Finding a space for the practice of interior design

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ABSTRACT

Despite recent intensity in discourse surrounding the definition and territory of interior design as a practice and a field of study in professional and academic forums around the world, little consideration has been given to the process and outcomes of contemporary interior design practice, and how analysis of it may (or may not) contribute to interior design's persistent discussions of contested definition of identity and territory. This paper seeks to find a position within the current literature that allows justifiable discussion of contemporary interior design practice methodologies and projects. Using examples of awarded projects from Australia's annual peer judged interior design awards program, analysis of contemporary interior design practice is positioned within the context of the main themes of this continuing debate.

TERRITORIAL DEBATE

During the last four years an unprecedented amount of discussion has been generated in academic and professional forums concerning the territory of interior design as a practice and a field of study. These have included the 2006 publication of the seminal *Intimus Interior Design Theory Reader* edited by academics Mark Taylor and Julieanna Preston; the International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI) *Interior Design: the State of the Art* roundtable conference in Singapore, 2006, and IFI's subsequent *Thinking into the Future* roundtable conference in New York, 2007; Interiors Forum Scotland's *Thinking Inside The Box: Interiors in the 21st Century – New Visions, New Horizons & New Challenges* conference in Glasgow, 2007; and the *What's In A Canon?* forum presented by RMIT and the Victorian State of Design Festival in Melbourne in 2006. Each of the conferences were based on a similar premise that positioned interior design as a difficult to define and even 'slippery'[1] discipline, with the *Intimus* reader acknowledging interior design as 'an emerging discipline'[2] that draws upon a broad theory base from sources beyond 'disciplinary boundaries of design and architecture'[3]

In each of these forums, there is an acknowledgment of the broad and loosely defined characteristics of interior design. Some commentators see this as a benefit, particularly in relation to the freedom this offers interior design to be uninhibited and expansive in both its theoretical explorations and its practice methods and outcomes. Other commentators view it as a problematic aspect that prevents the establishment of interior design as a respected and serious profession. In other words, one position celebrates the lack of territorial boundaries and embraces the opportunities this offers, while the other view calls for a tighter definition and therefore a more bounded identification of interior design's field of education, research and practice.

As the following review of these positions presented in recent forums will reveal, the discussions of interior design territory rarely make reference to examples of actual interior design practice. The second part of this paper provides these references, leading to a conclusion that, in the case of contemporary Australian interior design at least, the approach, outcomes and authors of professional practice contribute to the view of interior design as a collaborative and expansive field.

In *Intimus Interior Design Theory Reader*, Taylor and Preston have researched and collected sixty-nine essays containing interior-related theory unconstrained by disciplinary boundaries and not dominated by architectural conjecture or interior decoration assertion. The absent representation from the interior design field in this interior design reader is, however, telling. Not one text within *Intimus* was authored by an interior designer or an interior design (educated) academic, and not one text has an interior space designed by an interior designer as its subject. The contents of *Intimus* illustrate both the expansive and interdisciplinary strengths as an unbounded discipline, yet also fuel its greatest frustration – the inability to identify discipline-specific examples of knowledge and practice. This author has previously argued that interior design disciplinary theory is broad not only because of the nature of interior design as a discipline and a practice that requires and benefits from many multidisciplinary connections, but also because the major group of potential contributors to interior design theory – interior design academics – have intellectual and professional allegiances to other fields. According to a 2008 IFI estimate, only 20% of interior design academics have qualifications in interior design.[4]

The IFI *State of the Art* roundtable conference was convened by the then IFI President Madeline Lester '…to explore the definition of Interior Architecture/Design … This seminar aims to bring together professionals and educators from the various parts of the world to explore and discuss the State of the Art in Interior Architecture/Design, and to formulate a directive opinion to fuel the world-wide debate on the position of the profession.'[5] An article by Ellen Klingenberg of Oslo National Academy of the Arts entitled *Interspace* was circulated to delegates as a positioning paper prior to the roundtable. Klingenberg proposed that 'The interspace – the emptiness in space – is filled with human activity and stories.'[6] She argued that this notion of '… abstract space – the storytelling or the action space …'[7] is just as important to the interior design process as is the construction and function of the physical environment. Klingenberg concluded that this distinct idea of interspace makes it possible to distinguish between interior architecture as a field of study and interior architecture as a profession, and that there is a need for discipline-specific theory (as distinct from general design methods and general design theory) to be developed for interior architecture.[8]

