economic decline. At a greater regional scale, violent incursions into Aboriginal occupied territories throughout south-east Queensland aided pastoral expansion. The defense of the early Brisbane township was supported by the presence of a protective Military force, the mounted Native Police and town police forces to repel low technology attacks with devastating high technology counter-attacks<sup>75</sup>. The rapid development of the inner Brisbane township was reflected in the 1865 survey plan consolidating growth outwards from the original penal site by greater subdivision (Figure 4). The plan of Pugh's Almanac of 1865 retraced the original locations of all the so-called Boundary Streets forming the three perimeter edges of early confines of Brisbane town, including the fourth boundary, named Ipswich Road. Interestingly, the public recreation reserve that would become the contemporary site of Musgrave Park and Brisbane State School, lay just inside the eastern edge of Wade's 1844 original boundary perimeter at what is now, the present day Vulture Street (formerly named Boundary) (See Figure 4)<sup>76</sup>.

Greenop and Memmott's<sup>77</sup> review of metropolitan place values in Brisbane, notes that the site location of the emerging CBD and the defined boundaries of settlement, curiously corresponded with a lack of obvious use or significance by local land occupying groups. They conclude this was largely employed as a strategy to discourage unwanted conflict,



and minimise Aboriginal resistance. Another key consideration was preserving settler preferences and sensibilities of what was considered indecent, unclothed Aboriginal residents in daily and ceremonial activity.



**Figure 4.** Extract of Plan of Brisbane [Pugh's Almanac of 1865]  
Note: The reduced southern Reserve for Public Recreation (in green)  
and the remnants of the original town boundaries indicated in red.  
Source: Brisbane City Council: Musgrave Park Conservation  
Study, Figure 3.2, (1996), 40.

Let us now project forward to 1985, when Patrick Murdoch, the former administrator of the Aboriginal service agency for homeless people, the Musgrave Park Aboriginal Corporation (MPAC) led the first MPCC proposition<sup>78</sup>. The significance of this date is that it coincides closely with assertions that Musgrave Park was a sacred site. This claim was supported in the historical research report, by a then junior researcher named Kerkhove<sup>79</sup> who attributes the site to a bora ground, based on the following reference, 'the Woolloongabba Aboriginal camping-ground or village extended out this way, and according to one very old, respectful Aboriginal<sup>80</sup>, there was once a bora ground<sup>81</sup> (ceremonial ground) where Musgrave Park now stands.'

The Kerkhove<sup>82</sup> report, titled 'The Musgrave Park Project' is not publically assessable in a complete form, yet it has fuelled an urban folklore about the sacred significance of Musgrave Park, repeated in several research sources, some being Kidd, the West End State School's, 'The Kurilpa Cultural Trail' and indirectly by Greenop and Memmott<sup>83</sup>. Kidd in particular, directly draws from several Kerkhove<sup>84</sup> references, however, the sources remain unable to be verified. Kerkhove's<sup>85</sup> reference to a single bora ring at Musgrave Park by 2008 had become embedded into urban place mythology, where the



number of sacred sites, had increased in frequency and proximity to number between two and three sacred men's sites in the immediate area<sup>86</sup>. This perpetuating myth is reflective of the disempowered position occupied by minority groups outside mainstream power and economic structures. In the case of Musgrave Park, Aboriginal place attachment and lived experiences have concentrated into contested and conflicting views of place.

Musgrave Park from the 1930s to current, has had a significant Aboriginal past as both a meeting and gathering place, based around a range of formal and informal activities. This has resulted in what Greenop and Memmott<sup>87</sup> define as a, 'historically and culturally charged location'. In its contemporary setting, Aboriginal people have repeatedly associated with Musgrave Park as a site of protest marches, arts markets, sports festivals, NAIDOC Family Fun Day, memorials, all separately categorised as activities contributing to both resistant, shared-contact-history and pan identity values. Such layered place activities founded on myth<sup>88</sup>, text and lived experiences have fabricated together to reinforce attachments that are retold in contemporary Aboriginal urban life about the site. Cowlshaw<sup>89</sup> has referred to these practices as, 'mythologised through a body of positive narratives and beliefs about Indigeniety that underlie and energise everyday action'. This deference for myth over genuine experiences at Musgrave Park equally attests to what, Comaroff and Comaroff<sup>90</sup> refer to as, 'the collective consciousness' of identity as 'the quintessential political act'.

But, the sustained presence of 'parkies' or Aboriginal public place dwellers engaging in drinking undermines any positive narrative of place attachment, by their resistance to alcohol consumption laws. Their anti-social behaviour contributes to an ongoing negative reception of any permanent representation of place<sup>91</sup>. In an era of competing interests in Native Title<sup>92</sup>, this vigorous place attachment, both positive and negative has perpetuated Musgrave Park as a culturally contested place operating within a multi-cultural framework. The Musgrave Park Cultural Centre project has been surrounded by heightened and exaggerated claims about its purpose and intent to those within and outside its Aboriginal constituency.

The recognition of a genuine and sustained Aboriginal place attachment, combined with a vision suitably reframed under the MAP program aspirations was the basis of funding provided from the State and Federal government agencies for the MPCC. The funding of the MPCC project demonstrates that ethnicity and difference had both currency under the policy of the day and tied responsibilities. On this point Moran<sup>93</sup> argues, that there are

dilemmas, of Aboriginal self-determination when practiced with the strategic aim to gain access to power and resources, because funding providers require accountability and monitor efficiency. MPCC Inc. reliance upon funding agencies to realise, sustain and support any vision proposed, reinforces Beckett's<sup>94</sup> conclusions about this vulnerable interdependency, where 'for its part, the state is so inextricably bound up with the Aborigines, politically and administratively'.

