



# BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Architecture and the Visual Arts Syllabus Stage 6

PART

1

The Frames

*Building Connections* is a multi layered resource aimed at supporting the teaching of architecture units as part of the Visual Arts Syllabus Stage 6. It is divided into 3 parts – the frames, conceptual framework and practice, and focuses on the architecture of six art galleries and museums. It explores the connections between architecture and other art forms, investigating ideas and themes through images, text, artmaking activities and links to other information. Two of the galleries are examined in more detail through essays and descriptions of practice, demonstrating how architecture can be considered within broader discussions of the Visual Arts.

**Part 1 includes:**

- 1 discussions of national and international art gallery and museum architecture.
- 2 explanations using the frames as a means of interpretation.
- 3 examples of related artworks to reinforce insights and create connections between architecture and other art forms.

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## OUTCOMES

This resource is written for teachers to gain a greater understanding of:

1

how to build descriptions, narrative accounts, interpretations, comparisons and judgements around architectural concepts and examples

2

how to use the frames to unpack the elements and qualities of architecture

3

the relationship between architecture and other art forms, the world and the audience

## CREDITS

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# GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM BILBAO

A sculptural building  
to revitalise a city



Bilbao, Spain



Frank O. Gehry



1997



exterior: glass, limestone,  
titanium  
interior: stone, glass,  
parquet flooring, concrete,  
steel



[www.guggenheim.org/  
bilbao](http://www.guggenheim.org/bilbao)



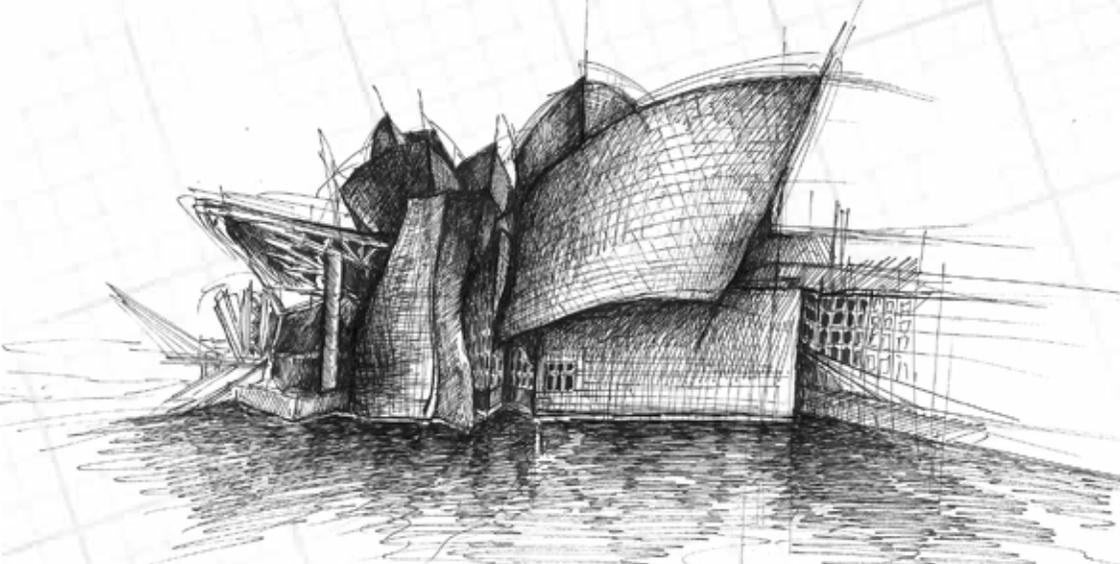
Gehry absorbs the riverfront urban setting into the design with a reflecting pool, a low water level placement, a long undulating elevated walkway that links the museum to the city around it, and a bridge that appears to cut through the museum itself, isolating a tower that recalls a sail in the wind – non-functional, symbolic and sculptural.

View of Museum by the water  
Photo Jean-Pierre Dalbera

Commissioned by the industrial port of Bilbao for the Guggenheim Foundation, Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum has become one of the most internationally recognised art museums. Both the Guggenheim Foundation and Bilbao wanted a building that would be both architecturally and aesthetically significant.

Gehry's design incorporates flowing, fragmented, sculptural masses that form a complex exterior. Geometric and organic solid and voids are combined to create a seamless, dynamic rhythm. His consistent exterior metal skin, in this case 24,000 facets of rectangular titanium, produces a reflective surface that responds to and integrates the site into the monument.

I approach each building as a sculptural object, a spatial container, a space with light and air, a response to contact and appropriateness of feeling and spirit. To this container, this sculpture, the user brings [their] baggage, [their] program and interacts with it to accommodate [their] needs. If [they] can't do that I've failed. **FRANK O. GEHRY**



## CULTURAL FRAME

Bilbao was a declining Basque port on the Nervion River when the decision was taken to raise the profile of the city and to energise its cultural and civic life by building an important and arresting new art museum. The museum would form the centrepiece of a revived civic centre that would draw the people back to the increasingly abandoned industrial site.

The 'Bilbao effect' refers to the way art and architecture can completely transform the identity of a city and its people. The decision to build an expensive art museum demonstrates a belief in the power and cultural importance of art and a desire to participate in a global intellectual culture. It invokes the status that is conferred by participation in the fine arts, seeking a redefinition of Bilbao in this dignified and elevated cultural light.

It's not new. The 'Bilbao effect' is the Parthenon effect, the Chartres Cathedral effect, the Notre Dame effect. The press labeled it the 'Bilbao effect'; I didn't name it. It's not new that architecture can profoundly affect a place, sometimes transform it. Architecture and any art can transform a person, even save someone. It can for children—for anyone. It still does for me. **FRANK O. GEHRY**

## POSTMODERN FRAME

Gehry exemplifies a reaction against the cool, rational, geometric modernist 'box'. This is a recurring feature of his architectural commentary. Seeking a more engaging, subjective approach to architecture, Gehry's buildings are sensory bombardments in stark contrast to the reserved intellectualism of the International Style. The modernist canon 'form follows function', the idea that every aspect of a building is a perfect visible form and their structural purpose obvious, is discarded in the attempt to excite and surprise its audience.

Gehry has been called a deconstructivist architect because his work explores forms that purposely distort, fragment and complicate the rational and clear geometry of past architecture. Deconstructivism has its critics of course, (Gehry himself rejects it), who speak of an architecture of 'destroyed forms' (Nikos Salingaros) and an 'aggressive assault to human senses', not to mention an attention-seeking irreverent flamboyance that

dominates the site rather than complementing it sympathetically. Others draw attention to a confusing and compromised relationship between exterior and interior.

The great complexity of structure and the resulting practical difficulties of actual construction that emerge from a deconstructivist approach are only made possible by the sophistication of C.A.T.I.A. software and its links to design and manufacture. Buildings like Bilbao are comprised of endlessly different architectural pieces; no two pieces of the steel girder frame are the same.