Joo Yun Kim, Vice President of the Korean Society of Interior Architects/Designers (KOSID) and Professor of InterSpace Design at Kongik University in Seoul, offered an expansive view when he posed the question 'Where are the interior designers?'[9] Here we can see that the field of interior design is actually a place where any other designers from other fields … can easily approach and work in … doesn't it seem as though interior design is something you can do without formal interior design education? Perhaps our profession doesn't really need professional education.'[10] Joo Yun Kim proposed expansion of the field of interior design, and

coincidentally offered the term 'inter-space' design to identify the future he envisioned for an interior design characterised by convergence to form new hybrid fields of design – a future characterised by interdisciplinary practices and creativity rather than professional competencies.[11]

Despite Joo Yun Kim's insight and the provocation of using Klingenberg's paper for a roundtable convened by the international professional body, the majority of other papers focused on the definition and identity of interior design/interior architecture as a profession, not a field of study. Speakers including David Hanson, President of the North American International Interior Design Association (IIDA), Shashi Caan, previous Chair of Interior Design at Parsons School of Design and now IFI President-Elect, Kees Spanjers, President of the European Council of Interior Architects (ECIA), and Ronnie Choon, President of the Malaysian Society of Interior Designers (MSID), each took the position that the definition of the field is the definition of the profession. That is, interior design is what interior design practitioners do, and that there is a need to protect that activity[4] through various levels of licensing and regulation. Shashi Cann's plea for regulated territory typifies this position: 'The importance of seeking appropriate legislation in America cannot be underestimated and is critical to the growth and recognition of the discipline … Why do we not own this field, practice it magnificently and dramatically improve it?'[12]

IFI convened a second roundtable conference titled *Thinking Into the Future* in New York in 2007. This roundtable continued the debate about interior design identity, this time with a predetermined focus on education. The proceedings of the roundtable reveal that presented papers and discussion sessions were once again dominated by a profession-led position of how interior design can best educate (and develop knowledge) for practice. 'In our practice we need to understand what we're doing. In education and research we need to study why we are doing it.'[13] Efforts to move beyond this were regularly thwarted by the ever-present problem of definition: 'I'd like to see us working to understand the discipline of interior design. Do we have a

discipline? Is it that we are just here to serve a profession or are we actually building a philosophical, theoretical and research theme to provide a foundation for interior design education?'[14] More pragmatic reasons for a profession-led approach were articulated by others including academic Drew Plunkett, Chair of Interior Design at Glasgow School of Art: 'We need credibility behind the notion that interior design is a proper discipline in our institutional contexts … The distinct nature of our discipline isn't hitting home. Yes it's a very new discipline, but it also has to do with the fact that as a group of educators, we can't come up with something solid that gives us that kind of authority.'[15]

The arguments presented at the roundtable either represented the view that the role of the academy is to educate students for professional practice, or the view that the scope of the academy also includes the mandate to educate students for future possibilities beyond current practice. Dr Luisa Collina, Professor of Design at Politecnico di Milano, provided examples of this approach in her description of the Politecnico's interior design curriculum that emphasises 'design as a form of innovation' that is related to 'new meanings, new needs, new values, culture, symbolic values, new context of use, new qualities, and so on',[16] resulting in unprecedented propositions for new types of spaces and opportunities for new uses of spaces. In her summation of the roundtable, invited moderating panel member Suzie Attiwill, Chair of the Interior Design/Interior Educators Association (IDEA) and Program Director of Interior Architecture at RMIT, suggested that discussion should centre around a more reciprocal relationship between the profession and academia. 'To counter-pose the expectation of the profession of graduates with the expectation of graduates of the profession. Perhaps the idea of qualities of an educated interior designer is a better way of framing a future roundtable – where education is not viewed as something which is separate from practice and before one enters the profession, but rather is ongoing.'[17]

Another forum based upon the question of interior design identity was the *Thinking Inside The Box* conference convened by Interiors Forum Scotland in Glasgow in 2007. The proceedings