The original funding budget allocation of \$5.0 million from the Queensland Government in 1999, was almost immediately inadequate due to a number of reasons. The first was an eighteen month project delay caused by a Native Title claim, the second being construction escalation costs and the third was a lack of site infrastructure services, requiring \$9.0 million by 2008<sup>95</sup>. Although MPCC, was visioned and promoted by Arts Queensland as a project within the MAP, materially it was in reality outside the program's objectives. MPCC was excluded from funding adjustments afforded other MAP projects which had increased the bottom line project and infrastructure budget from, \$228 million in 2002, increased to \$260 million in 2004 and upon completion in 2006 to \$291.3 million<sup>96</sup>.

By 2008, the MPCC implementation had disintegrated after the funding shortfall met by the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) was withdrawn, completely stalling the project as envisaged in the Richard Kirk Architect and Innovarchi scheme<sup>97</sup>. Further complicating the projects implementation was MPCC Inc. failure to adequately measure up to the government agency's requirements of an efficient and responsible body. This has equally hampered the project's progression, in what government agencies perceive in a post-Native Title environment as a factionalised Aboriginal constituency. MPCC is currently being reformulated by the funding agency, Arts Queensland (AQ), albeit with a severely reduced budget from the original \$5.0 mil awarded in 1999,<sup>98</sup> with deductions for fully commissioned project consultant services for the original scheme, legal costs to defend a planning objection in the Planning and Environment Court, and an injunction by Native Title Claimants.<sup>99</sup>

The design objectives for the MPCC from the position of the Aboriginal participants over the last twenty-five years has consistently centred on visibility and presence to reinforce pan-identity attachments to place. This attachment founded on multi-layered identities has been largely ignored and it is seen as having very little currency with sceptical government funding bodies, whose primary objectives are accountability and

administrative control. In this context it becomes difficult to measure Fantin's<sup>100</sup> concerns about non-Indigenous perceptions of public representations of Aboriginality referred to at this paper's commencement. Although, negative perceptions of public ethnicity occur, they are impossible to control or censor. It is, however apparent from this study, that public representations of identity in architecture as some have assumed, do not appear to uniformly impact negatively on Aboriginal self-perception. We find the inverse of what has been presumed, with Aboriginal groups strategically using pan expressions of identity architecture to project and validate attachments to place. The Aboriginal participants endorsed what appears to be non-identity architecture, because they had elevated expectations that the project's anticipated realisation would cement not only the complexity of prevailing place attachments, but provide a firm foundation for Indigenous visibility. This has been described as the paradoxical practice of self-determination, where independence is exercised in the context of economic dependency upon the State. In the case of the MPCC project, its Aboriginal constituency simultaneously sought public validation as "counterpoint between "authentic" self-recognition and social acknowledgement".<sup>101</sup>

The future direction of the Musgrave Park Cultural Centre project remains uncertain. The State has dispensed with the Richard Kirk Architect and Innovarchi scheme along with the considerable funds invested in commissioning extensive consultancy services and legal injunctions. It is presumed from a recent newspaper article<sup>102</sup> that Arts QLD has appointed yet another consultant to again determine support for the MPCC. After what has been almost 12 years after the original funding allocation in 1999, the State still has intentions to procure a building project, but clearly diminishing in scale and purpose. In comparison with the high level of finish of other MAP projects, any proposition, even if eventually implemented with the remaining reduced budget, the MPCC remains a dilution of the original MAP objectives and a testimony to discriminatory implementation.

## Conclusion

In conducting this reflective exercise about MPCC and other projects incorporating Aboriginal themes, this paper has argued that ethnicity, in particular its multiple public manifestations bridges inter-cultural domains, where complex ideologies interplay in politicised arenas. The first of the tripartite structure nominated, **Fabrication One** – Between Lived and Imagined Public Identity, considered the Queensland governments – Creative Government – Creative Queensland (CG-CQ) policy of inclusivity and diversity. The MAP infused performative expressions of identity in order to legitimise its vision of

commodifying culture and the arts. The CG-CQ policy objectives were realised through the \$291.3 million MAP, by selling cultural diversity and inclusivity, but in practice was discriminatory. MAP short changed MPCC by selectively delivering projects for its predominantly non-Indigenous constituency. In particular, the incomplete MPCC, demonstrated the ambiguous place Aboriginal aspirations of place occupy, even if they capture the imagination of State ideology. The MAP failed to marry policy with action. It administratively isolated MPCC from funding injections available to the SLQ-MLP and GOMA, which effectively left it languishing outside the program aims. In this sense, Fabrication One demonstrated the incongruity between policies forging identity constructs with imagined visions of reconciliation and cohesion that were not realised in substance.

