

RMIT DESIGN ARCHIVES JOURNAL

VOL 13 Nº 2 | 2023

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Melbourne, C.1.

Tel. F 5116

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Should be retained by student and presented with Book of drafts and
examinations.

Date Dec. 9th

Frock

for M^{rs} Dugan

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Deborah Wills-Ives



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We acknowledge the people of the eastern Kulin Nations on whose unceded lands we conduct our business and we respectfully acknowledge their Ancestors and Elders, past and present.

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Front Cover

Photograph of Holden styling studio showing stages in design, c.1975, photographer unknown, RMIT Design Archives, Gift of Chris Emmerson.

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Joan Dugan's 1st Year & 2nd Year Dressmaking Notebook, 1936–1937, (detail) RMIT Design Archives, Gift of Christine Johnson.

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By collecting materials that document Australian design practices, professions, artefacts and environments across disciplines, the RMIT Design Archives provides a unique resource for design communities in Melbourne and more widely in Australia and internationally. The Archives provides access to these materials to researchers and offers distinctive public programming, activating the Archive's holdings to enhance public knowledge and professional practice.

But as an entity within a university of design, technology and enterprise, the RMIT Design Archives also plays a multifaceted and often surprising role in education and professional development. And research often supports or is grounded in learning and teaching.

For this issue of the RMIT Design Archives Journal, we wanted to document the diverse ways that researchers and students at RMIT University engage with the Archives. We asked academic staff and students who have engaged with the Archives in recent years to reflect on their experience, their learning and the contribution made through that engagement. Our overarching goal was to expand common perceptions of the roles of archives. We wished to articulate how learners and teachers can activate the archives as an entity, a collection, a community and a site, and to show the roles that design archives can play in creative education and practice research. Themes in the Open Call included:

- > Curating and exhibiting the RMIT Design Archives collections;
- > Partnerships between design schools and the RMIT Design Archives;
- > Reflections on design archiving practices: objects, materials, spaces, and everything in between;
- > Promoting design/practices: making visible underrepresented designers, their places, and practices;
- > How archival collections can be used as communal resources: re-appropriation, re-use, re-interpretation from inside as well as outside the archives; and
- > Design in everyday life: objects that inspire your own design practice from the collection.

As you will see, the ways that students, researchers and teachers use, are inspired by and contribute to the RMIT Design Archives take myriad forms. So do their reflections on the value of activating the archives for their own practice and for their disciplines, professions and communities.

A first grouping of articles engages with material held in the Archives to enrich public narratives about Australian cultural and social history. In her article, which derives from her doctoral research, Deborah Wills-Ives explores the fashion and textiles curriculum offered at the Emily McPherson College (Emily Mac), which merged with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in 1979. Wills-Ives combines institutional history with individualised experiences represented in former students' workbooks to provide a nuanced, layered history of fashion and textiles education in Melbourne in the mid-twentieth century. Like Wills-Ives' study of women's educational experiences, Anna Altan (Anisimova)'s article on maternity fashion and attitudes towards pregnant bodies in the past 60 years in Australia shows how design archives can illuminate otherwise untold stories. In the absence of publicly-accessible collections of historic maternity clothing, Altan (Anisimova) employs a visual data-driven method to analyse images of maternity wear in *Vogue Australia*, working particularly with the unparalleled collection held at the RMIT Design Archives.

A second grouping of articles and visual essays explores innovative uses of design archives for learning and teaching in design. Educators and students in design disciplines at RMIT regularly work with the Archives collections and site for undergraduate, honours and postgraduate studios and independent projects, with generous facilitation from the Archives staff. In a visual essay, Elizabeth Lambrou shares a collaborative studio in which students explored the design work, processes and educational methods of designer and educator Gerard Herbst, then worked with Herbst's own methods to generate an exhibition in the Archives Window Gallery, which faces onto a busy central Melbourne intersection. Photographs, students' reflections and Lambrou's analysis demonstrate archived design materials can offer not only learning about earlier designers, design practices and wider conditions, but also prompts for innovative practice today. Noel Waite's article offers a reflection on seven years of collaboration between the RMIT Design Archives and the RMIT Master of Communication Design program (MCD), in which students have researched collections and designed and curated exhibitions – physical and digital – 'in conversation' with the materials.

We're particularly honoured to share graduates' accounts of their self-initiated work with the RMIT Design Archives. A second visual essay, from Master of Architecture graduate Matija Dolenc, presents Dolenc's architecture thesis *Studiolo*, which he undertook alongside an internship at the RMIT Design Archives. *Studiolo* extends and reimagines the envelope and fabric of the Archives to create new spaces for inquiry, exhibition and storage. And in an interview, edited for length, Bachelor of Communication Design graduates Mei Leong and Ellen Waite share their own experiences of delving into archival collections – those of communication designer David Lancashire and car designer Philip Zmood respectively – to create engaging exhibitions in the Window Gallery that responded to Lancashire and Zmood's practices and, in Waite's case, to develop the technical specifications now in use for all exhibitor-curators in the Gallery.

The issue begins with an editorial from Christine Phillips on the role that design archives can play in the era of generative text and visual AI. As AI disrupts design educational and workplace practices alike, Phillips argues that the rich, tangible experiences afforded by materials in design archives offer students and educators alike a valuable and singular opportunity. As the above short outlines should signal, the work presented in this issue shows just how true this can be.

Sarah Teasley | *Editor*

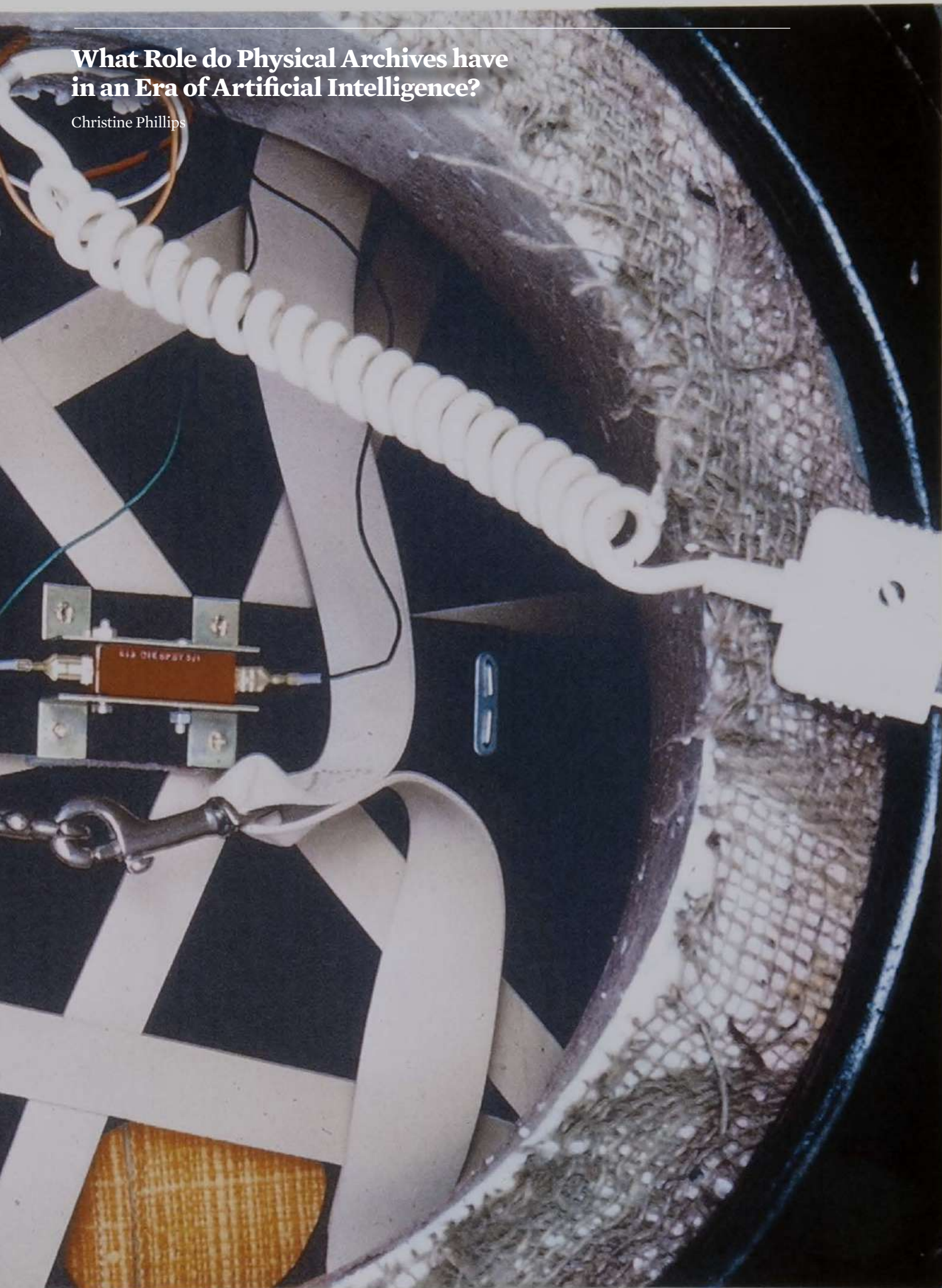
Opposite

Alex Stitt & Bruce Weatherhead, Jigsaw Factory, *A Dictionary of Magic*, c. 1971–1973 (detail) RMIT Design Archives, Gift of Alexander and Paddy Stitt.