of the conference were disseminated in a publication bearing the name of the conference and the subtitle 'a reader in interiors for the 21st century'. In their positioning statement for the conference and introductory chapter for the reader, editors and conference convenors Ed Hollis, Alex Milton, Andrew Milligan and Drew Plunkett claim that 'Within education and practice, interiors occupies multiple identities, yet its historical, theoretical and contextual framework remains patchy, and is frequently contested and unclaimed territory in comparison to those of other disciplines.'[18] Reflecting the structure of the conference, the contents of the *Thinking Inside the Box* reader are divided into sections concerning education, identity, conceptualisation, history and pedagogy. The section about identity entitled 'What is interior design?' contains arguments from the two positions evident at the IFI roundtables: an expansive view of the field (espoused by authors including Chalmers and Close, and Weinthal); and the need for defined territory through some degree of regulation of practice and education (proposed by authors including Caan, Michell and Rudner, and Hannay). Despite revealing a sense of exasperation, Andrew Stone's analysis of the issue of identity provides an insightful summary: 'Interior designers maintain a near paranoiac need to define "this is what we do" … 'The risk of prescription is that the process can be necessarily reductive, limiting activities to those proffered by a dominant interest …'' A significant benefit is that it allows distance and inflection. The edge of the subject is active, offering catalytic opportunities and coalitions …'[19] Stone's paper communicates the need for education to provide future interior design practitioners with the skills and knowledge to '… reflect seriously and confidently on their subject … [and] … to distance themselves from industry demands in order to invest in the subject critically and creatively.'[20]

One of the papers included in the *Thinking Inside The Box* reader's 'What Is Interior Design?' section offers a possible way forward in the circular debate over interior design's identity. In a paper entitled 'What's In A Canon?' Suzie Attiwill presents an account and analysis of a public debate convened by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) for the 2006

Victorian State of Design Festival in Australia. Chaired by Attiwill, the event was based on the premise that 'the potential of a canon is to collect together significant examples of practice. The emphasis here on practice is not to distinguish from theory but to emphasise activity, i.e. the making of interiors.'[21] The forum comprised a panel of seven speakers[22] who were invited to respond to the question 'Are there 'canonical' interiors?' Attiwill's account of the event documented the range of examples offered as canons of interior design by the speakers. Apart from two domestic interiors suggested by *Vogue Living* editor David Clark (one by visual artist Dale Frank, and the other by interior design practice Hecker Phelan and Guthrie) that were the only non-architectural examples,[23] the rest were architectural in typology and authored by architects. In response to this, one of the panellists, RMIT Professor Leon van Schaik, observed that: 'I don't see how you can claim for interior design, works which are clearly the product of architectural processes and architecture as a professional practice.' The reality of this insight caused Attiwill to acknowledge 'the active relation between a canon and a practice and hence the question of interior design as a practice and its manifestations.'[24] Attiwill concluded with the realisation that 'Canons are sites where practitioners, theorists, academics, historians, students, curators can share a platform for discussion and debate … The concept of the canon could be reinvented from the canon to canons, becoming multiple and dynamic; as an intensity of a gathering; an assemblage composed of tangled lines; canons of interiorisations where it may be more useful to pose questions in relation to practice – asking 'how' as distinct from 'what is interior design?' or 'who is an interior designer?'[25] As Attiwill herself qualifies,[26] such a focus on practice is not to separate it from theory, but to concentrate on the process of the doing of interior design – how interior design is made.

The identification of this possibility for future discussion could signify a way forward for interior design discourse. The lack of discussion of examples of interior design practice (as either process or outcome) in the significant forums discussed above is glaring. The circular and self-negating arguments of bounded versus expansive territory in relation to interior design identity

(as both a practice and a field of study) may well have contributed all it can to our understanding of the field at the current time. Certainly the positions presented at the two IFI roundtables and the IFS conference indicate that neither academia nor the profession regard the other's argument helpful in defining the status quo or in proposing future development of the discipline.

Why has the situation occurred that few commentators (from either academic or professional realms) make reference to contemporary interiors or to interior design practice processes or methodologies in their discussions of the discipline that they are so keen to either loosely or tightly define? Is it because, as this author has previously suggested, few academics have qualifications or practice backgrounds in interior design, and therefore have no allegiance or research investment in the field? [27] Or is it as Joo Yun Kim identified at the IFI Singapore roundtable, none of the acclaimed (famous) design practitioners in the world have interior design qualifications? Or is it because of the historical protection of title and territory by the profession that is arguably interior design's most kindred discipline – architecture? 'Today many architects, along with interior and industrial designers, deal with projects broadly called "interior architecture", but even this title cannot be legitimately used in academic institutions and by practitioners in parts of the world where the word *architect* is protected.' [28] Is it due to something even more evasive in our contemporary world, related to what we are presented with through publication and media? Traditional publication has celebrated interiors as sites of consumption and desire 'dominated by a culture of status-seeking ostentation' [29] at the expense of serious critical consideration of these and other types of interiors influencing practice and education alike. 'Shops, and the design of interiors for consumption or for consuming in, have been the most immediately visible commercial interior design work for much of the last 100 years… The profession, representative bodies and education have all failed significantly to address essentially unfashionable, or unprofitable, aspects of design work.' [30] Or is the reason even more discouraging, as Mark Pimlott suggests, because the interiors we are required to create for ourselves as a result of unquestioned consumerism and global commercialism are unworthy of critical design consideration? 'Today, one is struck by the multitude of interiors that resemble each other regardless of their location. Shopping malls, airports, office lobbies, museums – interiors for a mass public – all share the same morphology, the same tropes. They have submitted to the devices of publicity and become distended scenes of consumption.' [31]