The inherently contradictory nature of public ethnicity ensures tensions between abstract arguments and concrete action and this became evident in **Fabrication Two** – Text and Interpretation in the media. By surveying identity themes discussed in text media, along with their interpretation by several contributors the constructs of Aboriginality-as-resistance and persistence were explored through precedent works, such as Brambuk, Uluru Kata Tjuta and NMA. Some attention was paid to Brambuk and Uluru Kata Tjuta, as they have been subjected to unconvincing textual misreadings and primitive mislabeling. Rather, what was interpreted as prima facie evidence of primitivism, was examined as conversely perceived by Aboriginal groups as empowering. While countering the fiction that Aboriginality is untouched or incompatible with modernity, an alternate outcome is observed that persistent representations are merged with new technologies reproducing new typologies. This is contrasted with the more contested and irresolvable position occupied by the NMA, as it stood as a concrete challenge to the textual debates supporting heroic, Nationalist ideology and an imagined past, free from historical taint. In this instance, Indigenous presence in place-making and nation building, although shifting incrementally from the piecemeal architectural edge to centre stage, failed to carry the weighty ideals of a pluralist agenda.

In the final identity manifestation, **Fabrication Three** – Mythologies and Place the role of myth was examined in attachments to place by dominant and minority groups. The multiplying bora ring myth at Musgrave Park follows on from the settler myth of a place free for settlement. The Aboriginal attachments to Musgrave Park are founded on actual continued associations that have merged with place myth and can be seen as a consequence of occupying a position outside the mainstream power structure. This paper

has argued that identity has both currency and ambiguities when played out in the public realm, yet there are clear limitations to the value attached to these identity fabrications.

Public identity constructs by their nature are uncontrollable. As technologies continue to morph into forums with multiple, unidentified and uninvited contributors, they may be beyond censorship. The audience for Aboriginal identity themes in architecture including the diversely separate Aboriginal constituency, were found to be both segmented and divided. Of the relatively few productions completed they share one commonality, they are premised on a self-conscious awareness and fabrication of identity, otherness or blackness; reflecting the ambiguous place Aboriginal people occupy in Australian society, shifting perpetually from exclusion and invisibility to inclusion and visibility. The outcomes of identity ideologies in the context of arts consumption and particularly in the case of MPCC are indeterminate with unsatisfying consequences.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Naomi Stead, 'The Ruins of History: allegories of destruction', in Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum, *Open Museum Journal* Volume 2, *Unsavoury Histories*, August, (2000), 1 <<http://hosting.collectionsaustralia.net/omj/vol2/stead.html>> (accessed July 23, 2002); Kylie Message, 'Contested sites of identity and the cult of the new: The Centre Culturel Tjibaou and the constitution of culture in New Caledonia', *reCollections: Journal of the National Museum of Australia*, March, 1, 1 (2006), 9.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Jencks, "Constructing National Identity", in Dimity Reed (ed.) *National Museum of Australia*, (Mulgrave, Vic.: The Images Publishing Group, 2002), 61.

<sup>3</sup> Shaneen Fantin, 'Aboriginal Identities in Architecture', *Architecture Australia*, 92, 5 (2003), 84-87.

<sup>4</sup> Tara Mallie and Michael Ostwald, 'Reflecting on Contemporary Architectural Interpretations of Australian Aboriginal Identities', in Julia Gately (ed), *Cultural Crossroads: Proceedings of the 26th International Conference Society of Architectural Historians Australia and New Zealand*, The University of Auckland, Auckland 2-5 July, (2009a), 1-14; Tara Mallie and Michael Ostwald, 'Politics and the Cultural Centre: Representations of Australian Aboriginal Totems at Brambuk', *IDRP Interdisciplinary Design and Research e-Journal*, 3, 1: Design and Politics, Spring, (2009b), <[http://www.idrp.wsu.edu/Vol\\_3/IDRP\\_vol3\\_Mallie\\_Ostwald.pdf](http://www.idrp.wsu.edu/Vol_3/IDRP_vol3_Mallie_Ostwald.pdf)> (accessed April 19, 2011); Tara Mallie, 'An Examination of How Australian Indigenous Cultures Have Been Portrayed Within Contemporary Architecture and the Built Environment', in Jamal Al-Qawasmi, Abdesselem Mahmoud, Ali Djerbi (eds), *Regional Architecture and Identity in the Age of Globalization*, Volume 1, The Second International Conference of the Center for the Study of Architecture in the Arab Region (CSAAR): Proceedings of CSAAR 2007 Conference, Tunis, Tunisia, 13-15 November, (2007) 331; Kim Dovey, 'Myth and Media: Constructing Aboriginal Architecture', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 54, 1 (2000), 2-6.

<sup>5</sup> Between 1999-2004, the author was engaged by Musgrave Park Cultural Centre Inc. as an Aboriginal architectural consultant to assist in obtaining State government funding and negotiating the architectural procurement process with Project Services and Arts Queensland.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Kirk Architect, Unpublished Project Definition Plan. 'Musgrave Park Cultural Centre', Draft Issue No. 04, September, 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Personal Communication, Richard Kirk (Principal of Richard Kirk Architect), Ken McBryde and Stephanie Smith (Co-Directors of Innovarchi) 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Jeremy Beckett, 'The past in the present; the present in the past: constructing a national Aboriginality', (1988a), 193. See Gillian Cowlshaw, 'Mythologising culture. Part 1: Desiring Aboriginality in the suburbs', *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 21, (2010), 209.

<sup>9</sup> Catherine De Lorenzo, 'Confronting amnesia: Aboriginality and public space', *Visual Studies*, 20, 2 (2005), 106-108; Kelly Greenop and Paul Memmott, 'Urban Aboriginal Place Values in Australian Metropolitan Cities: The Case Study of Brisbane', in C. Miller & M. Roche, M. (eds), *Past Matters: Heritage and Planning History – Case Studies from the Pacific Rim*, (Newcastle, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, (2007), 226.