What Role do Physical Archives have in an Era of Artificial Intelligence?

Christine Phillips



Australia on show at Expo 67



AUTHENTIC COLORS of coral give brilliant life to Barrier Reef display prepared by Mr. E. Grant, a fisheries research biologist, of Brisbane.

Pictures by ROBERT FELDMAN

With wool, sheepdogs, coral, kangaroos, "talking chairs," and 21 lovely hostesses



MODERNISTIC exterior of the Australian Pavilion at Expo 67 towers over Canberra police officers Inspector L. Connolly and Constable R. Donaldson.

THE picture of Australia as a young, virile, and energetic nation, presented in the Commonwealth's display at Montreal's giant Expo 67, will be emphasised on Australia's National Day, June 6.

Australia's big day ("Special Days" as they are called at Expo) will include boomerang throwing by Frank Donnellan, sheepdog exhibitions, woodchopping contests between Australian, Canadian, and American axemen, and three-set tennis matches between Australian and U.S. players.

The "Special Day" program will be televised direct to Australia by satellite.

In the evenings of June 5 and 6, there will be two concerts, featuring the Seekers, Rolf Harris, Bobby Limb, Frank Donnellan, and Normie Rowe.

On the same nights, the

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra will give performances with Australian-born soprano Marie Collier as soloist.

"From the Stone Age to the Space Age" is the main theme of the Australian Pavilion. To give a soft, lush, feeling, wool carpeting is used throughout. At the bottom of the stairs an automatic footmat cleans the undersides of visitors' shoes.

Up the winding rampway to the main display area, the visitor sees large color picture-windows showing various aspects of Australian life.

At the top of the ramp, the floor is covered with double-thick-pile white carpet, which also lines the walls. Even the ceiling seems to be covered by a lush white carpet—an effect created by sprayed asbestos.

Core of the pavilion is a complex system of comfortable "stereo" chairs designed by Grant Featherston, of Melbourne. The chairs are grouped around the various exhibits and those who sit in

them hear the voices of noted Australians describing the displays. The tapes play back in French and English.

A model of the Parkes (N.S.W.) radio telescope points toward a huge suspended painting of the Southern Hemisphere's night sky by Australian artist Donald Laycock.

There is also an animated scale model of the Snowy Mountains hydro-electric scheme, a scale model of Canberra, and a collection of contemporary Australian art by Sir William Dobell, Sidney Nolan, Russell Drysdale, Arthur Tucker, and Arthur and David Boyd.

The art collection is worth about one million Canadian dollars. Dobell's painting, "The Cypriot," alone is insured for 400,000 Canadian dollars.

A down-ramp takes the visitor into a coral cay built from 1000 pieces of authentically colored coral from the Great Barrier Reef.

Another strip of water symbolises a billabong.

Twenty kangaroos, specially acclimatised to hearing off-beat noises, music, and the hubbub of big crowds, are housed in an "outback" pen.

Although the organisers did not even start to design the pavilion until October, 1965, the Commissioner-General of the Australian display, Air-Marshal Sir Valston Hancock, is proud of the fact that the entire building, its exhibits, and its ingenious sound-effect chairs were ready on time.

The 21 Australian hostesses, selected from every State, and seven young "hosts" did a "cram" course on Australia, its culture, and its way of life to answer visitors' questions.

Estimates of the crowds who will attend the Expo during its six months' life have been rising. First estimate was 20 to 24 million; now it is 40 million.

—Harold Dvoretzky

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — May 24, 1967

What Role do Physical Archives have in an Era of Artificial Intelligence?

Christine Phillips

As the Architectural History Stream coordinator for the RMIT Architecture Program, I spent the 2022–23 summer holidays agonising over OpenAI’s ChatGPT—to embrace or not to embrace?—that was the question.

Without going into the details of where I got to with this dilemma, it did get me thinking about just how unique the RMIT Design Archives (RDA) is, and how much it has to offer our design students and researchers that AI bots like OpenAI’s ChatGPT cannot replicate. Amusingly, ChatGPT agrees:

Researching physical archival material is a unique and enchanting experience that allows you to connect with history in a tangible way, offering insights and stories that digital sources often can’t capture.¹

This is true; the RMIT Design Archives offers students and researchers an experience that fosters curiosity and wonder and invites them to explore material in a way that cannot be replicated by AI bots. While the RDA has a terrific digital online collection, the physical experience of exploring the collections is unsurmountable. In 2019, I co-authored a book about Robin Boyd with Peter Raisbeck². One of the most enjoyable aspects of researching the book was the time I spent looking through material at the RDA.

To begin with, you need to book ahead and plan your visit to the RDA—a lesson in planning—research takes planning. There is a performative aspect of visits to the RMIT Design Archives that makes your visit exciting and draws you into a world of discovery. Once you arrive, you are required to cloak your belongings and sign the visitor register. You then slip your hands into a pair of blue nitrile gloves and are invited to carefully peruse the material over a concentrated time, usually two–three hours. During a time when we are surrounded by distractions of all kinds, having a block of time to peruse archival material is precious—a lesson in slowing down—research is slow.

OpenAI’s ChatGPT is spot-on in describing the tangible aspects of researching from physical archives like the RDA which makes the experience unique. I will never forget picking up the most exquisite hand-rendered sketch of Robin Boyd’s design for the Carnich Towers during my research. The drawing was produced by Peter Wilson when he was an architecture student—Peter is now a founding director of the internationally renowned German-based practice, Bolles Wilson. Seeing the drawing at a 1:1 scale, picking it up and perusing over the skill and craft of the perspective schematic drawing was quite a joy.

This sense of discovery was matched when I ploughed through Robin Boyd’s handwritten letters and stumbled across the last letter Boyd had written to his partner Frederick Romberg from his hospital bed right before his death. “Dear Frederick,” it started, “I am still in hospital, although I hope it won’t be too much longer.”³ Unfortunately for Boyd, he didn’t stay in the hospital for much longer as he died not long after writing the letter. Having the opportunity to read through Boyd’s handwritten letters at the RDA certainly gave me insight into his personal character, which had not been a planned aspect of my research but one that I was thankful to have.

The RDA staff add an additional layer of knowledge and conversation to your research that can lead you to new paths of discovery. I got to know the RDA staff, Ann Carew, Rickie-Lee Robbie and Simone Rule very well when I was researching Boyd’s late works, and they became as important to my research as the material itself. I’ll never forget when Simone dug out a *Women’s Weekly* article that featured coloured photographs of Boyd’s design for Expo ’67 in Montreal that I had not known about before. She took me down into the depths of the Archives to dig out the article. I had read about the Australian-themed gardens that formed part of Boyd’s design for the Expo ’67 exhibit, but seeing a colour photograph of the replica garden of Australia’s Great Barrier Reef was unforgettable. The RDA team also brought out some illuminating photos showing the mechanics of the Featherston designed sound chairs that formed part of Boyd’s Expo ’67. These were sourced from the Ian Howard archive which I would not have thought to look through myself. It was this kind of in-depth knowledge of the archive material that gets shared with you by the RDA staff during your visits that cannot be replicated in any other way.

The final aspect of the RDA collection that is especially relevant to design students and researchers is the nature of the collection. It is eclectic, it is delightful, and it features everything from Chris Emmerson’s automotive designs to Vaclav Victor Vodicka’s gold and silversmithing work that encourages a transdisciplinary exploration of design. The collection is focused not just on the final design output or artefact, but also on the process of design that tells a story about how a design was developed and the various iterations that were undertaken throughout the design process. From the perspective of an architecture educator, this is especially important for our students to see, as published books and industry articles on built works rarely reveal the messy side of the design process but it is one that we foreground in design teaching.