Each are plausible explanations for the absence of discussion of contemporary interior design practice, and each can be seen as relevant to the overall problem of interior design's contested identity and territory. However, even the most pessimistic of these explanations provides an opening for critical consideration of the 'how' of interior design as opposed to consideration restricted to the 'who' or 'what'. If this may be accepted as a legitimate reason to analyse examples of contemporary interior design practice, the next challenge that presents itself is how these examples may be selected. The author has previously discussed projects awarded within the annual Australian Interior Design Awards program (IDA) in an attempt to describe characteristics of

contemporary interior design practice in that country. The argument for the significance of peer awarded projects is again made that '… instead of a history written long after the fact, the awards, when collected together as a document, form an instantaneous record of contemporary peer recognition. They tell us what, at a particular moment in time, a certain group of people believed might embody excellence …' [32] In the case of the IDA, this 'certain group of people' are interior designers themselves who undertake the peer judging process.

TERRITORIAL PRACTICE

The IDA is a national awards program that began in 2004 to '… celebrate and recognise interior design excellence …'[33] The IDA offers awards in sixteen categories representing the breadth of interior design practice. The peer jurors are required to assess, and designers are required to submit, entered projects against a series of criteria that focus on how the project contributes to contemporary interior design practice. Analysis of the responses to this criteria by both the judges and the designers of entered projects allows insight into the 'how' of interior design suggested by Attiwill, and provides possible contribution to the discourse surrounding interior design's territory. Before proceeding, however, it is necessary (and useful) to acknowledge the other long debated considerations of 'who' and 'what' of interior design in relation to this awards program.

As many of the commentators cited in this paper have reminded us, the answer to the question of 'who is an interior designer?' is not (and may never be) clear. It certainly cannot be assumed that only interior designers will enter projects for consideration into an interior design awards program. As such, the IDA was conceived as a program that has no disciplinary or professional membership restriction for entry. Since 2007, the IDA entry process has collected data on entering practices.[34] The 2007, 2008 and 2009 programs resulted in projects from a total of 250 practices shortlisted for awards. Of these practices, 30% described themselves as interior design practices, 54% described themselves as architectural practices, and 16% described themselves as other types of practices with 'exhibition design practice' and 'multi-disciplinary design practice' being the most common descriptor provided. Despite the fact that it is unlikely that anyone would enter an interior design awards program if they did not want peer and public acknowledgement that they designed interiors, the data clearly indicates that not all projects were (or were solely) the work of those who would necessarily identify themselves as being an interior designer through qualification.

To address the question of 'what is interior design?', the IDA award categories are relatively expansive when compared with the award categories offered by peer judged national award programs in other design disciplines. [35] The IDA includes primary award categories of Corporate Interior Design, Retail Interior Design, Public/Institutional Interior Design, Hospitality Interior Design, Installation Design (including gallery and museum exhibitions, installations, set design, event marquees, promotional displays, etc), Residential Interior Design, and Residential Interior

Decoration. There are also secondary award categories for Ecologically Sustainable Interior Design, Emerging Interior Design Practice, Best of State Awards in Commercial Interior Design and Residential Interior Design, Colour in Residential Interior Design, and Colour in Commercial Interior Design. In 2007 and 2008 categories were offered for Interior Product Design (including furniture) and Interior Textile Design. The Interior Design Awards is not constrained by the anxiety of the 'who' or 'what' of interior design that appears to pervade professional thinking world-wide. As a peer-judged awards program, its open entry policy and relatively expansive categories aims to acknowledge the creation of interiors, regardless of *who* does it and to some extent, *what* it is that is created.

Since 2005, the IDA has recognised outstanding creativity with an overall Premier Award for Interior Design Excellence and Innovation that is judged from the awarded projects in each of the primary categories. It is in the results of this premier award that the expansiveness of the IDA, and interior design practice itself, is most evident. This premier award is bestowed by the jury panels in recognition of how the projects contribute to excellent and innovative interior design practice. Analysis of the six projects that have received this premier award to date reveal much about the 'how' of interior design – 'how is interior design practiced?' – and add to the discussion of interior design identity in new ways.