<sup>10</sup> Kevin Keefe, 'Aboriginality: Resistance and Persistence' *Australian Aboriginal Studies*, 1 (1988), 67-81, Beckett, 'The past in the present; the present in the past: constructing a national Aboriginality', (1988a), 191-217, ' Paul Memmott, 'Queensland Aboriginal Cultures and the Deaths in Custody victims', in Wyvell, L., Commissioner, *Regional Report of Inquiry in Queensland, Royal Commission into Deaths in Custody*, Australian Government Printer Canberra, Appendix 2, (1991) 171-289. From its early beginnings ethno-episteme conceptualised in social science theory attempted to marry biology with subjectivity, as an explanation of social action (Keefe 1988:73). Aboriginality-as-persistence, defined by Keefe (1988) and Beckett's (1988a) seminal papers drawing upon persistent elements of culture presupposes they are derived from classical influences that have origins in traditional Aboriginal culture. However, there are mythological aspects, in that, some assert these are genetically transferred and reproduced. Whereas, Aboriginality-as-resistance against colonisation and the nation state through exhibiting political oppositional statements is ideologically perceived as a more dynamic and active concept, although this view is resisted by Keefe (Keefe 1988:68,80). A third manifestation of Aboriginality-as-shared contact history is drawn from bonds generated by shared experiences of colonial oppression, post-colonial experiences of racism, and the legacy of oppression of proximate kin and ancestors (Memmott 1991:171-289). Pan-Indigenous expressions of identity share overlapping qualities with persistence constructs, where cultural elements drawn from specific local geographic language groups are then transmuted and adopted by unrelated Aboriginal individuals or groups. Examples of pan identity are the rainbow serpent, hand stencils, and playing of the didgeridu (Keefe 1988:70).

<sup>11</sup> John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 27; Cowlshaw, 'Mythologising culture. Part 1: Desiring Aboriginality in the suburbs', 209.

<sup>12</sup> Marcia Langton, 'Well I heard it on the radio and I saw it on the television', (Sydney: Australian Film Commission, 1993), 27.

<sup>13</sup> Stead, 'The Ruins of History: allegories of destruction', 1.

<sup>14</sup> Lynette Russell, *Savage Imaginings, Historical and Contemporary Constructions of Australian Aboriginalities*, (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2001), xii-xiii, 96 is concerned with how Aboriginal people draw archaeological and anthropological research for social and political struggles to sustain myths that appeal to antiquity. Mallie and Ostwald, 'Reflecting on Contemporary Architectural Interpretations of Australian Aboriginal Identities', 6, drawing on interconnections between landscape and architecture by arguing unconvincingly, they reinforce stereotypes of the 'primitive' and 'authentic'. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *In other worlds. Essays in Cultural Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 118-119, examines the politics of interpretation as a classic dichotomy between subjective and objective relationships, as ideologically over-determined.

<sup>15</sup> See Naomi Stead, 'Shedding the Shed, UnAustralian Architecture', *The Cultural Studies Association of Australasia's Annual Conference*, December, 6,7,8 (2006), 1-7; Tara Wilkinson, *Abstract: Caribbean Identities*, Miguel Angel Del Arco-Blanco, *Abstract: Francoist Authoritarian Regimes*; Semeneh Ayalew and Binyam Sisay, *What is in a Term? A Historical and Linguistic Examination of Revolutionary Terminology in Ethiopia*; Sarina Pearson, *Citing Hollywood in the Pacific*; Te Oti Rakena, *Loss of the Pacific Quality: The Colonised Maori Voice*; Research Proposition, Brown International Advanced Research Institutes (BIARI) 2010, *Towards a Critical Global Humanities*, Theme 3, *Critical Entanglement: Humanities and the Sciences*, Brown University, Rhode Island.

<sup>16</sup> Langton, 'Well I heard it on the radio and I saw it on the television', 32-35.

<sup>17</sup> Jeremy Beckett, 'Aboriginality, Citizenship and Nation State', *Social Analysis*, No. 24, December (1988b), 3.

<sup>18</sup> Mathilde Lochert, 'Mediating Aboriginal Architecture'. *Transition*, (1997), 54-55, 8.

<sup>19</sup> Beckett, 'Aboriginality, Citizenship and Nation State', 3.