Critics distinguish between postmodernism in architecture, which revives decoration and historicism, and deconstructivism, which, like modernism, abandons decoration but also challenges the utopian ordered exploration of the ideal geometric form.

## THE ART

### *The Matter of Time*, 2005 Richard Serra

Richard Serra is an internationally renowned American artist whose works are imposing, some would say threatening structures that are manufactured in Siegen Germany, the only steel mill capable of their production. Serra's experience as a steelworker in his early adult years led to his deep engagement with this material.

*The Matter of Time*, situated in the Guggenheim, Bilbao, is an installation of undulating walls of steel that create a series of pathways for visitors to follow in one direction. The four metre high walls of the sculptures frame a view of the architecture overhead, excluding all but the sculpture from the viewer's vision.



There is a fascinating dialogue between the sculptures and the museum: the heavy, dark, dense, absorbent simplicity of *The Matter of Time* contrasts with the light, bright, airy, complex, reflective and contradictory qualities of the Guggenheim.

Above, Views of Richard Serra sculpture, *The Matter of Time*, 2005  
Photo jmiguel.rodriguez

In *The Matter of Time* the steel leaves of the sculpture incline and separate recalling the undulations of the gallery walls, hence 'the building becomes a sculpture and the sculpture becomes part of the architecture' (Architecture the Complete Box Set).



Photo SWANclothing

### *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913 Umberto Boccioni (Italian, 1882-1916) Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY Bronze

The dynamic and reflective forms used by Boccioni to create a sense of movement and fluidity are reminiscent of the shapes and forms used by Gehry.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Using the postmodern frame, explain how traditional patterns of authority in art and/or design and/or architecture have been questioned and revised by practitioners.

*'Artworks shape the way we understand culture.'*

With reference to this statement, explain how artists raise awareness of economic, political or social issues.

## ART MAKING Speculative Architecture

Design and create a proposal for an 'Inspired Building'.

- 1 In your Visual Design Journal, define the purpose/concept of your building.
- 2 Record the development of your concept including preparatory sketches.
- 3 Present your finished proposal in a digital format (Sketchup, Photoshop or Indesign) using plans, elevations, and site maps, or make 3d architectural models using available materials (eg cardboard, wire, plastic etc).

### Design Possibilities include:

- A Building that responds to a specific social need, such as a museum, art gallery, hospital, school, a place of worship, etc;

- B Building inspired by a particular site that might be restrictive, difficult or that was part of a breathtaking landscape;
- C Building inspired by emotions or abstract concepts such as power, romance or friendship;
- D Concept for Barangaroo near Darling Harbour;
- E Building to complement already existing structures or as part of a broader event or concept. Consider the Olympic stadiums, regeneration projects such as Docklands in Melbourne or Darling Harbour in Sydney.



*Now and When: Australian Urbanism*

*Abundant: Models from the Australian Pavilion 11th International Architecture Exhibition*

*Archigram*

*Laboratory of Visionary Architecture (L.A.V.A)*

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# MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY

Old meets new with  
a focus on community



Maitland, NSW



Paul Berkemeier Architect  
in association with Barry  
McGregor & Associates



2003



steel, timber, glass,  
marble, concrete, brick



[www.mrag.org.au](http://www.mrag.org.au)

MRAG is comprised of two historical buildings designed by the New South Wales Government architect, Walter Liberty Vernon, and a new infill section designed by Berkemeier and McGregor, linking the historical with the present.

The two older buildings, previously known as the Maitland Technical College, house spaces for workshops, classes and a museum. The older buildings were never completed due to budgetary issues. Berkemeier and Mc Gregor converted these spaces into an art gallery providing an outstanding example of adaptive reuse.



[Download a pdf on the building's history](#)



Entrance to the gallery  
Photo Damien Furey



The new work provides contemporary gallery accommodation sitting between these two historic buildings. It is a two-storey, linear form that unites the entire gallery complex. The architects used glass and openings to reveal the unfinished fabric of the older buildings and reinforce the story of the change of architectural direction that occurred in the early 20th century.

## STRUCTURAL FRAME

The new addition makes a bold statement and acts as an 'infill' work between the two older buildings. The exterior uses strong geometric shapes combined with restrained colour and materials that contrast against the warm textured bricks of the older facades. Both old and new buildings have imposing exteriors, one with a modern asymmetrical block form and the other with a weighty symmetrical Federation facade. The architects have played with scale and proportion in the new addition, providing the gallery with a focal point while still allowing the older structures to reveal themselves.



Inside the new two storey space the use of glass discloses the unfinished sections of the older buildings with the half completed brick walls, filled openings and toothed nibs. The dramatic change in design to the 21st century building is experienced in both the interior and exterior.

The interior of the oldest building includes neo-Gothic arches that divide the rooms into exhibition spaces, an Art Nouveau inspired skylight, a cantilevered marble staircase and a suspended concrete slab. The latter two features demonstrate exceptional technical achievement for the time of construction in 1908.

**Top**, Exterior view of the three buildings comprising the Maitland Regional Gallery  
**Left and right** Interior views  
**Photos** Adrian Boddy



## CULTURAL FRAME

The Maitland Regional Art Gallery is an outstanding example of adaptive reuse and the connection between past and present communities. This is evident in the maintenance of the two historical buildings and in providing them with a new function.

As well as adapting the older building as gallery spaces, the new building adheres to the intentions of the original site as a place for education with workshops as dedicated spaces to facilitate learning.

The gallery provides a fine example of both early 20th century and contemporary architecture and is situated in the centre of the town close to other civic amenities. Constructed with creativity and technical ability, the interior of the larger building completed in 1908 is an obvious example of a mixture of architectural styles, influences and ideals. The Federation building uses

neo-Gothic archways, an Art nouveau skylight and was constructed with brick and stonework that demonstrate a high level of craftsmanship.