The projects that have received the Excellence and Innovation award since the inception of the IDA include an art museum (2004), a residence (2005), a temporary refreshment lounge (2006), a bar (2007), a corporate workplace (2008), and a school (2009). The projects ranged in scale and cost as much as they did in type, with the smallest project being 70sqm ($AUD67,000) and the largest 15,4000sqm ($AUD27m).

In 2004 the Ian Potter Centre at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne received the award for Excellence and Innovation. Designed by LAB Architecture Studio, in association with architecture, interior design and urban design practice Bates

Smart, the project involved the interior and exhibition design of gallery spaces, interior design of the museum's shop, theatrette and café, and the design of wall layouts, multimedia information displays, signage and furniture (Figure 1). The designers also created new curatorial interpretations of the museum's collection including 'the introduction of contemporary work with new narratives into the colonial galleries, and the hanging of a sequence of 19th Century portrait and landscape paintings'[36] that enables visitors extended experience and understanding of the art works beyond subject matter alone. The design of gallery partitions and horizontal and vertical circulation space enables visitors to interpret the collection '… through a shifting matrix of view lines and cross connections.'[37] In the resting and refreshment areas, views back into the galleries and multimedia displays provide further viewing of the collection. The significant contribution of this project, as acknowledged by the award juries, was the complete integration of art and space that placed the visitor experience at the centre of this connection.

The 2005 award went to a Church Conversion project that transformed a 130 year-old church in a small Australian rural town into a family residence. The authors of the project were

the interior design and architecture practice Multiplicity and landscape sculptor Mel Ogden. The project was a complete collaboration from beginning to end with authorship attributed equally to Multiplicity and Ogden in all aspects of the design (Figure 2). The designers, the process they undertook and the final outcome displayed a heightened sense of awareness of responsibility to re-establish the role of a significant building in a small community. The designers were deliberate in their aim to create exterior and interior spaces so that 'active public and functional services took advantage of the pre-eminent areas of the former church.'[38] As a result, the project's greatest contribution lies in its successful maintenance of the public 'ownership' of the church while at the same time, transferring its custody to that most private function of domestic habitation. The interior design and the landscape design contributed equally to this through considered creation of spatial elements within and without. Externally the landscaping creates screening for privacy yet maintains characteristics of traditional and recognisable church landscaping. Internally the interior design created spaces for sleeping, ablutions, cooking and communing without compromising the nature of the interior volume, and, in particular, without interrupting the sightlines between the stained glass windows at either end of the church building.

The Solivoid project that received the Excellence and Innovation award in 2006 was the work of the Spatial Design and Research Group at Monash University's Faculty of Art and Design. Solivoid is a temporary, transportable, inflatable refreshment and resting space for use at large trade-show expositions. As with the 2005 Church Conversion project, Solivoid was the result of multi-disciplinary collaboration. Contributing members of the Spatial Design Research Group including interior design, visual art, architecture, graphic and multimedia designers. The conceptual

premise of the Solivoid project was based upon Philip Thiel's idea of place where 'art is not relegated to something outside and apart from ordinary life, but becomes a characteristic of life at its optimum.'[39] As a resting place for weary trade-show delegates, Solivoid digitally records activity within the space as visitors pass through it or stop to sit on the bubble-wrapped seating, and responds by generating colour and pattern sequences that are projected on inflatable Nylon forms that comprise the space (Figure 3). The significance of this project is threefold. The temporary, inflatable space challenges notions of interior space as permanent enclosure; it unequivocally establishes the 'interior' as primarily a site of ordinary human activity and experience; and it presents multimedia information and digital art within an interior in a way that is not separated from the experience of the space itself by plasma screens or blank projection walls.