ENDNOTES

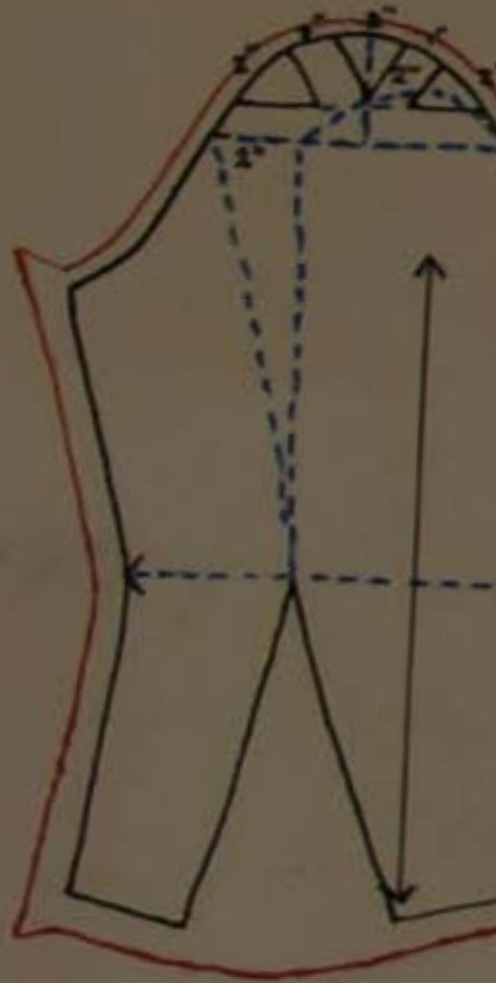
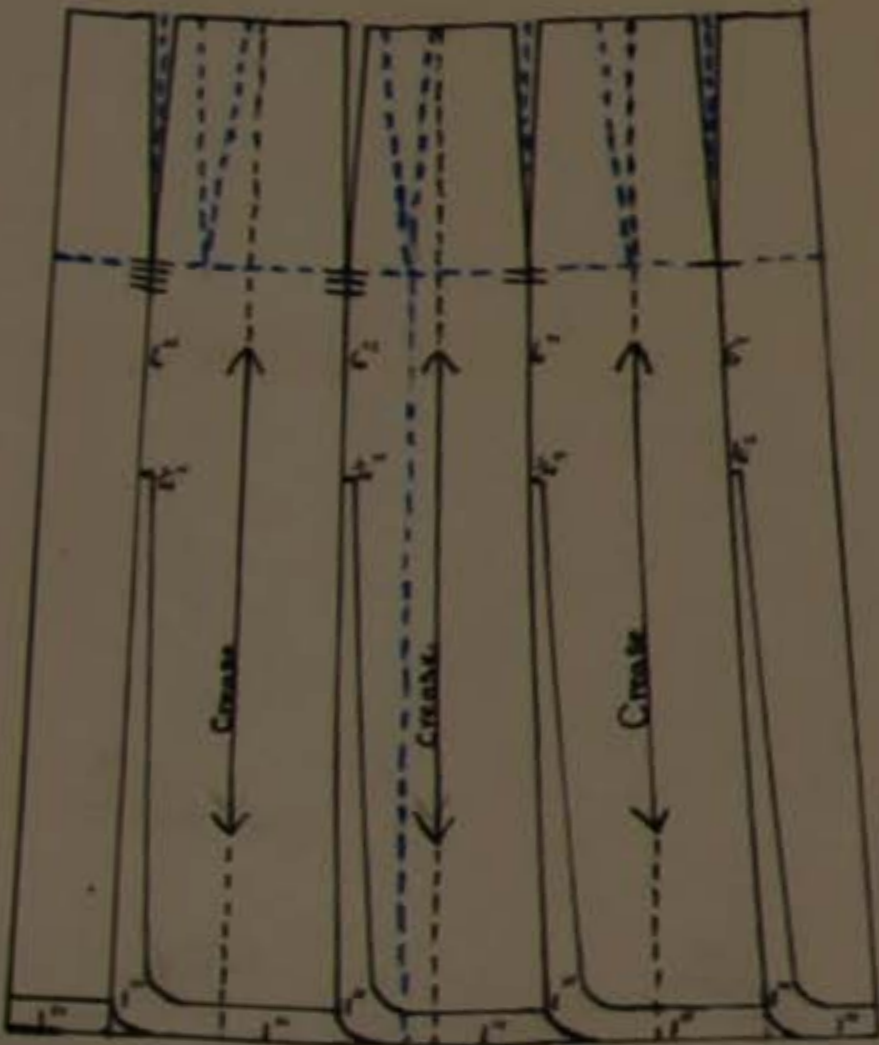
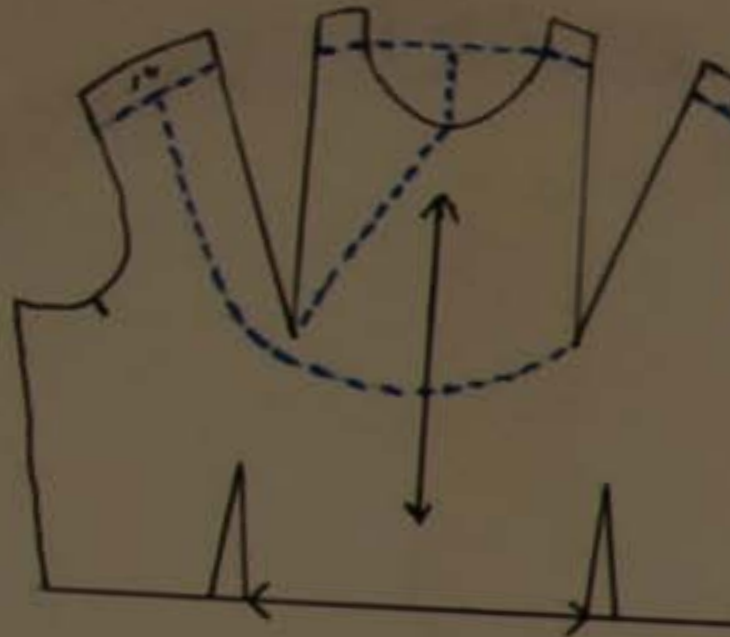
1. OpenAI ChatGPT’s response to Christine Phillips’ query regarding the experience of physical archives, September 1, 2023.
2. Pieter Raisbeck and Christine Phillips. *Robin Boyd : Late Works* (Melbourne: Uro Publications, 2020)
3. Robin Boyd, letter to Frederick Romberg, October 1971, Gift of Jason Romney, Donated through the Australian Governments’ Cultural Gift’s Program in memory of Frederick Romberg and Robin Boyd. RMIT Design Archives.

Preceding Pages

Print of photograph of underside of ‘Talking chair’ for Expo ’67 Montreal, designer, Grant Featherston, manufacturer, Aristoc Industries, unknown photographer, Gift of Ian Howard, RMIT Design Archives.

Opposite

‘Australia on Show at Expo 67’, *The Australian Women’s Weekly*, May 24, 1967: 8, author, Harold Dvoretzky, photographer, Robert Feldman, Gift of Ian Howard, RMIT Design Archives.



Unpicking the Threads Connecting the Fashion and Dress Curriculum at RMIT with the Emily Mac in the 1930s-1940s

Deborah Wills-Ives



Unpicking the Threads Connecting the Fashion and Dress Curriculum at RMIT with the Emily Mac in the 1930s–1940s

Deborah Wills-Ives



ABSTRACT

In 1979, the Emily McPherson College amalgamated with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), signalling a new chapter for fashion and dress education. While the former had begun as a state-funded college for women in 1906,¹ the latter was established for the working man, initially through philanthropic funding and later government support, and these early differences shaped the curriculum that developed in each college.²



By the 1970s, a range of fashion and dress related courses and programs had been offered at both institutions and in the mid 1980s, some seven years after the amalgamation, RMIT established the Bachelor of Arts (Fashion) program. The historical threads connecting this program with the earliest dressmaking classes at the Working Men's College (later RMIT) speak in part to the narrative that began with the domestic economy movement and the expansion of the state secondary school system. With the passing of the Education Act 1910, the secondary school system in Victoria was established and as part of this legislation, all girls were provided with practical instruction in the domestic arts.³ An important component of the domestic arts curriculum was the subject of Needlework, which supported higher-level skills for dressmaking, dress cutting and dress design as well as its domestic applications.

By the mid 1930s, fashion and dress programs were developing across these two institutions as demand for technical education for women increased.

This paper examines the workbooks of students, who studied fashion and dress at the Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economy (EMCDE) in the 1930s and 1940s, held as part of the Fashion Education collection at the RMIT Design Archives. These similar but different fashion programs which developed concurrently in relation (and in opposition) to one another are analysed using Bourdieu's field theory.

Methodology

Bourdieu's sociological framing identifies fields as socially structured spaces that have boundaries and edges, where agents operate within the space according to generalised rules or rather "regularities."⁴ Sometimes visualised as a playing field where agents operate with a "feel for the game,"⁵ Bourdieu's theoretical concept proposes conditions that constitute a site of struggle or competition. These sites of struggle constituted by the domestic economy courses at the EMCDE and the School of Applied Art at Melbourne Technical College (the former name of RMIT) are examined within the field of technical education in the 1930s-1940s. Knowledge and skills valued in each of these fields were underpinned with unquestioned ways of participating in the game, or what Bourdieu calls "doxa."⁶

The Domestic Economy Field

When Joan Lucy Nell Dugan began her dressmaking course at EMCDE in 1935, she'd completed her Certificate of Proficiency in Home Arts and Crafts at Preston Girls' School the year before and was likely to be around fifteen years old. Beyond the academic subjects at secondary school, all girls were required to complete practical subjects in the domestic arts, which included Cookery, Needlework, Art, Household Management and Laundry. Of these subjects, the knowledge and skills Joan gained in Needlework, which included dressmaking and millinery,⁷ provided a good foundation for the Full Course Dressmaking (FCD) Certificate. The course she selected had been offered as a trade certificate for more than two decades and was similar but different to the Diploma of Needlecraft (Dip.NC).