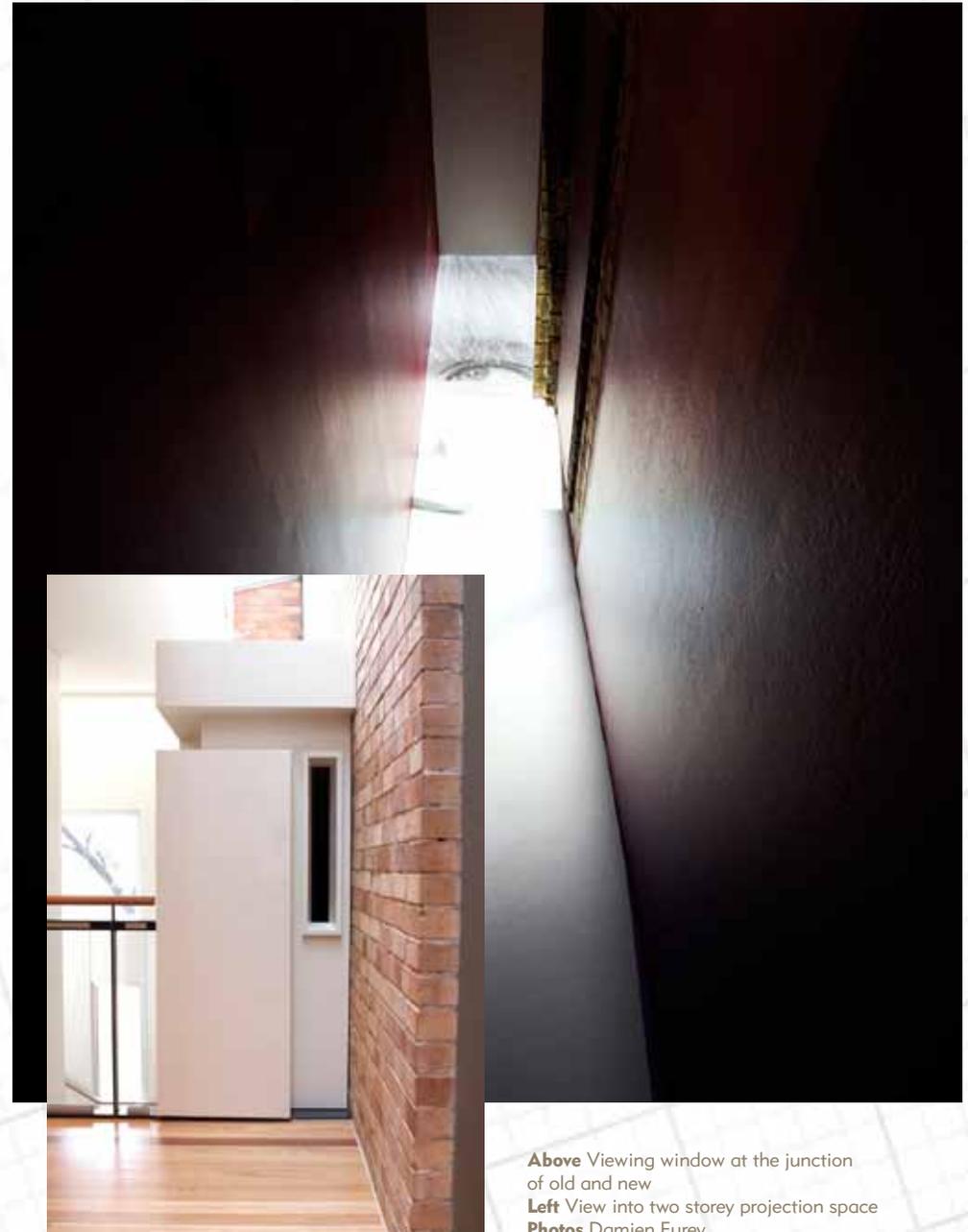
## THE ART

*Time Capture, 2003*  
Lara O'Reilly

The new section of the Maitland Regional Art Gallery was built with a place for the artwork *Time Capture* to be incorporated into the fabric of the building at the junction where the old and the new buildings connect. Hidden within a cavity and spanning two levels, *Time Capture* is a visual display that reveals the stories of 100 Maitland females aged from three months to 93 years. These women and children, filmed with a few of their treasured objects, celebrate the diversity of women in the Maitland community. The entire work, spanning 25 years, runs at a slow mesmerizing pace which is quite addictive for audiences.



[www.laraoreilly.com](http://www.laraoreilly.com)



**Above** Viewing window at the junction of old and new

**Left** View into two storey projection space

**Photos** Damien Furey

## ART THAT 'INFILLS' SPACES

*Dispatchwork, Street Art, 2007*  
Jan Vormann

Brightly coloured Lego pieces are used to repair cracks in the city environment. The artist, Jan Voorman has done this all around the world and is now encouraging others to get involved.

**List of art locations:**  
[www.dispatchwork.info/](http://www.dispatchwork.info/)

[www.janvormann.com/testbild/dispatchwork/](http://www.janvormann.com/testbild/dispatchwork/)

*Decorative Potholes*  
Juliana Santacruz Herrera

The artist 'repairs' the streets of Paris through her visual intervention using braided strips of colourful fabric. Seeing the many cracks and potholes of the city as the 'canvas' for her project, the site-specific pieces are a playful addition to the grey urban setting.

[www.designboom.com/weblog/cat/10/view/14280/juliana-santacruz-herrera-decorative-potholes.html](http://www.designboom.com/weblog/cat/10/view/14280/juliana-santacruz-herrera-decorative-potholes.html)

## ART THAT RE-THINKS EXISTING STRUCTURES

*Vai Com Deus, typographic installation, 2008-9*  
R2 Design

The Ermida Nossa Senhora da Conceição, in Lisbon, is a small chapel repurposed as a gallery that shows work by contemporary Portuguese artists. R2 Design have used raised typography on the outside walls, referencing sayings about God, that are not permanent as the building is heritage listed.

[typestack.com/uncategorized/%E2%80%9Cvai-com-deus%E2%80%9D-typographic-intervention/](http://typestack.com/uncategorized/%E2%80%9Cvai-com-deus%E2%80%9D-typographic-intervention/)

*Parasites*  
Richard Goodwin

*Parasites* are attachments to architecture that mediate the space between the 'host body' and public space. It transforms the architecture that it is attached to it by way of attack.

[www.richard-goodwin.com/flash/gallery/album/03\\_Architecture%20Parasite/index.html](http://www.richard-goodwin.com/flash/gallery/album/03_Architecture%20Parasite/index.html)

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1 Evaluate the view that art reflects the social values of a particular time and place.
- 2 Explain the function of material decisions artists make in developing a visual language.

## ART MAKING

- 1 Using Photoshop or image cut outs, create a photomontage using a range of architectural styles for public buildings, houses, galleries etc. These can be collected from the internet or magazines.
- 2 Students can draw over the top of the montage in order to extend their vision of the future.
- 3 Focus should be on the cultural significance of different architectural styles and how the photomontage will symbolise the 'mash-up' of a range of ideals expressed through the built form.
- 4 The artwork could be developed through film/ video, ceramics, sculpture or installation.
- 5 Students will begin discussing what they think the future city might look like. They need to consider matters around climate change, population and changes in social structure. Technology, bio-mimicry, re-use of existing structures or the cultural significance of various architectural styles could be used as starting points for investigations.