2007 saw the continued tradition of multi-disciplinary authorship of the awarded project. The Dusk bar was designed by Diretribe, a practice of three who collectively hold qualifications in graphic design, architecture and visual art, and describes its work as 'crossing art and design fields including industrial and graphic design, film, architecture and visual art.'[40] Dusk is a small bar fashioned within an existing building in the popular night-time entertainment precinct of St Kilda in Melbourne. Dusk is a space that makes inspired use of technological cast-offs (cable reels, CDs and CD cases are amongst the selected materials) in surprising and quite beautiful ways as the ubiquitous 'designed' elements of a bar (stools, tables and pendant lights) to simply provide the necessities of a hospitality space – somewhere to sit and drink (Figure 4). The contribution of this project is perhaps no better articulated than in the words of the designers themselves: 'This is all very retro, anti-techno, and NOT really where it's at … In an age of Catia and YouTube, of stereo lithography and Google Earth, Dusk finds comfort in life's simple things – sitting on a cable reel and having a beer … Dusk celebrates unusual usages of the mundane, of the outdated, and of the "off the shelf". [41] There is little doubt that the jury panels bestowed the award for Excellence and Innovation in recognition of the symbolic reminder that Dusk bar represents, not just to consumer-driven

society, but to interior designers themselves. It is a powerful, intelligent and extremely humble contribution to interior design practice that demonstrates all of the ethical, human-focused, experimental and imaginative characteristics that can be the result of an unbounded practice.

In 2008, the Santos Centre project by Blight Voller Nield Architecture (BVN) received the IDA premier award. BVN designed the interior for the Adelaide headquarters of mining giant Santos .The design provides workplace accommodation for 900 staff, visiting field-based employees and up to forty visitors over twelve floors, with individual worksettings, conference, meeting, training and quiet rooms, open team-work areas, three laboratories, a commercial kitchen, function rooms, and a cafe that is open to the public (Figure 5). As a physical entity resulting from functional analysis, facilities and space planning, material and detailing strategy, allied with selected and custom designed furniture, fittings and equipment, BVN's interior both demonstrates and enables the operation of Santos' corporate culture and business success. 'The workplace supports the free flow of knowledge, faster collaboration and provides for visible, open leadership, all contributing to improved productivity in an industry that is characterised by rapid technological developments and expeditious decision making.'[42] The project reveals the breadth of mainstream commercial interior design practice and the multitude of complex considerations that needs to be addressed when designing spaces for the people that comprise these enormous global corporations. The overwhelming contribution of this project is in its demonstration of the direct and indirect value that interior design can bring to business in relation to corporate identity and culture, workforce efficiency, flexibility and productivity, human resources recruitment and employee retention and satisfaction through the physical environment.

The most recent award for Excellence and Innovation was made in the 2009 IDA program and was bestowed upon the Melbourne Grammar School project by John Wardle Architects. The project comprised a new school entry, library, lecture and seminar spaces, plus space for various administrative units (Figure 6). The project
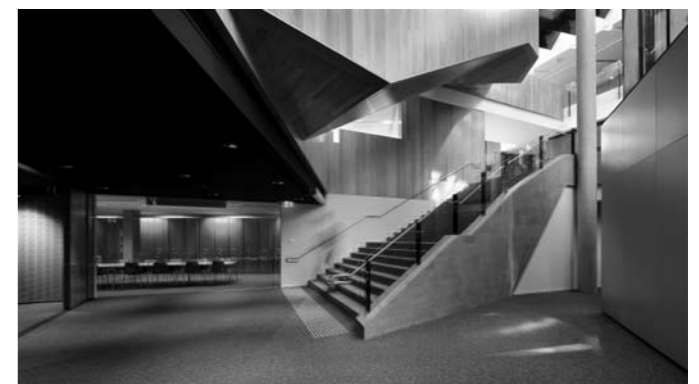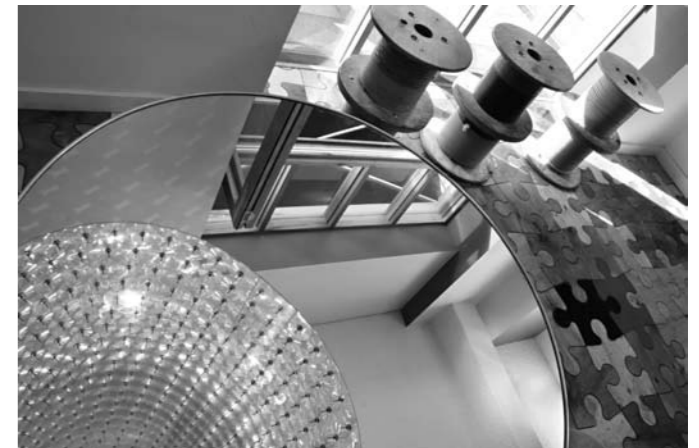
Opposite
Figure 3: Spatial Design and Research Group, Soliviod, 2006 photo Darragh O'Brien