The Dip.NC was a three-year program established in 1929, and entry into this program was the equivalent of four years of secondary school with evidence of an ability in the subject of Drawing. Whereas the FCD was designed to support girls moving into Melbourne's clothing trade after two years of instruction, the Dip.NC aimed at providing the foundation for a teaching career in the Domestic Arts Schools or Technical Schools for girls. To use the Dip.NC to qualify as a teacher, young women were encouraged to apply for entrance to the Teachers' College on a Domestic Arts Scholarship to complete an additional year in teaching methods. If successful, scholarship holders were bonded to the Education Department for a period, to fill teaching positions in the domestic economy subjects.

The workbooks Joan used to document her work in the FCD were issued by the Education Department as pre-printed exercise books for use in the domestic arts schools.

Preceding pages

Layout of Afternoon Frock (detail), Lorna Clarke's Cutting Book 1, 1942, RMIT Design Archives.

Left

Joan Dugan's 1st Year & 2nd Year Dressmaking Notebook, 1936-1937, RMIT Design Archives. Gift of Christine Johnson.

Continued

In Victoria, the Education Department had shown their support for the domestic economy curriculum, opening the first School of Domestic Arts in 1915 at Bell Street, Fitzroy, one of Melbourne's inner-city suburbs. A further eleven domestic arts schools were established over the next decade. Dominated by working-class families, girls enrolled at these schools from the age of twelve and over the course of two years, were provided with practical instruction in cookery, laundry-work, needlework, home dressmaking, millinery, home management, and personal and domestic hygiene.⁸ The introduction of the domestic arts curriculum was seen as a way of providing instruction to girls, that were likely to earn an income as domestic servants. Sewing and skill with the needle was complimentary to domestic service, but equally an important component of the ideals underpinning the domestic economy movement.⁹ From 1935, the Education Department renamed their domestic arts schools as girls' schools,¹⁰ and these schools continued to provide facilities for the practical subjects of household management, needlework, dressmaking, art, and craftwork. The legacy of these schools and the relationship they had with the trade courses at the EMCDE can be seen in Joan's workbooks at the RMIT Design Archives. Within the field of domestic economy, where food for the family and scientific management of the home was privileged above fashion, Joan's notes on dressmaking and needlework were documented in line-ruled exercise books printed with sponsored advertising from Robur Tea, Sunshine Biscuit Co. and the Victorian Dried Fruits Board. Within these pages, handwritten notes for patching, darning and working with flannel spoke to the ideology of thrift and utility where Joan created diagrams for drafting her own undergarments, instructions for hand worked buttonholes, hems and closures.

In contrast, Lorna Clarke's work as a student in the Dip.NC is presented in a large format sketch book designed to be used by "Gallery and University Students for use with both Pencil and Water Color,"¹¹ locating this workbook closer to the field of art and design. While the subject of Art is listed in the course outline in both programs, Art with Design appears only in the Dip.NC and this privileging of design is an important difference that existed between the two courses in the domestic economy field.

On further examination, Joan's workbooks offer valuable insight into the way the curriculum was organised in the FCD, with reference to the care and maintenance of the sewing machine, advice for moving into employment and costing sheets developed to support the construction process.

As manufacturing methods were changing in the local industry, the introduction of Power Machining was included into course outlines from 1937¹² and teachers at the EMCDE were often approached by local fashion companies to propose candidates for employment. Ruth Bunting joined the college in 1927 and presented regular reports documenting the number of girls successfully placed into industry positions. By 1935, the college council arranged for a "telephone extension to Miss Bunting's room

so that head of Department may, when necessary, be put in direct contact with employers enquiring for assistance in workrooms."¹³ Speed at the machine was becoming a factor in the FCD, which spoke directly to the skills required for mass production. Ruth Bunting's management of the Dressmaking Department saw student enrolments increase throughout her time at the college where she and her colleagues reportedly assessed 2000 frocks in one year.¹⁴ The importance of the "frock" as central to fashion practice during this period and evident throughout both Joan and Lorna's workbooks; where fashion illustrations, descriptions of frocks and fabric and trim details are noted, were presented in similar but different ways. Joan produced line drawings of dresses without color or movement to document basic design details and to support the development of her patterns for each garment constructed. Pre-printed assessment sheets are pasted into her workbooks, with frocks described by the color of the fabric and design-line detail. A clear example of Joan's description of a frock created in her final year in the course is documented as: "Floral Georgette Semi Evening Frock. Magyar style trimmed with blue flowers and sash."¹⁵

In addition, the assessment sheets required students to record who the garment was made for, the cost of materials and time taken to cut and sew, further connecting this course curriculum with practices of garment production. In 1935, Ruth Bunting marked all of Joan's work with a "PASS" adding her initials, the date and an occasional comment such as "neat work." By 1936, a college stamp was used perhaps in an effort to speed up the process. Importantly, while almost all of Joan's garments were made for herself; with occasional frocks made for her mother, the requirement to make for yourself, within a trade-based course showed the paradox that existed within the domestic economy field. Bourdieu's notion of doxa, or the unquestioned ways technical education was framed for women at the time, are made visible in this paradox. For women, the domestic economy field conceived dressmaking skills as useful in serving two purposes; one that might support entry into employment, and one that would provide girls and women with garments to wear. Bourdieu's theoretical lens also makes visible the knowledge and skills privileged via Joan's assessment sheets where construction and costs of construction stand in opposition to art and design. In the absence of any reference to either art or design documented on the pre-printed sheets, the creative and/or artistic part of fashion practice is rendered, through its omission, not useful and unimportant.

Lorna Clarke's work is presented very differently as a student in the Dip.NC. Beginning her fashion studies in 1940 a few years after Joan had finished, Lorna's workbooks show fashion illustrations in color and on the body, styled with hair and make-up, shoes and accessories indicative of the 1940s period. While Lorna presents designs across a range of garments that include skirts, coats and two-piece suits, the predominance of the frock is clear. With support provided by the RMIT Design Archive staff to view this workbook, each fashion illustration is supported with scaled diagrams; from the quarter scale drafting for foundation

Opposite

Assessment sheets in
Joan Dugan's 1st Year
& 2nd Year Dressmaking
Notebook, 1936–1937,
RMIT Design Archives.
Gift of Christine Johnson.

The Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economy,
Melbourne, C.I.
Tel. F 5115

CLOTHING DEPARTMENT.

1. Details should be filled in by student and checked by teacher.
2. The garment should not be taken into use until form has received the College Stamp.
3. These forms should be retained by student and presented with Book of debts and Notes at examination.

Date: Dec 1st '36

Garment: Skirt
 Made by: from Diagram for self
 General Directions: Skirt length like Evening Skirt.
Waist 34y. hemmed with 1 1/2" flange 2" wide.
 Class: Standard for F.C. Dressmaking.
 Class Teacher: Miss Munnage

COSTS.

TIME—	hours from	to	per hour	£	s.	d.
MATERIAL—						
	3 1/2 yds. Good L.C. 2/11			8	15	
	1 1/2 yds. White Ribbon @ 4/6			2	5	
	4 yds. Organza (for flange)			9	5	
	2 yds. white			5		
	checked etc.			2		
TOTAL				11	10	



Passed by—
RMS

The Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economy,
Melbourne, C.I.
Tel. F 5115

CLOTHING DEPARTMENT.

1. Details should be filled in by student and checked by teacher.
2. The garment should not be taken into use until form has received the College Stamp.
3. These forms should be retained by student and presented with Book of debts and Notes at examination.

Date: Dec 9th

Garment: Skirt
 Made by: from Diagram for Miss Duggan
 General Directions: Drawn flat with 1 1/2" flange
— hemmed with 1 1/2" flange.
 Class: Standard for F.C. Dressmaking.
 Class Teacher: Miss Munnage

COSTS.