[Interview with Kim Blunt, MRAG Public Programs Coordinator](#)

[2010 Cultural Award for MRAG Redevelopment](#)

[MRAG Gallery Library](#)

[The Herald MRAG photos](#)

[Video on Masdar City](#)

[Now and When: Australian Urbanism Education Kit](#)

[Segment of Time Capture video installation](#)

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# CHICHU ART MUSEUM

A study in light



Naoshima, Japan



Tadao Ando



2004



Concrete, steel, glass,  
wood



[www.benesse-artsite.jp/en/chichu](http://www.benesse-artsite.jp/en/chichu)



The Chichu ('in the earth') art museum was designed by Japanese architect, Tadao Ando, for the Benesse Foundation and is situated on the cliffs that overlook the Seto Inland Sea on the island of Naoshima. With his underground museum, Ando sought to question the relationship between people and their environment. Designed specifically to house the works of Claude Monet, James Turrell and Walter de Maria, it was built over three levels.

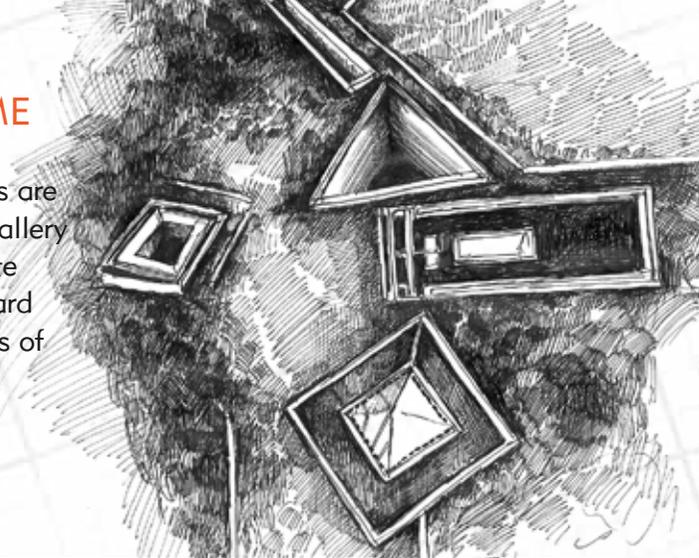
**Above** View of courtyard within museum. Surrounded by concrete walls, a growth of scouring rush horsetail brings nature into the museum.

**Photo** Ippei & Janine Naoi, 2008

## STRUCTURAL FRAME

The carved geometric volumes are lit by natural light and each gallery space is connected by concrete corridors. A triangular courtyard connects the exhibition spaces of the three artists.

**Below** Natural light penetration gives the structure a mystical and spiritual depth.  
**Photo** Trent McBride, 2010



Nature in the form of water, light and sky restores architecture from a metaphysical to an earthly plane and gives life to architecture. A concern for the relationship between architecture and nature inevitably leads to a concern for the temporal context of architecture. I want to emphasize the sense of time and to create compositions in which a feeling of transience or the passing of time is a part of the spatial experience. **TADAO ANDO**



## SUBJECTIVE FRAME

The Chichu Art Museum articulates relationships between architecture and nature, artworks and site, light and space. This gives the building a mystical and spiritual depth when 'walking' the interior.

Historically, art museums can be categorised into three phases. The first phase museums, such as the Louvre (1546-1878), were built for the collections of royalty. Second

phase museums took a critical stand against their predecessors in that their exhibition spaces are abstract yet uniform eg. the Guggenheim Museum (1956-1960), New York, by Frank Lloyd Wright, and the National Gallery in Berlin (1965-1968), by Mies Van Der Rohe. Third phase museums feature art works which interact with their surroundings, i.e site specific art works. The Chichu Art Museum epitomises this concept.

**Top left** Walter De Maria's *Time/Timeless/No Time*, 2004

**Top right** View towards the Monet Room

**Photos** Simon Noizat, 2004

## THE ART

Five of Impressionist Claude Monet's water lily paintings are housed in a space which is naturally lit. This focus on an ever-changing light reinforces Monet's wish that brush strokes be connected in order to read the paintings thus allowing the audience to create meaning. This concept is also apparent in the work of Turrell and De Maria.

Walter de Maria's *Time/Timeless/No Time*, 2004 consists of a black granite sphere and 27 gold-leaf wooden sculptures which define the space aligned from east to west. The constantly changing light throughout the day constructs the audience's experience of the work.

James Turrell's works, *Afrum, Pale Blue*, 1968, *Open Field*, 2000 and *Open Sky*, 2004, present light as an art itself and the distinction between architecture and art is blurred.

**Other museums designed for specific collections:**

**MONA**  
MUSEUM OF OLD  
AND NEW ART

 Hobart, TAS

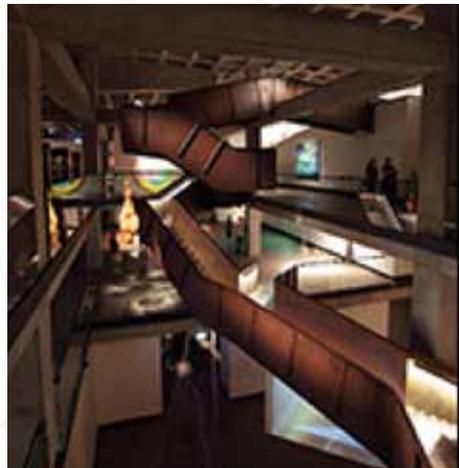
 Nonda Katsalidis

 [www.mona.net.au](http://www.mona.net.au)

 2011

 concrete, steel, timber,  
Corton steel

MONA is an underground space carved into a sandstone hill on the Derwent River, sitting below two existing Roy Grounds buildings. It is a brilliant example of a unique interrelationship between building and environment. It was designed specifically to accommodate the private collection of Tasmanian David Walsh. A visit to MONA is akin to journeying into the ancient catacombs.



Top MONA from across the Derwent River  
Bottom Facade close up  
Photo Leigh Carmichael

-  [ABC Arts Online: 'Inside MONA's subversive Disneyland'](#)
-  [Australian Design Review article](#)

**DIA: BEACON**

 Hudson River, New York

 Renovated with artist Robert Irwin and architect OpenOffice

 [www.diacenter.org](http://www.diacenter.org)

 2003

The DIA Foundation has utilised a former Nabisco Box Printing Factory on the Hudson River in New York to house their large scale collection of artworks from the 1960s to the present. The converted building is lit by natural light from 25,000 square feet of north facing skylights.

Artists represented include Richard Serra (b.1939), Cy Twombly (b.1929), Walter de Maria (b.1935) and Andy Warhol (1928-87).



Top Richard Serra sculpture inside museum  
Photo Tom Blessley

Bottom Effect of natural light within museum  
Photo David Kemp 2006

## Outside the museum – 'Architecture becomes the art'

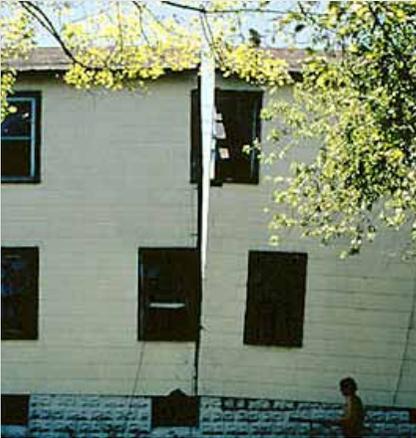


Photo U. Muna

### *Splitting, 1974* Gordon Matta Clark

Gordon Matta Clark (1943-1978) was trained as an architect and produced a body of site specific artworks known as 'the building cuts' – sculptural transformations of abandoned buildings.