- <sup>20</sup> Langton 'Well I heard it on the radio and I saw it on the television', 9-10.
- <sup>21</sup> Poignantly illustrated by *The Australian's* coverage of segregated Aboriginal opinion over the Howard/Labor NT Intervention initiative, demonstrating divisions between three key Aboriginal women along geographic, social, cultural, educational and political lines. Marcia Langton led a swift response to Larissa Behrendt's twittersphere impropriety directed against Bess Nungarrayi Price's support for the NT Intervention. Langton clearly aligned with Price's views and condemned Behrendt's privileged urbanity. See Kenny, Chris, 'Scorching Blast of Desert Heat', *The Australian*, April 16, 2011, <<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/commentary/scorching-blast-of-desert-heat/story-e6frgd0x-1226039919848>> (accessed April 20, 2011); Karvelas, Patricia, 'Calls to dump Larissa Behrendt from review after Twitter slur', *The Australian*, April 16, 2011, (accessed April 20, 2011) <<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/calls-to-dump-behrendt-from-review-after-twitter-slur/story-fn59niix-1226039970761>>; Langton, Marcia, 'Aboriginal sophisticates betray bush sisters' *The Australian*, April 15, 2011, <<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/commentary/aboriginal-sophisticates-betray-bush-sisters/story-e6frgd0x-1226039349353>> (accessed April 20, 2011).
- <sup>22</sup> Langton, 'Well I heard it on the radio and I saw it on the television', 28.
- <sup>23</sup> Mark Moran, 'Practising Self-Determination: Participation in Planning and Local Governance in Discrete Indigenous Settlements', PhD Thesis, School of Geography, Planning and Architecture, University of Queensland, February (2006), 136-137.
- <sup>24</sup> Beckett, 'The past in the present; the present in the past: constructing a national Aboriginality', 192.
- <sup>25</sup> Moran, 'Practising Self-Determination: Participation in Planning and Local Governance in Discrete Indigenous Settlements', 145-148.
- <sup>26</sup> Chris Healy, *Forgetting Aborigines*, (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2008), 7-8.
- <sup>27</sup> Alcheringa (1962) was an ABC Television Series consisting of 12-part (15mins – Episodes) portraying Aboriginal people in various traditional activities in a staged format. Some examples cited by Healy, are Episode 2- Trading, Episode 3 – Making a Stone axe, Episode 5 – Fishing, Episode 6 – Women Gathering Food, Episode 8 – Hunting an Emu, Episode 10 - Walkabout. See Healy, *Forgetting Aborigines*, 35-36.
- <sup>28</sup> Elizabeth Povinelli, 'Review "Forgetting Aborigines"', *Australian Historical Studies*, 40, 3 (2008), 388, <<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t786314679>> (accessed June 1, 2011).
- <sup>29</sup> Healy, *Forgetting Aborigines*, 35-37.
- <sup>30</sup> Comaroff and Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*, 1.
- <sup>31</sup> QLD Government, Arts QLD, Creative Queensland. 'The Queensland Government Cultural Policy 2002', October 2002, 8,11,13,20, <<http://www.arts.qld.gov.au/docs/creative-govt.pdf>> (accessed April 12, 2011); QLD Government, Arts QLD, Millenium Arts Project, 'Millenium Arts Project in Perspective' (n.d.), 2, 4, <[http://www.sd.qld.gov.au/dsdweb/docs-bin/v2/major\\_proj/mpc03\\_05\\_mil\\_arts.pdf](http://www.sd.qld.gov.au/dsdweb/docs-bin/v2/major_proj/mpc03_05_mil_arts.pdf)> (accessed April 12, 2011).
- <sup>32</sup> John Macarthur, 'Millenium Arts. State of the Arts', *Architecture Australia*, March/April, 96, 2 (2007), 52-53; QLD Government, Arts QLD, Creative Queensland, The Queensland Government Cultural Policy 2002, 8-11.
- <sup>33</sup> QLD Government, Arts QLD, Creative Queensland. 'The Queensland Government Cultural Policy 2002, Snapshots - Indigenous Arts and Culture', (n.d.), 2, <<http://www.arts.qld.gov.au/docs/qgcp-snapshots.pdf>> (accessed April 12, 2011); QLD Government, Arts QLD, Creative Queensland, 'The Queensland Government Cultural Policy 2002', 8,11,13, 20..
- <sup>34</sup> QLD Aerial Survey Company, QASCO (n.d.) Millenium Arts Project Executive Summary, <<http://www.qasco.com.au/Projects/Millennium%20Arts%20Project.pdf>> (accessed April 11, 2011).
- <sup>35</sup> QLD Government, Arts QLD, Millenium Arts Project, 'Millenium Arts Project in Perspective'.
- <sup>36</sup> Stead, 'The Ruins of History: allegories of destruction', 1; Catherine De Lorenzo, 'Confronting amnesia: Aboriginality and public space', *Visual Studies*, 20, 2 (2005), 108; Paul Memmott, 'Aboriginal Signs and Architectural Meanings' [Part 2], *The Architectural Theory Review*, 2, 1, April (1997), 48-49.
- <sup>37</sup> Michael Tawa, 'Liru and Kuniya', *Architecture Australia*, 87, 2, March/April, (1996), 48-55; Memmott, 'Aboriginal Signs and Architectural Meanings' [Part 2], 48-52; Jennifer Taylor, 'Brambuk – A Rapport with the Setting', *Landscape Australia*, 80, 8, August (1990), 6–13; Sueanne Ware, 'Radar Competition2', *Architecture Australia*, 90, 5 (2001), 40-42.

<sup>38</sup> Spivak, 'In Other Worlds. Essays in Cultural Politics', 122.

<sup>39</sup> Comaroff and Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*, 24.

<sup>40</sup> Dovey, 'Architecture about Aborigines', 102.

<sup>41</sup> YouTube: Video No Fixed Address, We have Survived the White Man's World, <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuwPTxcu\\_Ug](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuwPTxcu_Ug)> (accessed May 13, 2011).

<sup>42</sup> Paul Memmott and Joseph Reser, 'Design concepts and processes for public Aboriginal architecture', PaPER, 55-56, (2000), 69-86 (77-78).

<sup>43</sup> Paul Kelly, 'Our rival storytellers', *The Weekend Australian*, September 27-28, 2003, 28.