TIME—	hours from	to	per hour	£	s.	d.
MATERIAL—						
	4 1/2 yards @ 2/11			1	2	1 1/2
	4 yds. organza @ 2/6 1/2			5		
	2 yds. white			5		
	checked etc.			1		
TOTAL				1	3	3 1/2

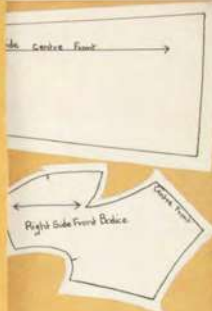
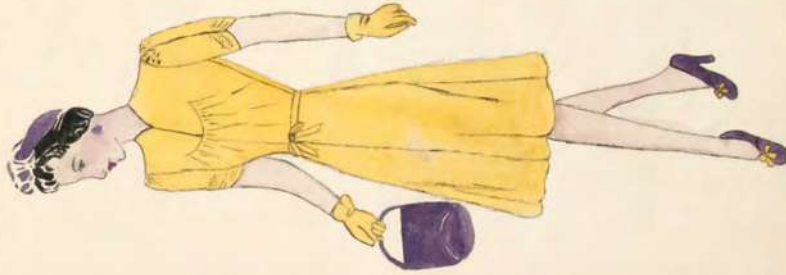


Passed by—
RMS

LAY OUT
OF

16-3-42

AFTERNOON
DRESS



LAY OUT
OF

LEAVE TAKING
DRESS

23-2-42

2 3/4 Yards of 54" MATERIAL



Continued

blocks and fashion styles, to the carefully cut quarter-scale pattern pieces, arranged to replicate mini-lay plans.

From concept to pattern, many of Lorna's designs are labelled according to their intended use. For example, and with particular reference to frocks, labelling of the designs as The Afternoon Frock, The Leave Taking Frock and The Tub Frock, highlights the way fashion language changes over time, but equally the way frocks are described differently in different fields. In the 1930s and 1940s, a Tub Frock was designed to be cut in a cloth that would allow the dress to be washed in a tub, situating these garments in opposition to a frock that required more specialised laundering.

The Leave Taking Frock is possibly an armed services reference created during World War II, when Lorna was studying, and the Women's Weekly published articles such as "His Home Leave...and Your Frock."¹⁶ While the visual presentation of Joan and Lorna's work is different, both workbooks show signs they were assessed by Ruth Bunting, but even this is different. Whereas the college stamp is printed onto each of Joan's assessment sheets, a simple "RB" appears at the back of Lorna's workbooks in pencil. This is a small but significant difference that seems to show respect for the outstanding level of artistic detail accorded to Lorna's work.

Joan's workbooks also provide us with information on other staff in the Dressmaking Department at the EMCDE. While Alice Knight's name appears as Joan's dressmaking teacher in 1935, Alice had begun teaching in the School of Applied Art at the Working Men's College. Working alongside Gladys Dellit as part of a small teaching team in the Needlework Department, Alice was teaching dressmaking and dress designing classes from 1921 until the end of 1926.

These fashion and dress classes had been established by Gladys Dellit when the new School of Applied Art building opened to students in 1917. Beginning initially as evening classes, Alice Knight, Gladys Dellit and Miss Anderson offered both day and evening sessions in the early 1920s. Graduating from the original College of Domestic Economy in 1910, Dellit believed that "dressmaking was an art not a trade,"¹⁷ and taught classes that included dressmaking, tailoring, cutting, millinery and whitework. Although specific numbers of women enrolled in these classes have not been confirmed, according to Dellit, "She started with two pupils but made the classes so popular that for the last three years [c.1923–1926] there was never less than 100 on the roll."¹⁸

In a move that might be seen as maintaining the boundaries between the field of domestic economy and the School of Applied Art, the Working Men's College Council permanently transferred both Dellit and Knight to the EMCDE, where they were appointed as teachers in the Education Department. The dressmaking and millinery equipment and the sewing machines from the Needlework Department were also transferred for the start of the school year in 1927.

The Art School Field

From 1927, the Dressmaking and Millinery subjects that had been part of the Artistic Crafts at the Working Men's College, were moved out of the School of Applied Art and into the EMCDE, weaving the historical threads of these two colleges together. As new neighbours sharing the same city block, the WMC and the EMCDE were encouraged by the Education Department to establish a Common Interest Committee (CIC). The purpose of the CIC was to manage staffing resources and to avoid duplication of programs. Throughout the few years the CIC was active, various arrangements were put in place to suggest this approach was effective, especially as a measure of efficiency and economy with state funds. For example, the EMCDE provided instruction to WMC students in Dressmaking, Cutting, Millinery and Cookery and the WMC reciprocated with instruction in Physics and Chemistry. Students were admitted to these subjects "without [additional] payment of fees under the arrangement existing for the transfer of students between the Colleges."¹⁹ This arrangement signalled a blurring of what Bourdieu calls the boundaries and edges of the fields, as differences within each socially structured educational space, began to change. Men started attending the dressmaking and cutting classes at the EMCDE which had been established exclusively for women, and women attended classes in subjects dominated by men at the WMC. While women's participation in classes at the Working Men's College was not unusual, up until the opening of the new EMCDE building in 1927 their presence was mainly confined to the classes, courses and programs in the art school.

In 1931, with the appointment of Harold R. Brown as the new Head of Art, a reorganization of the School of Applied Art began. An important part of Brown's new direction was the use of practising artists engaged by the college to teach full time and twenty-five applications from artists across a range of artistic mediums were considered for the role of Senior Art Instructor. While Mervyn Napier Waller was appointed, three female artists submitted applications and one of these; Miss Millicent White, was selected the following year as a part-time teacher of dress design.²⁰ The decision to re-introduce the subjects of dressmaking back into the School of Applied Art was contrary to the Education Department's remit to avoid duplication and makes visible the WMC's autonomy in developing their own curriculum. As a council-controlled institution, the WMC stood in opposition to the EMCDE, which had been established as a departmental school. While both colleges relied on state government funding, their positions as "players on the field" were different and as a consequence of this difference, a new way of conceiving fashion and dress education was established.

Around 1932, a Dress Design Course appeared in the Working Men's College Prospectus,²¹ as a co-delivery with the EMCDE, where the subjects of Dressmaking and Cutting were taught by Ruth Bunting and Miss Seely.²² By 1934, a new variation of this course was created as the first position of supervisor of dress design was filled. Monsieur Pierre Fornari, appointed into this new role, was engaged as a part-

Opposite

"Women Must Work,"
Table Talk, July 8, 1937,
RMIT Design Archives,
Gift of Colin Beardsley.



time teacher and following the new “rules of the game,” was a practising and established fashion designer. According to Eckett et al., (2019) Fornari was born in Milan²³ and though Melbourne-based, exhibited his fashion collections both locally and interstate throughout the mid-1920s and early 1930s. While his association with the Dress Design Course was just over a year, his appointment elevated fashion and dress education, into the new pedagogical approach underpinning other programs in the art school. Within the field of the art school, when led by Pierre Fornari, frocks became part of a “collection,” with names such as “Flower of Heaven”, “I Know Nothing”, “Sigh” and “Blue Mist”.²⁴ During this period, Fornari was supported by two women; Miss V. Herwig and Miss F. Molyneux. By 1936, Miss Herwig had been appointed to replace Fornari

who departed for Europe in the final school term of 1935. While more work is still needed to fill in the narrative of the Fornari period in the School of Applied Art, the Dress Design Course continued to be developed throughout the 1930s and 1940s in opposition to the FCD and the Dip. NC at the EMCDE.

In the early 1940s and possibly during the years Lorna Clarke was completing the Dip.NC at the EMCDE, the Dress Design Certificate Course was reimagined in the art school field, from the original two-year course outline to include an additional year of study. This structuring of the course curriculum, with two years full-time (day) study and one year (evening) study was similar but different to some of the other courses at the time. Whereas the Dress Design

Continued

Certificate Course followed a similar structure to the course outlines for Decorative Needlework and Fashion Drawing; notably all artistic craft areas traditionally dominated by women, other areas of learning had been reconstructed into Associateship Diploma programs. The Associateship Diploma had been established at the WMC since the early 1900s and stood in opposition to the certificates and diplomas offered in the School of Applied Art and issued by the Education Department. During this period, the WMC had established five Associateship Diplomas within the School of Applied Art. In addition, there were four Certificate Courses and Diplomas for Teachers and each of these were also issued by the Education Department. The Dress Design Course was one of six other certificates that were issued by the College, confirming the area of fashion and dress education through the Bourdieusian lens as a “site of struggle”²⁵ likely to be seen as competition for the departmental FCD and Dip.NC at the EMCDE.

As part of the Fashion Education collection held by the RMIT Design Archive, the work of Alison Beardsley²⁶ provides additional insight into the historical narrative of the Dress Design Certificate Course.

Alison Beardsley (née Hall) was awarded a day scholarship in the School of Applied Art in 1936²⁷, and likely to have been a student in either the Photography Course or Commercial Art Course. While the details of Alison’s program are beyond the scope of this research, a review of her collected works held by RMIT Design Archives contributes important information.

In July 1937, the Melbourne Technical College (MTC) published a double page spread in *Table Talk*, with the headline “WOMEN MUST WORK” and a copy of this advertising article is amongst Alison’s workbooks.