[Artnet Article on Gordon Matta Clark](#)

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1 How are artists' practices shaped by the innovations of other artists? In your discussion of specific examples, consider: materials, techniques, beliefs and theories.
- 2 Explain how particular art works/exhibitions of art have caused changes in artworld beliefs and practices.
- 3 Do you agree or disagree with John McDonald? Present your point of view using evidence, including artists and their works.

The great artist retains an ever-renewing sense of discovery and expresses that feeling to his or her audience.  
**JOHN MCDONALD**, Art Critic

## ART MAKING

### Light

- 1 Students choose an artist's work which focuses on the element of light. Once the student is committed to this artwork, they are to design a space for this work to be housed – either inside or outside.
- 2 The space is to have a structural focus based on one geometric form eg. cube, triangular prism or sphere.
- 3 Natural light is to be incorporated into the function of this space. The design process is to be documented as part of the final product.



[Mathew Colson pdf on Chichu](#)

[Chichu info from Benesse Art Site Naoshima website](#)

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# GALLERY OF MODERN ART, BRISBANE

A connection to place



Brisbane, Queensland



Lindsay and Kerry Clare of Architectus



2007



Steel, concrete, glass, anodised aluminium, timber

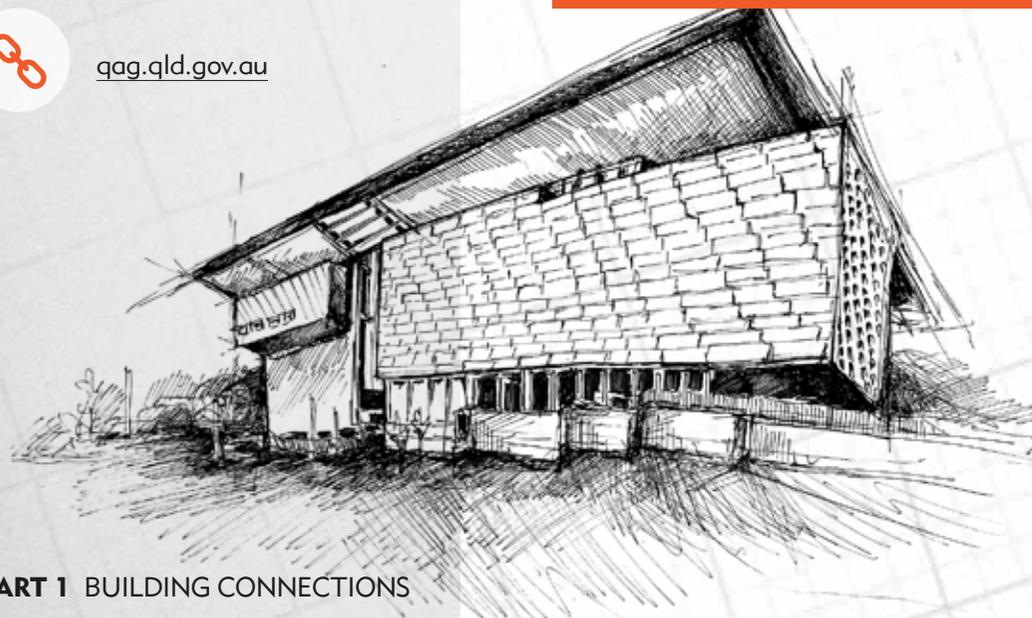


[qag.qld.gov.au](http://qag.qld.gov.au)



Unlike buildings designed merely as an object we set out to create a building that would engage with its place and act as a catalyst for future cultural/social endeavours within a subtropical climate.

**KERRY CLARE**



exhibitions of modern and contemporary Australian and international art, indigenous Australian art, and the art of the Asia-Pacific region.

## CULTURAL FRAME

The building with its prominent placement on the river's edge, creates a strong sense of connection to the Central Business District of Brisbane and is part of the life of the city. The choice of materials, the spatial organisation, and qualities of transparency and lightness connects it to place – Australia and the Asia Pacific. It promotes continuity and a sense of belonging through the adaptation of traditional methods to solve contemporary problems. Australia and Queensland in particular, has a tradition of timber buildings in both public and residential work. The use of timber screens in response to climate and orientation quickly became a distinctive and identifiable building element as did the large overhanging eaves. The circulation spaces in the gallery directs views out to the city through vast glazed walls, and the buildings edges are activated with observation decks, a café, restaurant and reception spaces.

The Gallery of Modern Art is situated on the Brisbane River only 150 metres from the Queensland Art Gallery and adjacent to the State Library in what is now a vibrant cultural precinct. The design is a lightweight, open riverside pavilion containing two major levels of exhibition space, two cinemas, education facilities, a restaurant and boardwalk café. The gallery is organised into flexible, adaptive spaces which can house changing programs and

## STRUCTURAL FRAME



The former gallery director **Doug Hall** contends that 'modern art is best shown in a simple setting. Walls that meet floors at a right angle, neutral backdrops, hard surfaces ... provide a setting that does not compete with the works on exhibition'.

The gallery's most distinctive element is the tapered metal roof that provides the metaphorical 'hat' and principal shading device that permits the rest of the design to work so effectively. The roof also reflects sunlight deep into the gallery via reflection from the underside of the roof overhang. At either end of the roof, angled broad blades create narrow blades of light and shadow.

The intention of the overall design is represented by a black box symbolically and functionally representing the cinema, and the white box representing the gallery. The forms and spaces of the building are logical and well organised around a voluminous 'Latin cross' shaped circulation space. By including large areas of glazing in the circulation spaces, visitors can connect with the city and landscape beyond. The concentration of almost all movement in this space ensures that the new galleries have a simple clarity and allow for a focus on the art.

The qualities of lightness, openness and transparency continue from the exterior to the interior. The planning arrangement is divided by the central circulation gallery – by this we have been able to create the 'thin plan' – that is, every room is directly accessed from a (seemingly) 'outdoor' space. This constantly reinforces the connection to place and serves as orientation for the visitor... The 'thin plan' is a recurring theme in tropical and subtropical architecture.

### ARCHITECTUS

The materials are commonplace and include polished concrete floors and white walls. The finer details such as zinc panelling at the gallery thresholds and timber and stainless steel nosing to concrete stairs contributes to a more finely tuned design.