Above (from top to bottom)
Figure 4: Diretribe, Dusk bar, 2007 photo Tanja Kimme
Figure 5: BVN Architecture, Santos Centre, 2008   photo John Gollings
Figure 6: John Wardle Architects, Melbourne Grammar School, 2009 photo Peter Hyall, Trevor Mein, Dianna Snape

represents a significant shift in institutional design, with the interior of the new building made visible to the street and therefore the community. Another in a long line of highly awarded education projects by the practice that are characterised by revealing the activity within, the interior is palpably evident from the outside and there is seamlessness from exterior to interior, interior to exterior. The project succeeds in not only 'orienting … students toward the city, its history and beyond'[43] but also in allowing unprecedented public views of student learning in action. The contribution of this project is perhaps less about the design of the interior and more about the importance of the interior itself as the site for so many fundamental stages of human life.

These are the projects that the profession itself looks towards to represent the identity and future of interior design in Australia. The selection of these projects by the profession (the peer judges) to represent excellence in practice reflects on the discipline itself. These are the projects that represent interior design practice at the current time. The projects are a broad representation of 'how' interior design is done. The projects are not all authored by individuals who have qualifications in interior design, nor do they represent a specific band of practice methodology or project typology. In fact, as a collection (possibly a collection of canons?) they extend the boundaries of practice. Some transcend enclosure and permanence, some are the result of hybrid practices or in-between practices, some are not the result of momentous briefs or budgets, some are the result of academic and applied research, some speak of issues that are far beyond the idea of interior design itself, and some use the interior to achieve organisational and social ends. All are confident and critical in the context of contemporary practice and the contemporary world.

The current arguments that take an expansive view of the interior design discipline and broaden the territory that interior design may exist within (or without) have led to possibilities for the analysis of how interior design is practised, as opposed to arguments that call for the definition and regulation of a determined and specifically identifiable profession. Both positions are practice-led, yet the first enables the practice itself to contribute to the

discussions surrounding the whole discipline of interior design – education, research, theory, practice and profession.