Table Talk was a publication for men and women published in Melbourne between 1885–1939 and the advertising spread found in Alison’s collection in the archive suggests it was saved as a memento.²⁸ Presented as a photographic collage with annotations describing a list of “occupations and hobbies for women”, Miss Alison Hall is shown as one of three women “engaged in catalogue grouping”, where photography “appeals to women.”²⁹ Other occupations presented included pottery, interior design, textile printing, weaving and stained-glass window work, speaking to the legacy of the arts and crafts movement experiencing a revival in Australia around this time.³⁰ For the occupation or hobby of fashion and dress, a woman working with fabric on a dress stand was photographed as part of the *Table Talk* collage, and this same image appears in the RMIT University Archives Digitised Collection of Historical Images.

The previously unnamed woman described simply as “Dressmaking Student Working on Dress Form”³¹ was Miss Joy Fleming and this new information challenges the historical record. A student listed as “J. Fleming”³² was part of the Dress Design Course in 1937 and noted as one of twenty-seven students from the MTC attending classes at the EMCDE as part of the on-going arrangement between the two colleges.

Conclusion

Through activating the RMIT Design Archives’ Fashion Education collection, new knowledge emerged to support the unpicking of threads that connect the fashion and dress curriculum at RMIT with the EMCDE. The FCD trade certificate and the Diploma of Needlecraft at the EMCDE developed throughout this period, in relation to each other and within the boundaries defined by the regularities of the domestic economy field. Joan’s pre-printed assessment sheets make explicit the knowledge and skills required to cut and make garments along with an introduction to commercial constraints, by recording material and labour costs. Within this course curriculum, art and design and the ability to communicate design ideas to others was not useful and stood in opposition to the fashion illustrations and pattern work created by Lorna Clarke. While it is likely that Lorna constructed some of her designs as part of the Diploma of Needlecraft curriculum, it is unlikely that all of her fashion illustrations were cut and sewn into garments. There are also minor technical errors noted within Lorna’s quarter scale patterns that suggest the privileging of art and design concepts over technical accuracy.

Bourdieu’s field theory makes visible the similarities and differences between these two programs where trade training and teacher training formed the basis of technical education for women at the time. The conscious and deliberate reframing of fashion design practice re-inserted into the School of Applied Art at the Melbourne Technical College, later RMIT conceived fashion and dress design practice within the art studio, situating the legacy of this course in opposition to both the existing EMCDE programs. Later in the 1940s, the Dress Design Course was updated to a three-year full-time program and by the time the amalgamation took place in 1979, both colleges had changed their names again. The Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economy dropped the Domestic Economy and has been known as the Emily Mac ever since. The Working Men’s College was renamed as the Melbourne Technical College in 1934, then the Royal Melbourne Technical College in 1954 and in 1960 was renamed again as the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. In 1976, the Emily Mac upgraded their Diploma of Fashion Design and Production (formerly the Diploma of Needlecraft) to the Diploma of Arts (Fashion). In the same year, RMIT updated their Associateship Diploma of Arts (Fashion Design) to the new Diploma of Arts (Fashion Design). Following the amalgamation of the Emily Mac with the Department of Design at RMIT, only one fashion and dress program was retained.

ENDNOTES

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Unveiling Australian Design History Through Visual Data: Leveraging the Unique Vogue Australia Collection at RMIT Design Archives

Anna Altan (Anisimova)

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ABSTRACT

Studying Australian design history holds immense importance in understanding the nation's cultural identity and creative evolution. It provides a lens through which we can trace the development of Australian aesthetics, explore the impact of global trends on local design practices, and unravel the intricate connections between design and societal shifts.

Australian design history reflects a unique blend of diverse cultural influences, indigenous heritage, and innovative approaches. By delving into this rich tapestry of design, we gain insights into values, aspirations, and the remarkable creativity and ingenuity of Australian designers throughout history.

The RMIT Design Archives (RDA) house a truly remarkable collection, with a particular gem being the unique Vogue Australia collection (VA). This collection can be regarded as the most comprehensive and well-preserved compilation of *Vogue Australia* magazines, surpassing even those found in renowned Australian libraries such as State Library of Victoria (SLV), State Library of New South Wales (SLNSW), State Library of Tasmania (TSL), State Library of Queensland (QSL) and the National Library of Australia (NLA). The magazines within this collection were generously donated by former Vogue Australia representatives and have been meticulously preserved in their original state, without being bound or cropped as is often the case with periodicals in libraries. This unparalleled collection provides an invaluable resource for researchers, offering a genuine glimpse into the history of Australian fashion and culture.

The research process for our investigation of modern Australian maternity dress over six decades presented unique challenges, notably the absence or inconsistent availability of physical artefacts to study. This absence was also highlighted by Catriona Fisk in her paper, where she focused on investigating the material record of pre-twentieth century maternity wear in museum collections.¹ To overcome this hurdle, we embraced visual data-driven methodologies as a viable solution. Drawing inspiration from Gillian Rose's influential textbook *Visual Methodologies*, the shift towards visual-based research proved instrumental in advancing our study.² By relying on visual data, such as the extensive VA collection within the RDA, we could analyse and interpret fashion trends with greater accuracy and depth. This methodology provided a transformative approach, ensuring our research remained robust and comprehensive.

The purpose of this article is to showcase the significance of the RDA and the unique VA collection in studying Australian design history. We aim to highlight the value of the archives for researchers interested in Australian design and the transformative potential of visual data-driven methodologies. The article is structured into sections on the RDA and the overview of the VA collection, the methodology of our study, the research findings, the impact and applications, and the conclusion.

The RMIT Design Archives: A Hidden Treasure Trove

The RDA, while primarily focused on Melbourne design and architecture, holds a much wider variety of materials with national importance in both design and social history.³ One notable collection within the Archives is the VA collection, which is of significant value for fashion research. As already widely known, magazine-based research methodologies have been recognised as a valid approach in studying various topics, and the textbook of Abrahamson in collecting significant examples in this area is acknowledged.⁴ In the case of fashion research, publications like *Vogue Australia* serve as priceless sources of information not only on design practices but also on the social, cultural, and political contexts of the time. The RDA provide researchers with access to these invaluable resources, enabling a deeper understanding of Australian design history within broader societal frameworks.

In our research project, we worked with two periodicals: Australian Women's Weekly (AWW) and *Vogue Australia*. While AWW is available in digital format through the National Archives of Australia, we could not establish the existence of the VA archive (neither for the internal use of the publishing house nor for external use).⁵ This presented a challenge for us as researchers, but it also sparked a sense of excitement and pursuit.

Vogue US has pioneered in making their archive available online, offering subscribers access to every issue from 1892 to today.⁶ With *Vogue Australia*, however, even establishing a complete collection of physical copies has proven problematic. The publishing house itself does not possess the full collection, which is a regrettable fact considering the immense value of past design knowledge as a source of inspiration and information on social and cultural history.

Consequently, a significant amount of time in our research was dedicated to locating a complete collection of *Vogue Australia* magazines. We visited multiple Australian state libraries and institutions, including the State Libraries of NSW, Victoria, Queensland, and Tasmania, as well as the National Library of Australia (NLA), Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences in Sydney (MAAS), and National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) libraries. Our search resulted in the creation of a comprehensive online index for the publication, known as the Anna Altan (Anisimova) *Vogue Australia* Index.⁷

In our opinion, the VA collection held in the RDA is exceptional. It is nearly complete and in excellent condition, comprising over 600 issues. Jan Whitehead, the former *Vogue Australia* advertising director for Victoria, demonstrated remarkable generosity by contributing to the RDA's collection.

Her donation encompassed a collection of over 83 issues of *Vogue Australia*, which included several rare early editions. What adds an intriguing dimension to her contribution is the inclusion of various other fashion and design magazines, such as *Flair*, *Vogue Living*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *House and Garden*, and more. Whitehead's foresight in preserving and gifting these magazines to the RDA has given to researchers an invaluable resource for conducting comprehensive studies of historical Australian fashion and design trends.

We appreciate the meticulous preservation methods employed, ensuring that the original state of the magazines is maintained, providing a unique and authentic experience with the publications. The accessibility of materials and the ease of collaboration have also been noteworthy aspects of our experience. Collaborating with the Archives not only allowed us to redirect our research when we faced a dead end due to the lack of physical objects but also enabled us to complete our work from the comfort of Melbourne, thanks to the Archives nearly complete collection of magazines. Our short volunteering opportunity with the Design Archives not only enriched our knowledge of preservation and cataloguing techniques but also fostered a closer connection with the VA collection, deepening our understanding of its priceless value for researchers like ourselves that are exploring design within social contexts.

The RDA hold immense value for researchers interested in Australian design, particularly in the realm of fashion. In this matter, we acknowledge the significant contributions of authors such as Margaret Maynard,⁸ Jennifer Craik⁹ and Alexandra Joel¹⁰ in exploring Australian fashion heritage. The desire to identify and embrace a unique Australian style has strongly influenced the fashion sector, and researchers are eager to articulate the distinct differences

and true trends in Aussie fashion. The question of whether a recognisable, definitive Australian fashion style exists has been widely debated. We firmly believe that the answer, along with other sources, lies within the extensive collection of fashion periodicals available in the RDA. Through a comprehensive examination of these archives, researchers can unravel the rich tapestry of Australian fashion history and gain insights into the unique style that defines the nation's fashion identity.