<sup>44</sup> See Stuart MacIntyre and Anne Clark, *The History Wars*, (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2003), Robert Manne, (ed.) *Whitewash: On Keith Windschuttle's fabrication of Australian history*, (Melbourne: Black Inc., 2003), Keith Windschuttle, The myths of frontier massacres in Australian history, Part I: The invention of massacre stories, *Quadrant* 44, 10, (2000a), 8-21, Keith Windschuttle, The myths of frontier massacres in Australian history, Part II: The fabrication of the Aboriginal death toll, *Quadrant* 44, 11, (2000b), 17-24, Keith Windschuttle, The myths of frontier massacres in Australian history, Part III: Massacre stories and the policy of separatism, *Quadrant* 44, 12, (2000c), 6-20, Keith Windschuttle, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History, Volume 3, The Stolen Generations 1881-2008*, (Paddington: Macleay Press, 2009), Henry Reynolds, *Dispossession: Black Australians and white invaders*, (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1989).

<sup>45</sup> See Rosemary Neill, Size Matters, *The Weekend Australian* 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> April (2009), 5. Dawn Casey was effectively removed as museum director, when her contract was not renewed. The history war's ideological battle most prominent casualty Casey was replaced by Craddock Morton, the self-appointed censor of the purported Braille apology.

<sup>46</sup> See Keniger, Michael, Radar Review, Taste Over Analysis. The Garden of Australian Dreams, *Architecture Australia*, 92, 5, September/October, (2003), 34-36.

<sup>47</sup> Neill, Size Matters, (2009), 4.

<sup>48</sup> Dawn Casey, Nation of Many Stories, *The Australian*, 6 October, (2003), 11.

<sup>49</sup> John Macarthur, 'Australian Baroque. Geometry and Meaning at the National Museum of Australia', *Architecture Australia*, March/April, 90, 2 (2001), 52.

<sup>50</sup> See Charles Jencks, 'Constructing National Identity', in Dimity Reed (ed.) *National Museum of Australia*, (Mulgrave, Victoria: The Images Publishing Group, 2002), 60; Howard Raggett, 'Visible and Invisible Space', in Dimity Reed (ed.) *National Museum of Australia*, (Mulgrave, Victoria: The Images Publishing Group, 2002), 40-41.

<sup>51</sup> Michael Keniger, 'Museum of Australia: The Final Schemes' *Architecture Australia*, January/February, 8, 1, (1998) 13; and Keniger, *Taste over Analysis: The Garden of Australian Dreams*, 34.

<sup>52</sup> Jencks, 'Constructing National Identity', 61.

<sup>53</sup> Kylie Message and Chris Healy, 'A Symptomatic Museum: The New, the NMA and the Culture Wars', *borderlands e-journal*, 3, 3, (2004), 1-2, <[http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol3no3\\_2004/messagehealy\\_symptom.htm](http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol3no3_2004/messagehealy_symptom.htm)>

<sup>54</sup> Stead, 'The Ruins of History: allegories of destruction', 1-17. See also, Stephen Cairns and Jane Jacobs, 'Radar Competition1', *Architecture Australia*, 90, 5, September/October (2001), 36; Sueanne Ware, 'Radar Competition2', *Architecture Australia* 90, 5, September/October, (2001), 41-42. The 'Stolen Generations' memorials proposed as part of Canberra's 'Reconciliation Place' included versions of history sympathetic to Aboriginal perspectives under the effects of government social engineering policies that have been subjected to academic debate, bureaucratic interference and censorship. See further, Keith Windschuttle, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History. Volume III, The Stolen Generations 1881-2008*; De Lorenzo, 'Confronting amnesia: Aboriginality and public space', 116-117.

<sup>55</sup> Keniger, 'Taste over Analysis: The Garden of Australian Dreams', 34,36.

<sup>56</sup> Naomi Stead, 'Landscape, Museology and Alliance', Review, *Architecture Australia*, 92, 2, March/April, (2002), 66.

<sup>57</sup> Jencks, 'Constructing National Identity', 68.

<sup>58</sup> Taylor, 'Brambuk – A Rapport with the Setting', 6–13; Memmott, 'Aboriginal Signs and Architectural Meanings' [Part 2], 53-57; Tawa, 'Liru and Kuniya', 48-55; Taylor, Jennifer 'Uluru-Kata Tjuta Cultural Centre', *Landscape Australia*, 23, 1, January (2001) 26 – 29.

<sup>59</sup> Mallie and Ostwald, 'Reflecting on Contemporary Architectural Interpretations of Australian Aboriginal Identities', 2-3, Mallie and Ostwald 'Politics and the Cultural Centre: Representations of Australian Aboriginal Totems at Brambuk', 7, Mallie, 'An Examination of How Australian



Indigenous Cultures Have Been Portrayed Within Contemporary Architecture and the Built Environment', 331.

<sup>60</sup> Comaroff and Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*, 27.

<sup>61</sup> Sarina Pearson, 'Citing Hollywood in the Pacific', Research Proposition, Brown International Advanced Research Institutes (BIARI) 2010, Towards a Critical Global Humanities, Theme 3, Critical Entanglement: Humanities and the Sciences, Brown University, Rhode Island.