## A bit more on Architectus:

Kerry and Lindsay Clare were the founding architects and designers of Architectus Sydney (2000 – 2010) During this time the firm designed the multiple award winning Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane. In 2010, they were joint recipients of the Royal Institute of Architects Gold Medal. The couple is widely known for their sub-tropical, low impact, sustainable residential projects across regional Queensland. Kerry and Lindsay Clare are champions of sustainability and always imbue their work with a sense of place.



### Jury Citations

2007 RAI Queensland Architecture Awards

Architect's statement

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(13.12.11)

[qag.qld.gov.au/about\\_us/architecture/goma/architects](http://qag.qld.gov.au/about_us/architecture/goma/architects)

## JEAN-MARIET JIBAOU CULTURAL CENTRE NEW CALEDONIA

A connection to  
place and culture



Renzo Piano



2007



laminated and natural wood, concrete, coral, aluminium castings, glass panels, tree bark, stainless steel



[www.adck.nc](http://www.adck.nc)



Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre celebrates the Kanak culture of Noumea. The assemblage of buildings is comprised of ten conical huts, constructed out of wooden joists and ribs. that are arranged in three groups, or village clusters, enclosed in a setting of great natural beauty.

Piano's centre is a contemporary interpretation of traditional designs based on the village cluster and the ribbed huts from Pacific culture of Noumea.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1 Explain the function of material decisions that artists make in developing a visual language.
- 2 'Artworks shape the way we understand culture'. With reference to this statement explain how the architecture of galleries and museums reflect the place and culture.

## ART MAKING

- 1 You have been invited to submit a proposal for an artwork that responds to a description of GoMA found on the website: 'A main theme of Architectus' design is a pavilion in the landscape'. The artwork may be two and/or three dimensional.
- 2 Design a house for subtropical or tropical conditions using the same principals that Architectus used in GoMA.

# MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM

Engineering meets craft



Milwaukee, USA



Santiago Calatrava



2001



Concrete, steel, glass

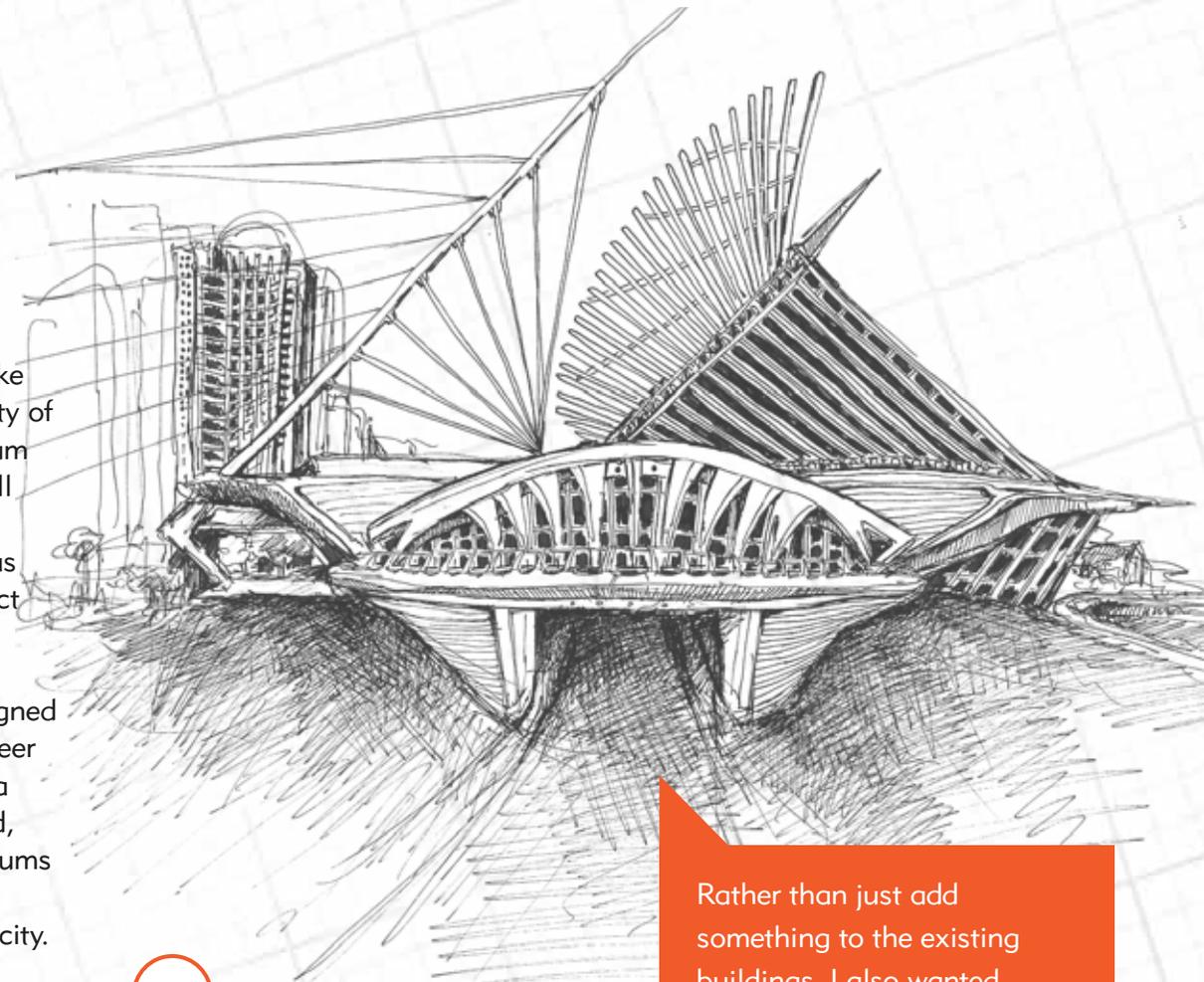


[www.mam.org](http://www.mam.org)

The Milwaukee Art Museum (MAM) sits on the shores of Lake Michigan in the mid western city of Milwaukee. The original museum (1957) was an early work of well known architect Eero Saarinen and the first addition (1975) was designed by Milwaukee architect David Kahler.

The spectacular additions designed by Spanish architect and engineer Santiago Calatrava are one of a long list of recently constructed, architecturally daring art museums intent on exciting visitors and attracting them to a particular city.

The Calatrava additions, completed in 2001, are comprised of three main elements; the Quadricci Pavilion, the pedestrian bridge, and the moveable Brise Soleil or permanent sun shading. These additions serve to connect the museum with the downtown business section of



[See the Brise Soleil open](#)

Milwaukee and to Lake Michigan's wide expanse of water. They also create a spectacular presence that has since become a symbol of the city.

Rather than just add something to the existing buildings, I also wanted to add something to the lakefront. I have therefore worked to infuse the building with a certain sensitivity to the culture of the lake - the boats, the sails and the always changing landscape."

**SANTIAGO CALATRAVA**

## POSTMODERN FRAME

Calatrava's designs are often inspired by nature, featuring a combination of organic forms and technological innovation.