It is important to acknowledge that our approach to studying modern fashion history focuses on visual representation rather than object-based study. This perspective, shared by ourselves and those who recognise the value of visual analysis in this field, allows us to delve into the rich fabric of fashion's visual language and its impact on cultural and historical contexts.

Methodology: Visual Data-Driven Research

Our research focuses on a specific category of women's clothing, maternity wear, within *Vogue Australia* magazines. This choice was influenced by various factors. Firstly, our longstanding interest in the history of western European maternity wear prompted us to explore this niche further. Our initial inspiration came from Doretta Davanza Poli's book that provided valuable insights into the subject.¹¹

Given the absence of tangible objects for our research, we adopted a visual-based approach, drawing inspiration from early fashion history studies. The systematic analysis of visual data became our primary method of investigation.

We strategically selected *Vogue Australia* as our primary source due to its global reach, international recognition, and extensive history. However, we encountered several challenges during the process. Firstly, *Vogue Australia*'s publications were not regular throughout our six decades. Secondly, the task of locating complete magazine collections proved to be challenging, as none of the libraries possessed a comprehensive set. Lastly, identifying maternity wear images within the magazines posed a difficulty, particularly when models were not visibly pregnant. And, of course, the most frightening aspect was the scale of manual searching. We had to look at each of the magazines and every page since the digitised version did not exist, and that's why the metadata search option was absent.

To address these challenges and enrich our research, we decided to include another publication, Australian Women's Weekly (AWW). This addition not only helped us overcome the limitations of the *Vogue Australia* magazine but also provided a broader context for our analysis, enhancing the overall outcome of our research.

Description of the Processes Used for Data Analysis

Our approach was inspired by Lidewij Edelkoort's work in fashion forecasting and fashion theory, as well as the knowledge of approaches to describing and attributing clothing used in the fashion industry and e-commerce.¹² We believe that studying a garment through its attributes can provide authentic and detailed insights into its evolution over time.

In our research, we conducted a detailed analysis of the data obtained from the selected magazines. The final dataset included two magazines, 750 magazine spreads, 768 pages, 614 articles, 973 images, and a total of 1,127 separate images (segments of images which contain one garment only). Each image was carefully described using a system of attributes developed specifically for this project. This system consists of four groups of attributes, comprising a total of forty-six different attributes, each having various values (up to six in some cases to better describe the variety).

For the final assignment, only thirty-two attributes were utilised. This selection was made after conducting preliminary testing of the dataset fragments, resulting in twenty-seven attributes being retained for manual assignment. Additionally, five attributes were assigned using an artificial intelligence (AI) framework in collaboration with the Nextatlas team, an Italian AI company founded in Turin in 2012. Nextatlas provides AI-powered trend forecasting and market intelligence services to consumer goods brands, retailers, and marketing agencies worldwide, making them a valuable partner in our case study.¹³

The image categorisation system played a crucial role in the analysis, enabling a comprehensive overview of the dataset. We developed four blocks of attributes to describe the dataset from various perspectives (Publication, Image, Setting, and Body and Garment), allowing us to attain the research objectives. Each group allowed us to examine different aspects of the data.

The analysis involved observing the performance of each attribute over the six decades, identifying trends, and verifying them by correlating with other attributes. We used tables and graphs to present the performance of the attributes and interpreted the trends based on social and cultural rationales.

Our analysis offers valuable insights into the dynamic trends and distinct attributes of maternity wear, revealing the evolving nature of pregnancy fashion over time. By examining visual representations in periodicals, we demonstrate the significance of using these sources as a research tool. The findings highlight both the changes and enduring elements in the portrayal of pregnancy fashion, providing a deeper understanding of this specialised field.

The identification and interpretation of trends, such as the shift in garment styles and materials, the influence of technological advancements, and the role of celebrities, contribute to a comprehensive view of the evolution of maternity wear.

This research underscores the importance of visual representation as a rich and informative resource for studying fashion history, showcasing its capacity to uncover valuable insights and document the cultural and societal shifts reflected in the world of fashion.

Identification and Interpretation of Clothing Trends

By combining attributes and analysing visual data over time, we have identified and interpreted various trends in the representation of maternity wear. Our developed system/

approach allowed us to review historical visuals and detect significant shifts in maternity fashion. Notably, we observed changes in the frequency and content of maternity wear-related images and articles in the magazines studied.

While variations in the presence of maternity wear-related content could be attributed to factors like fluctuating birth rates, our research did not aim to confirm or deny this aspect as it falls outside the scope of our research questions. Additionally, we were unable to establish a clear seasonal pattern in the publications of maternity wear-related content.

We did note slight increases during autumn and spring. The disproportionate distribution of images and articles between AWW and VA, influenced by publication frequency, did not impact the quality or significance of our research. Our focus lies more on the components and contents of the images and articles themselves rather than their specific sources.

The findings highlight the substantial changes that have occurred in the mass media industry over the past six decades. Technological advancements, such as the shift from illustration to photography and the transition from black and white to colour images, have influenced the portrayal of maternity wear. The growing influence of celebrities has also impacted how pregnancy and maternity are depicted. In the 1990s and 2000s, informative publications centred around pregnancy and maternity became more prevalent.

Regarding specific garments and body features, we observed several notable trends. The revealing of the pregnant abdomen, the popularity of two-piece maternity costumes, and the use of jersey fabric emerged as significant developments, particularly in the 1980s.

However, some trends remained consistent throughout the six decades, such as skirts being the preferred lower body dress and dresses being the most popular maternity garment. Public casual attire, a cataloguing category that refers to clothing worn in public for everyday occasions, consistently ranked as the most common occasion for wearing maternity clothing. Our analysis reveals evolving trends in maternity wear, emphasising the significance of visual representations as research tools. The findings identify shifts in styles, materials, technology, and celebrity influence, providing a comprehensive view of maternity wear's evolution. Visual representation is an essential resource for studying fashion history, uncovering valuable insights into cultural and societal shifts.

Integration of Social and Cultural Contexts

Considering social and cultural contexts is crucial for understanding the significance of the trends in our analysis. We examined the connection between maternity wear changes and major political and cultural events in Australia, revealing how fashion reflects and is influenced by broader societal shifts. This approach deepens our understanding of the intricate relationship between fashion and society, highlighting the impact of social and cultural changes on design and style. It provides a comprehensive view of maternity wear's evolution in Australia, emphasising the importance of contextualising fashion within its cultural and societal framework.

Research Findings: Unveiling Australian Design History

Decoding the Source

Decoding the sources, the analysis of the first three groups of attributes (Publication, Image, and Setting) reveals the main trends in maternity wear representation over six decades. In the 1960s, notable changes took place: photography became more prominent than illustration, pregnant women became the central focus and were portrayed as solitary figures rather than in the company of other females or children, and the settings shifted from private interiors to public or studio locations (See Figure 1). Additionally, there was an increase in maternity wear advertisements compared to the previous decade, which was predominantly focused on sewing patterns (with a general emphasis on DIA).

The 1980s witnessed two significant developments: the majority of visuals transitioned to full colour, and the articles occupied a larger portion of the page, sometimes covering up to 100% of the space. The latter observation is particularly intriguing, considering the historical taboo surrounding the topic of motherhood in society.

In the 1990s, several notable trends emerged in the portrayal of maternity wear. Firstly, there was an increase in the number of articles in comparison to advertisements (that were the top publication category previously), indicating a shift in content focus. Concurrently, image sizes decreased, allowing for more in-depth writing and analysis.

Additionally, there was a notable shift in portrayal settings, with private indoor spaces becoming the preferred location for maternity photoshoots. This represented a breaking of taboos surrounding the public display of private spaces in relation to motherhood. These trends can be attributed, at least in part, to the ripple effect of Demi Moore's iconic nude and pregnant portrait by Annie Leibovitz, which graced the cover of *Vanity Fair* in the United States and reportedly had a profound impact on Western society.¹⁷

The 2000s introduced three significant changes: publications increasingly centred around celebrity mothers and their lifestyles, the inclusion of adult males accompanying expectant mothers in social settings became more prevalent, signifying a departure from the perception of pregnancy and childbirth as solely "women's business." Men were visually represented as more involved in the process.

These trends illuminate the evolving representations of maternity wear and the shifting social dynamics surrounding pregnancy. They provide insights into the changing roles and perceptions of pregnant women, reflecting broader societal changes in gender roles, family dynamics, and public/private boundaries.

Decoding the Garment

The analysis of maternity garments across different decades, the fourth group of attributes, offers valuable insights into the evolving trends and styles in maternity fashion. In the 1960s, notable changes were observed. Firstly, there was a shift away from the prevalent depiction of pregnant women with a wasp waistline, which was commonly seen



Above

"The Growing Concern Maternity Boutique" advertisement in *Vogue Australia*, March 1985: 122, RMIT Design Archives.