<sup>62</sup> See Jose Munoz, *Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics, Cultural Studies of the Americas*, (Minneapolis, USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

<sup>63</sup> Emmanuel Kasarherou, Director of Tjibaou Cultural Centre, Noumea, Keynote Lecture: 'A Case Study Creating a Cultural Centre from the Ground Up', *University of Melbourne – Practices, Processes of Indigenous Place-Making – A Symposium*, Philip Theatre, 25-26<sup>th</sup> June, (2010).

<sup>64</sup> Lochert, 'Mediating Aboriginal Architecture', 13.

<sup>65</sup> Paul Memmott, 'Demand-responsive services and culturally sustainable enterprise in remote Aboriginal settings: A case study of the Myuma Group', Report 63, Desert Knowledge CRC, Alice Springs, (2010), 40.

<sup>66</sup> See Mallie and Ostwald, Reflecting on Contemporary Architectural Interpretations of Australian Aboriginal Identities, 2-3; Mallie and Ostwald, Politics and the Cultural Centre: Representations of Australian Aboriginal Totems at Brambuk, 7; Kim Dovey, 'Architecture about Aborigines', *Architecture Australia*, July/August (1996), 98-103; Dovey, *Myth and Media: Constructing Aboriginal Architecture*, 2-6; Lochert, 'Mediating Aboriginal Architecture', (1997); Fantin, 'Aboriginal Identities in Architecture', 84-87.

<sup>67</sup> Greenop, Kelly and Memmott, 'Contemporary Urban Aboriginal Place Values in Brisbane', Caroline L. Miller and Michael M. Roche, (eds) *Past Matters: Heritage, History and the Built Environment, Proceedings from the 8<sup>th</sup> Australasian Urban History/Planning History Conference*, 9-11 February, Massey University, Wellington Campus, New Zealand, (2006), 162.

<sup>68</sup> Colin Sheehan, 'Too good a site for a goal', Rod Fisher and Jennifer Harrison (eds.) *Brisbane: Squatters, Settlers and Surveyors*, Brisbane History Group, Papers, No.16, (2000), 2-3; Henry Wade, Map of Environs of Brisbane Town, by surveyor Henry Wade, (QDNR MT12) (1844).

<sup>69</sup> Michael Dodson, 'The End in the Beginning: Re(De)Fining Aboriginality', *The Wentworth Lecture*, The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, (1994), 12-13, 15, <[http://aiatsis.gov.au/lbry/dig\\_prgm/wentworth/m0008523\\_a.pdf](http://aiatsis.gov.au/lbry/dig_prgm/wentworth/m0008523_a.pdf)> (accessed June 28, 2010).

<sup>70</sup> Greenop and Memmott, 'Contemporary Urban Aboriginal Place Values in Brisbane', 162-163.

<sup>71</sup> Rod Fisher, 'The Brisbane scene in 1842', Rod Fisher and Jennifer Harrison (eds.) *Brisbane: Squatters, Settlers and Surveyors*, Brisbane History Group, Papers, No.16, (2000), 13.

<sup>72</sup> Fisher, 'The Brisbane scene in 1842', 13; Wade, Map of Environs of Brisbane Town.

<sup>73</sup> Wade, Map of Environs of Brisbane Town.

<sup>74</sup> Brisbane City Council, 'Musgrave Park Conservation Study Supporting, Historical Information', Landscape Architectural Services Section, Parks and Gardens Branch, Department of Recreation and Health, 2 (1996), 19-20, 39.

<sup>75</sup> Rod Fisher, 'From depredation to degredation', Rod Fisher (ed.), *Brisbane: The Aboriginal Presence 1824-1860*, Brisbane History Group, Papers, No.11, (1992), 32-33; Ros Kidd, Aboriginal History of the Princess Alexandra Hospital Site, (n.d.) 7-13, <[www.linksdisk.com/roskidd/general/g2.htm](http://www.linksdisk.com/roskidd/general/g2.htm)> (accessed April 4, 2011); Ros Kidd, 2001, 'Aboriginal History of South Brisbane', *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland*, 17, 11, 467.

<sup>76</sup> Brisbane City Council, Musgrave Park Conservation Study Supporting Historical Information, 40.

<sup>77</sup> Greenop and Memmott, 'Contemporary Urban Aboriginal Place Values in Brisbane', 163.

<sup>78</sup> From <http://www.musgravepark.org.au/14.html> (accessed April 4, 2011).

<sup>79</sup> Kerkhove, Ray 'West End to Woolloongabba: The Early and Aboriginal History of a District', Unpublished Draft Report, FAIRA, Brisbane (1985), 3-4.

<sup>80</sup> William MacKenzie (traditional name *Gaiarbau* (b.1873)) is identified by Kidd (nd:15, 2001:470-471) drawing from Kerkhove (1985, n.d.); as the source of information for the bora ground located near the corner of Russell and Cordelia Streets, which was purported to be used in the 1870s. However, extensive interviews of William MacKenzie, recorded by Winterbotham (1957:22-109), titled, 'The Gaiarbau Story' does not specifically mention any sacred sites at Musgrave Park, although one site is mentioned at north Brisbane.

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<sup>81</sup> Leon Satterthwait, and Andrew Heather, *Determinants of Earth Circle Site Location in the Moreton Region*, Southeast Queensland, (1987), 5-6, use the term, earth circle in preference to 'bora ground' which they define as an evident land feature used for ceremonial purposes, but also dance ground and dispute resolution. The site identified as having significance and separately verified for ceremonial use is located at Woolloongabba. The authors (1987:10) also provide considerable analysis on site morphology, noting that multiple sites used for secular or ritualistic purpose would not occur in close proximity.