Calatrava has drawn inspiration from Gothic Cathedrals, flight, and maritime themes. Among the many elements in Calatrava's Milwaukee design are: movable steel louvres inspired by the wings of a bird; a cabled pedestrian bridge with a soaring mast inspired by the form of a sailboat; and a curving single-storey galleria reminiscent of a wave.



In Calatrava's additions the boundaries between engineering, sculpture and architecture have disappeared. He combines old world craftsmanship with cutting edge technology. Ancient engineering techniques such as counterbalance create new and innovative forms, and technology is exploited to introduce moving parts.

He has drawn on Saarinen's TWA Terminal for inspiration with its curving contours suggesting a bird in flight.



**Left** Windhover Hall in the Quadricci Pavilion  
**Above**, View of entrance  
**Top right**, The Brise Soleil, as seen from the arched corridor linking the Quadricci Pavilion to the Milwaukee Art Museum  
**Photos** Spinstah



## SUBJECTIVE FRAME

The impressive entrance over a bridge creates a sense of a journey from the city into the gallery space. As the visitor enters the large white Windhover Hall they are drawn to the view of the lake beyond and experience the feeling of floating over Lake Michigan. Moving from the grand Quadricci Pavilion through the arched corridors to the more enclosed spaces of the older sections of the museum, visitors experience another journey from the contemporary postmodern to the modernist space.

The shapes in the building are organic and powerful and change continuously depending on the viewer's perspective and the light entering the building.

The Brise Soleil creates a sense of wonder and emotion in the viewer by evoking a feeling of flight while the whiteness of the building suggests purity and spirituality.

## THE ART

Expressing Movement



Photo Annette Mauer

*Isola di San Giacomo in Palude Chandelier II, 2003*  
Milwaukee Art Museum

**Dale Chihuly** has revolutionized the art of blown glass, moving it into the realm of large-scale sculpture, as a vehicle for installation and environmental art. Working in collaborative teams and dividing the labour within the creative process allowed Chihuly to create large and complex works made from multiple parts. Under his influence the traditional art of glass became a contemporary medium while evoking the glamour and luxury of the Venetians.



Nike of Samothrace (c.190 BC)  
Photo courtesy of Patrick Rasenbourg

*Nike of Samothrace*  
Louvre, Paris

The *Nike of Samothrace* originally stood on the marble bow of a sculpted warship, a monument that commemorated a naval victory. The *Nike* is designed to seem as if she is just landing in a fierce headwind, her great wings still aloft. The body twists slightly as if to maintain its balance, while the sheer chiton, heavy with sea spray, both clings and billows dramatically.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1 'Technological advances have transformed the practices of artists.' Discuss this statement.
- 2 'Artists deliberately set out to provoke audience reactions.' Argue a case both for and against this statement.

## ART MAKING

- 1 Take one element of the Calatrava additions to MAM and use this as a starting point for a sculpture in the round or in relief. Consider elements of repetition, light, movement, organic shapes.
- 2 Design and make a vessel that reflects the parabolic arches and structures in MAM. You could use heavy card or perspex.
- 3 Create a design for a relief print using Calatrava's buildings or bridges. The emphasis could be on rhythm and movement.



[www.calatrava.com](http://www.calatrava.com)

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Visit Amazon's Cheryl Kent Page  
Find all the books, read about the author, and more.

See search results for this author

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# ULURU-KATA TJUTA ABORIGINAL CULTURAL CENTRE

Cultural symbols  
expressed architecturally



Uluru-Kata Tjuta  
National Park, NT



Greg Burgess Architects



1996



Earth mud brick, various  
native timbers, a copper  
shingle roof

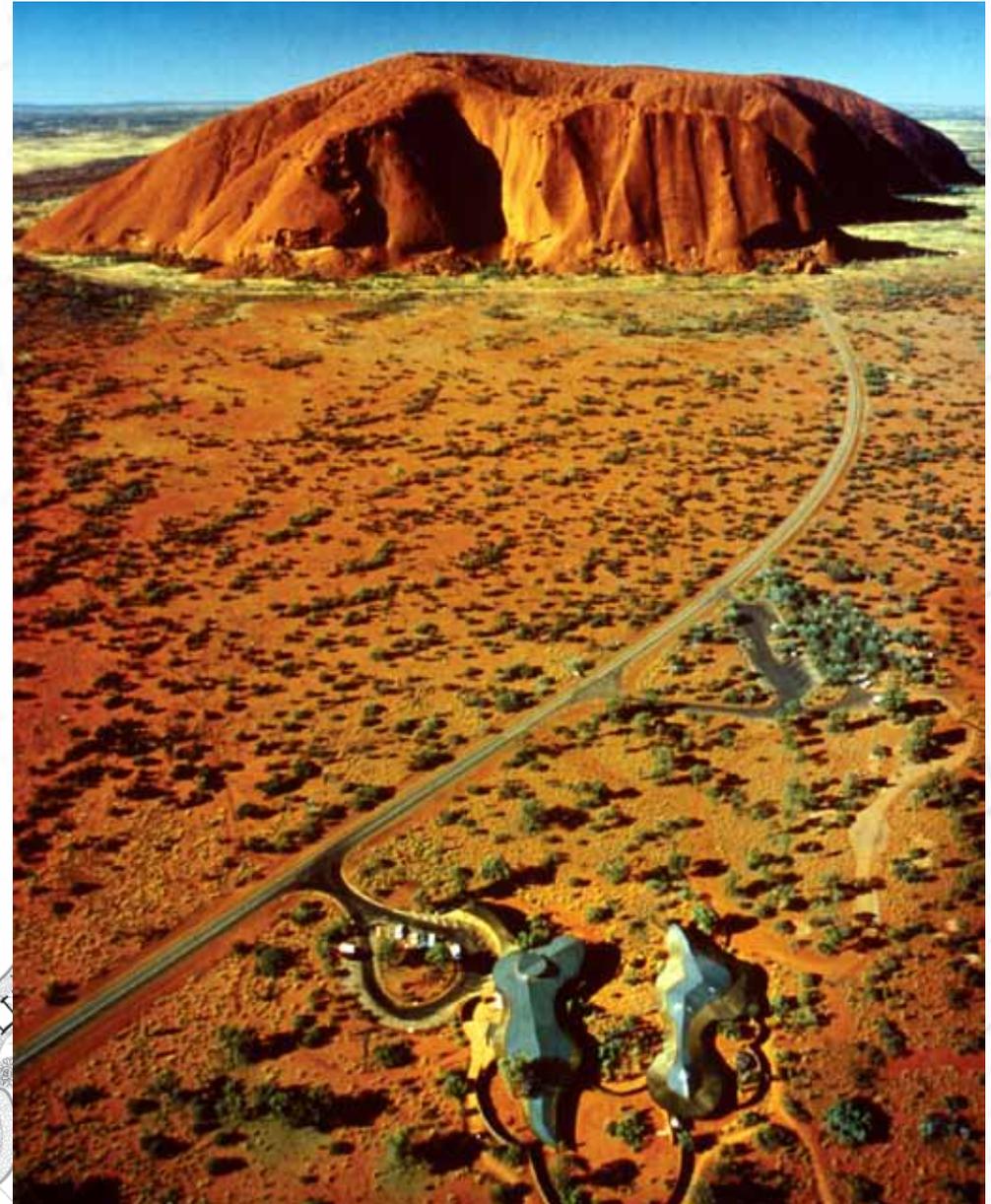


Uluru Cultural Centre site

Uluru-Kata Tjuta Aboriginal Cultural Centre is comprised of two main buildings, which follow the contours of the surrounding dunes. The buildings wrap around a central courtyard and are joined by curving timber and brush walls that create outdoor spaces.

