Projects: **DIY architecture: Avebury St. 2000-2008**

**Architect / designer / maker:** Cathy Smith and various collaborators  
**Brief:** architectural maintenance, renovations and installations at inner-city residence associated with research masters and publications.  
**Address:** Brisbane & Venice (interpretative model)

**Statement:**  
*Research Background*  
This is a folio of works relating to a primary architectural work—Avebury St (2000-2008)—and a number of associated public art and installation projects including: *Behind the Boundary* (2000); *Boundary* (2000-2001); *Not For Sale* (2004), and; *germinant: avebury* (2008). There is increasing interest in the phenomena of DIY or do-it-yourself in contemporary popular culture, and in particular, its relationship to architecture. Nevertheless, there is limited theorisation of the notion of ‘DIY architecture’ and its manifestation in practice. This research focused on a particular, localised design project involving a DIY ethic—Avebury St—in order to explore the notion of ‘DIY architecture.’ Avebury St was specifically initiated as a research project, and involved modest renovations and installations within an inner city residence. A number of experimental, public art installations were also developed in association with the Avebury St project.

*Research Contribution*  
Avebury St belongs to a tradition of architect’s own houses—such as Paolo Soleri’s own house at the Cosanti complex, Arizona—that become living architectural experiments in which the designer is also the maker and occupant. Avebury St contributed to this tradition through particularising ‘DIY architecture,’ and raising specific research questions relating to process, and: the deployment of a DIY ethic in architectural practice. The project can be positioned in terms of its focus on material recycling and repurposing. The project’s distinctive aesthetic qualities emerged from locally sourced, DIY and / or recycled and repurposed objects and on-site experimentation and daily testing.

*Research Significance*  
Avebury St is arguably a contemporary instantiation of DIY architecture. The research project was the primary tool in a design-based research masters, awarded in 2009: *germinant design practice: a do-it-yourself narrative* (QUT). The project was published in scholarly journals as well as in the local popular media, including: the *Architecture Theory Review* (2008); *IDEA* (2003, 2004, 2005); and *The Courier Mail* (2004). Significantly the project was also represented in the *Abundant*—the Australian exhibition at the 11th Architectural Biennale in Venice, 2008—as an interpretative model titled *germinant: avebury*. The project acted as a springboard for a number of associated public art projects including the aforementioned *Boundary, Behind the Boundary and Not For Sale.*