NOTES

1.   Ed Hollis, Alex Milton, Drew Plunkett, Andrew Milligan, Frazer Hay and John Gigli, eds. 'Thinking Inside The Box: An Introduction' in Interiors Forum Scotland 2007, *Thinking Inside The Box: a reader in interiors for the 21st century*, (North London: Middlesex University Press, 2007) xi.
2.   Mark Taylor and Julieanna Preston (eds), 'Proxemities' in *Intimus Interior Design Theory Reader*, (West Sussex: Wiley-Academy, 2006) 6.
3.   Taylor and Preston, *Intimus Interior Design Theory Reader*, 12.
4.   Joanne Cys, review of Intimus Interior Design Theory Reader, *Fabrications* 18:1, 2008, 131-132.
5.   Madeline Lester, 'Interior Design: The State of the Art' (introductory paper for the IFI Singapore Roundtable Conference Interior Design: The State of the Art, Singapore, 24 June, 2006) emailed to the author on 14 June 2006.
6.   Ellen Klingenberg, 'Interspace', in *Interior Design: The State of the Art Proceedings of the IFI Roundtable Conference*, Singapore, 24 June 2006. Kees Spanjers (ed) (Singapore: IFI, 2006) 58.
7.   Klingenberg, 'Interspace', 58.
8.   Klingenberg, 'Interspace', 60-63.
9.   Joo Yun Kim, 'Interior Architecture: The State of the Art' in *Interior Design: The State of the Art Proceedings of the IFI Roundtable Conference*, Singapore, 24 June 2006. Kees Spanjers (ed) (Singapore: IFI, 2006) 28.
10.   Joo Yun Kim, 'Interior Architecture: The State of the Art', 28.
11.   Joo Yun Kim, 'Interior Architecture: The State of the Art', 31.
12.   Shashi Caan, 'The State of the Interior Design Profession: Practice' in *Interior Design: The State of the Art Proceedings of the IFI Roundtable Conference*, Singapore, 24 June 2006. Kees Spanjers (ed) (Singapore: IFI, 2006) 40-41.
13.   Tiiu Poldma, discussion transcribed in *Thinking Into The Future* proceedings of the IFI Roundtable Conference, New York City, 11-12 July, 2007. Shashi Caan and Brad Powell (eds) (Singapore: IFI, 2008) 51.
14.   Lynn Chalmers and Denise Guerin, discussion transcribed in *Thinking Into The Future* proceedings of the IFI Roundtable Conference, New York City, 11-12 July, 2007. Shashi Caan and Brad Powell (eds) (Singapore: IFI, 2008) 50.
15.   Drew Plunkett, 'To Be or Not To Be: Making Our Mind Up and Keeping It Simple' in *Thinking Into The Future* proceedings of the IFI Roundtable Conference, New York City, 11-12 July, 2007. Shashi Caan and Brad Powell (eds) (Singapore: IFI, 2008) 63.
16.   Luisa Collina, 'Provocations' in *Thinking Into The Future* proceedings of the IFI Roundtable Conference, New York City, 11-12 July, 2007. Shashi Caan and Brad Powell (eds) (Singapore: IFI, 2008) 85.
17.   Suzie Attiwill, moderating panel member report in *Thinking Into The Future* proceedings of the IFI Roundtable Conference, New York City, 11-12 July, 2007. Shashi Caan and Brad Powell (eds) (Singapore: IFI, 2008) 136.
18.   Hollis et. al., 'Thinking Inside The Box: An Introduction', xi.
19.   Andrew Stone, 'The Underestimation of the Interior' in Interiors Forum Scotland 2007 *Thinking Inside The Box: a reader in interiors for the 21st century*, Ed Hollis, Alex Milton, Drew Plunkett, Andrew Milligan, Frazer Hay and John Gigli (eds) (North London: Middlesex University Press, 2007) 227.
20.   Stone, 'The Underestimation of the Interior', 236.
21.   Suzie Attiwill, 'What's In A Canon?' in Interiors Forum Scotland 2007 *Thinking Inside The Box: a reader in interiors for the 21st century*, Ed Hollis, Alex Milton, Drew Plunkett, Andrew Milligan, Frazer Hay and John Gigli (eds) (North London: Middlesex University Press, 2007) 61.
22.   The speakers were: Cameron Bruhn, then editor of design journal Artichoke; Peter Geyer, director of interior design practice Geyer; David Clark, editor of residential interiors magazine Vogue Living; Eliza Downes, graduate interior designer; Leon van Schaik, Professor of Architecture at RMIT; Caroline Vains, interior design PhD student; and Andrew Mackenzie, editor of interior design journal (inside) and architecture journal Architectural Review Australia.
23.   Attiwill, 'What's In A Canon?', 62.
24.   Attiwill, 'What's In A Canon?', 65.
25.   Attiwill, 'What's In A Canon?', 65.
26.   Attiwill, 'What's In A Canon?', 61.
27.   Cys, *Fabrications*, 131.
28.   Mohsen Mostafavi, 'Architecture's Inside', *Harvard Design Magazine*, 29 (2008-9): 10.
29.   William S. Saunders, 'What About The Inside?', *Harvard Design Magazine*, 29 (2008-9): 5.
30.   Stone, 'The Underestimation of the Interior', 229-234.
31.   Mark Pimlott, *Without and Within: Essays on Territory and the Interior* (Rotterdam: Episode Publishers, 2007) 9.
32.   Philip Goad cited in Joanne Cys '[Un]disciplined', *IDEA Journal*, (2006): 22.
33.   Interior Design Awards, 'About Awards', http://www.interiordesignawrds.com.au (accessed on 20 March, 2009). The IDA is a partnership between the professional body that represents designers in Australia, the Design Institute of Australia; Australian-owned design publisher Architecture Media's interior design journal Artichoke; and international media company DMG World Media's annual Australian interior design exposition, designEX.
34.   Interior Design Awards entry database, 2007-2009, Interior Design Awards, Melbourne, Australia.
35.   For example, the Australian Institute of Architects' national architecture awards and the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects' national landscape architecture awards.
36.   LAB Architecture Studio in association with Bates Smart, 2004 Interior Design Awards entry in the Public/Institutional Interior Design category 'Ian Potter Centre: NGV'.
37.   LAB Architecture Studio in association with Bates Smart, 2004.
38.   Multiplicity and Mel Ogden, 2005 Interior Design Awards entry in the Residential Interior Design category 'Church Conversion'.
39.   Spatial Design Research Group, Faculty of Art and Design, Monash University, 2006 Interior Design Awards entry in the Public/Institutional Interior Design category 'Solivoid'.
40.   Diretribe director Campbell Drake, personal communication with author, 6 June, 2008.
41.   Diretribe, 2007 Interior Design Awards entry in the Hospitality Interior Design category 'Dusk bar'.
42.   Bligh Voller Nield Architecture, 2008 Interior Design Awards entry in the Corporate Interior Design category 'Santos Centre'.
43.   John Wardle Architects, 2009 Interior Design Awards entry in the Public/Institutional Interior Design category 'Melbourne Grammar School'.