The use of natural forms and materials have produced a building with rough edges, bumps and distortions, which capture the site and reflect the surrounding desert environment.

From the air the building looks like a topographic map showing the layers of the land. In reality, however, we are experiencing the songlines of the indigenous Australian people. The curves of the roof line sinew across the land reflecting the tjukurpa ancestors, Kuniya (the woman python – southern building) and Liru (the poisonous snake – northern building).



Above, Aerial View  
Photo John Gollings

Left Plan courtesy of Gregory Burgess

## CULTURAL FRAME

The Cultural Centre is situated one kilometre from Uluru, a sacred site for the Mititjulu people. It is intended as a meeting place for the Anangu (people) of the western desert, the traditional custodians of the national park. The site was chosen with consideration given to the environmental impact, the atmosphere of the surrounds, and the wishes of Anangu.

In 1990, consultation between Greg Burgess Architects and the Mititjulu people began with Burgess spending a month in the community where the culture of the people and their connections to the land were explained to him through stories, song and dance.

In 1986 in the park's first plan of management it was recommended a cultural centre be established for the purpose of the:

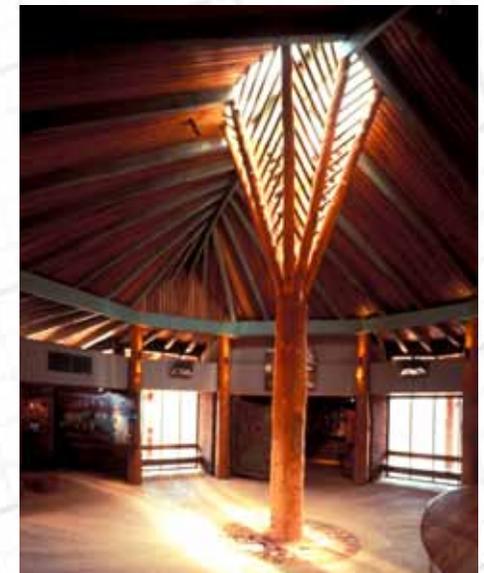
- presentation of interpretative material relating to traditional culture, song and dance
- display and sale of contemporary Aboriginal art and crafts
- display of historical contact and park history
- meeting place for the community where activities and events significant to the desert people are held as well as being a place where they can share their culture with visitors to the land
- conduct of other appropriate Anangu controlled cultural and commercial activities



### As Burgess explains:

Our buildings attempt to articulate the enigma of identity in place, social and communal well-being and the meaning(s) of being-at-home in the world.

Above and right Artefacts shop  
Photos Trevor Mein



## STRUCTURAL FRAME

The shapes of the buildings symbolise the two snakes Kuniya and Liru, from the Tjukurpa story. The buildings' spaces flow from inside to outside, making visitors aware of the continual connection of the building to the land. The position of openings and skylights allows a connection with the outside and natural light is able to flood the interior. Viewing platforms and openings frame the landscape, giving wonderful vistas of the surrounding desert.

Adobe bricks (bricks made from the earth of the site) used for the walls also reinforce the connection to the land. Low technology building methods and materials sourced from the local area (except timber which is a renewable material) ensured the building belonged very much to the land on which it sits. On the roof are bloodwood and copper roof shingles. As it ages, the copper slowly turns green through the oxidation process—a shade similar to the bushes of the surrounding desert.



[Read the Tjukurpa story](#)



Photo Gerry Mussett



Left, Undulating roofline responds to the surrounding landscape

Photo Jimmy Yang

Bottom Women Painting on sand walls

Photo Gregory Burgess

## THE ART

### Awelye (Women's Ceremony) Art Site

*Awelye* means women's ceremonies but it can also refer to the designs applied to a women's body as part of a ceremony. The ceremony is women's business and can reflect their connection to the land and their Dreamtime. It is a tradition reaching back thousands of years and is one of the oldest artforms in the world.

The Uluru-Kata Tjuta Aboriginal Cultural Centre has provided the space where these ceremonies can be performed and at times shared, in part, with visitors to the land. The colours of the land and the symbolism of the Dreamings are reflected in the ceremonies and the structure of this building.



[Read more about Awelye Art](#)

**Other cultural centres designed in collaboration with traditional owners:**

## BOWALI VISTOR CENTRE



Tropo Architects, Glenn Murcutt and the Traditional Owners of Kakadu



1992



timber, rammed earth steel plate, corrugated iron, glass



Kakadu National Park, NT

Bowali is a Gundjeihmi name for the immediate area and creek that runs through this locale in Kakadu National Park. This land is owned by the people of the Mirarr clan.

The oblique approach to Bowali Visitor Centre is a meander from car park through the bush and as explained by Big Bill Neidjie is the correct and respectful approach to

sacred and important sites. It has been described as a building 'that challenges European concepts of inside/ outside...' It is a long thin verandah building with an earthy base, breezy middle and huge curved roof soaring over the top. It reaches out to the environment with upward sweeping verandahs, open planning and materials drawn from the land around.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1 Explain the ways in which cultural identity is addressed in the work of artists.
- 2 Using the structural and cultural frames, interpret the work of an artist you have studied.
- 3 'Artworks shape the way we understand culture'. With reference to this statement explain how the architecture of galleries and museums reflect the place and culture.

## ART MAKING Speculative Architecture

- 1 Design a cultural centre using your own cultural background as a starting point. Use the structural and cultural frames to assist you in developing ideas for your design.
- 2 Research other cultural centres and examples of architecture that reflect aspects of culture such as Jean-Marie Jibaou Cultural Centre by Renzo Piano.
- 3 Use 3D modelling programs, sketches, photographs and physical models to assist in your presentation.



[What is Tjukurpa?](#)

[Video of Aboriginal Women applying body paint design](#)

[How the centre was constructed](#)

[Gregory Burgess Architects site](#)

[Gregory Burgess interview](#)

[Burgess interview with ABC](#)

[Gregory Burgess wins Gold Medal](#)

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