<sup>82</sup> The writer has been unable to access the reference, Ray Kerkhove, 'The Musgrave Park Project', FAIRA (n.d. c.1986).

<sup>83</sup> Kidd, Aboriginal History of the Princess Alexandra Hospital Site, (nd) 15 and Kidd, 'Aboriginal History of South Brisbane', *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland*, 470-471; Greenop and Memmott, 'Contemporary Urban Aboriginal Place Values in Brisbane', 160, cites in an endnote reference no.48, that the author, Jackie Huggins of the West End State School, *The Kurilpa Cultural Trail and Community Development Project* (1997) draws on Ray Kerkhove, 'West End to Woolloongabba: The Early and Aboriginal History of a District', unpublished report, FAIRA, Brisbane (1985) and Ray Kerkhove, 'The Musgrave Park Project', FAIRA (n.d. c.1986). Other research specifically, undergraduate honours theses drawing on Kerkhove's research are, Romano, Diana 'We is Human Beings. Musgrave People'. *Connecting to Urbanised Place and Country, Musgrave Park, South Brisbane*, Bachelor of Arts with Honours Degree in the School of Social Science, University of Queensland, St Lucia, May, (2008), 36-38 and Long, Stephen, 'We Have Survived: The Rebirth of Aboriginal Place'. Bachelor of Architecture Thesis, School of Geography and Planning, University of Queensland, St Lucia, (1994), 77-78.

<sup>84</sup> Kerkhove, 'West End to Woolloongabba: The Early and Aboriginal History of a District', (1985), and uncited report by Kerkhove, The Musgrave Park Project, FAIRA (n.d. c.1986).

<sup>85</sup> Kerkhove, Ray West End to Woolloongabba: The Early and Aboriginal History of a District, (1985), 3-4.

<sup>86</sup> Romano, Diana 'We is Human Beings. Musgrave People'. *Connecting to Urbanised Place and Country, Musgrave Park*, 37-38.

<sup>87</sup> Greenop and Memmott, 'Contemporary Urban Aboriginal Place Values in Brisbane', 163-166.

<sup>88</sup> I adopt here Cowlshaw's (2010:210) use of the term myth, as a means of understanding its usage by Aboriginal people, where she ideologically observes that myths are, "legitimised as 'knowledge', the idea of myth is seldom deployed to understand the fanciful, imaginative and faith-based idea that underlie governmental processes in apparently modern or post-modern societies."

<sup>89</sup> Cowlshaw, 'Mythologising culture. Part 1: Desiring Aboriginality in the suburbs', 209.

<sup>90</sup> Comaroff and Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*, 43.

<sup>91</sup> Romano, 'We is Human Beings. Musgrave People. Connecting to Urbanised Place and Country, Musgrave Park', 42; Greenop and Memmott, 'Contemporary Urban Aboriginal Place Values in Brisbane', 165.

<sup>92</sup> See Greenop and Memmott *Contemporary Urban Aboriginal Place Values in Brisbane*, 160. The registered Native Title Application over greater Brisbane by Turrbal claimants, is highly contested by Quandamooka, Jagera and Jinibara groups.

<sup>93</sup> Moran, 'Practising Self-Determination: Participation in Planning and Local Governance in Discrete Indigenous Settlements', 137-140.

<sup>94</sup> Beckett, 'Aboriginality, Citizenship and Nation State', 4.

<sup>95</sup> Moore, 'Indigenous Cultural Centre to finally get off the ground', *brisbanetimes*, 1<sup>st</sup> April, (2011), n.p. <<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/indigenous-cultural-centre-to-finally-get-off-the-ground-20110331-1cn67.html>> (accessed April 1, 2011); Richard Kirk Architect, Unpublished Project Brief and Status. Musgrave Park Cultural Centre, 2002, 9.

<sup>96</sup> Moulis, Antony and Thomson, Sheona, 'Radar Competition', *Architecture Australia*, 91, 4, (2002), 18; QLD Aerial Survey Company QASCO (n.d.) Millenium Arts Project Executive Summary; QLD Government, Arts QLD, Millenium Arts Project, 'Millenium Arts Project in Perspective', 1-15.

<sup>97</sup> Moore, (n.p.). See also, Musgrave Park Cultural Centre project overview and scheme, <<http://www.richardkirkarchitect.com/projects/cultural/musgrave-park-cultural-centre>> (accessed April 4, 2011).

<sup>98</sup> Moore, 'Indigenous Cultural Centre to finally get off the ground', n.p.; Qld Government Tenders, Qld Government Chief Procurement Office, Awarded Contracts, <<https://secure.publicworks.qld.gov.au/etender/tender/display/tender->

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details.do?id=1907&action=display-tender-details&returnUrl=%2Ftender%2Fsearch%2Ftender-search.do%3Faction%3Ddo-advanced-tender-search%26amp%3Bstate%3DOpen%26amp%3Bissuing> (accessed April 1, 2011).

<sup>99</sup> Moore, (n.p.).

<sup>100</sup> Fantin, 'Aboriginal Identities in Architecture', 84.

<sup>101</sup> Comaroff and Comaroff, *Ethnicity, Inc.*, 48; Moran Practising Self-Determination: Participation in Planning and Local Governance in Discrete Indigenous Settlements', 139.

<sup>102</sup> Moore, (n.p.); Qld Government Tenders, (n.p.).