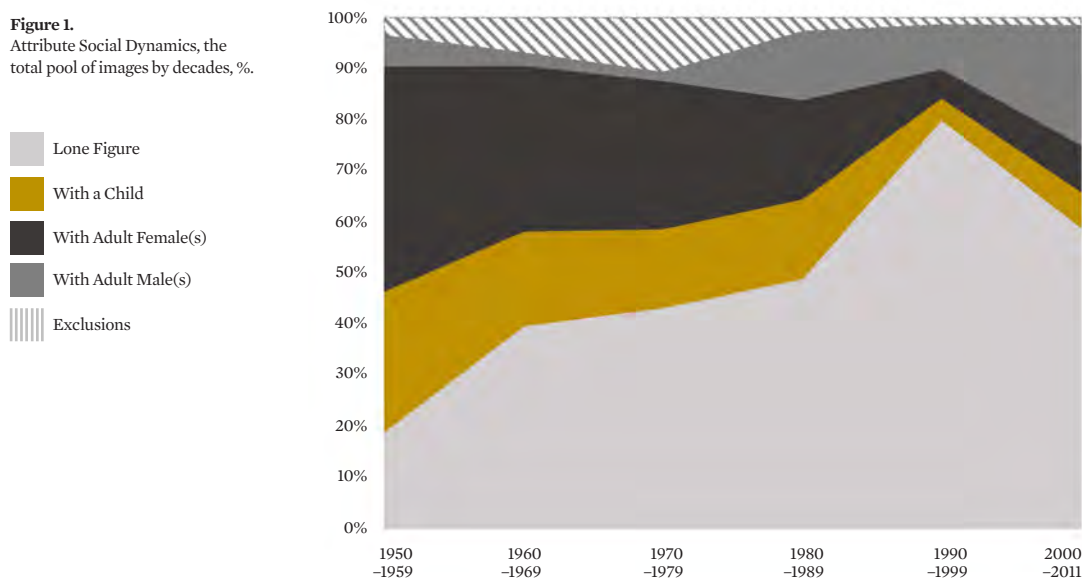
In earlier editions of *Vogue Australia*, there was a discernible trend of portraying pregnant women as a collective, a cadre of comrades, adorned in similar attire, effectively uniforms, to signify unity and mutual support; however, over time, this collective representation has diminished from prenatal iconography, shifting the focus solely onto the individual pregnant woman. Despite this shift, the social phenomenon of the "mummy tribe," a unification of mothers-to-be and postpartum mothers as a consumer group, remains extant.^{14, 15}

in the 1950s. Instead, a more realistic and voluminous shape became prominent. Figure 1 exemplifies the visual representation of the data outcomes. As evident from Figure 2, spanning from the 1950s to the 1970s, magazine editors seemingly favoured concealing the "baby bump" effectively. However, a substantial shift in these perceptions becomes apparent during the 1980s.

Additionally, the positioning of the waistline became less emphasised, and the previously articulated natural waistline disappeared. Sleeveless garments also emerged as a popular choice during this decade, reflecting changing fashion preferences. Transitioning into the 1970s, it became customary to observe longer lengths and long sleeves in maternity garments, in line with the predominant fashion trends of that time.

The 1980s witnessed a notable shift in the portrayal of maternity wear. There was a deliberate emphasis on the pregnant abdomen, making it the focal point of the garments. Additionally, a new trend emerged, dividing the garments into separate tops and bottoms, with the

Figure 1.
 Attribute Social Dynamics, the
 total pool of images by decades, %.



length aligning with the prevailing midi trend. During this period, there was a heightened fascination with pregnant celebrities, ranging from prominent figures like Princess Diana to lesser-known magazine workers, making appearances in publications. The voluminous shapes of maternity wear during this era allowed for the visible protrusion of the abdomen. The colours and patterns of garments became bold and eccentric, often deviating from traditional complimentary styles for pregnant bodies.

In the 1990s, we observed a resurgence of maxi-length garments, often paired with short sleeves. Conversely, in the 2000s, there was a return to sleeveless designs. We attribute this trend to the lasting influence of Demi Moore's iconic pregnant cover, which popularised the concept of a goddess-like appearance. The use of long dresses with a relatively narrow silhouette allowed for a similar aesthetic without the need for nudity. The combination of stylish long dresses and accompanying insightful texts created a strong and modern impression.

Summarising the findings, our analysis reveals several changes in maternity fashion trends over the observed time period, with the 1980s being particularly significant. The shift towards revealing the pregnant abdomen, the prevalence of two-piece garments, and the introduction of jersey fabric were noteworthy developments.

Despite these changes, certain trends remained consistent over the six decades studied, such as skirts being the most popular lower body dress option and dresses being the preferred choice for maternity wear. Additionally, public casual attire type consistently dominated as the most common occasion of use category throughout the years. These findings deepen our understanding of the evolving styles and preferences in maternity fashion, providing valuable insights into the historical development and trends within this specialised area of design.

Correlation Between Findings

The visual data analysis revealed valuable insights into the relationship between publications and garment trends in Australian design history. Significant correlations were found between source attributes and garment characteristics, validating trends observed in the primary data. This correlation sheds light on the influence of social and cultural factors on design evolution, emphasising the role of publications in shaping fashion trends. The research project exemplifies the application of visual methodologies and highlights the potential of visual data-based research, particularly in the field of AI. The findings contribute to our understanding of Australian design history, particularly in maternity wear, emphasising the importance of considering publication content and social influences in fashion trend analysis. This correlation opens avenues for further exploration and research into the intricate relationship between source materials and garment evolution.

Significance and Implications of the Research Findings

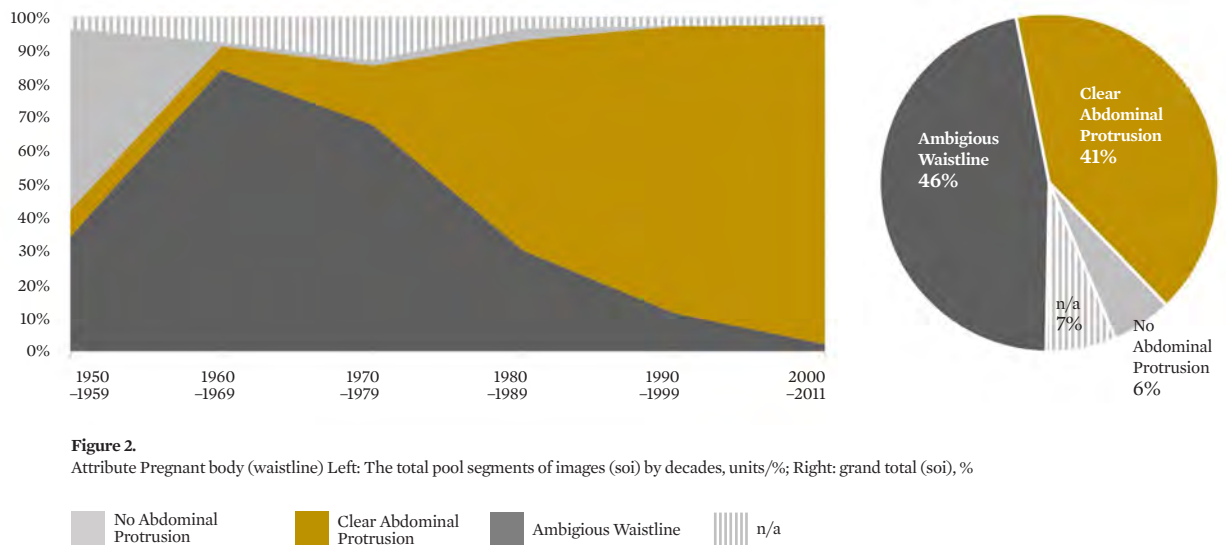
The research findings presented in this study hold significant implications for several areas within the field of maternity fashion research. Firstly, our study contributes to a better understanding of the evolution of Australian design history by examining the specific context of maternity wear. By analysing the trends and changes in maternity fashion over time, we shed light on the unique development of this niche area within the broader Australian design landscape.

Secondly, our research makes important contributions to the field of maternity fashion research itself, which is relatively underdeveloped compared to other areas of fashion studies. By providing a comprehensive analysis of numerical and visual data, we offer insights into the trends, styles, and preferences that have shaped maternity fashion in Australia. This fills a gap in existing scholarship and provides a foundation for further exploration and advancement in the field of maternity fashion research.



Above
“Chic-in-Waiting”, *Vogue Australia*, December, 1964: 59, author, Anne Deveson, photograph by David Hewison, RMIT Design Archives, courtesy of Gail Hewison.

Our analysis of six decades of *Vogue Australia* revealed shifts in the social dynamics of maternity images, evolving from an emphasis on female companionship to increasingly featuring male partners from the 1980s onwards. Unique single images, such as one that depicts an expecting woman with her male partner, further underscore this trend. The presence of males alongside pregnant women in these photographs serves to reflect broader social narratives, encapsulating both traditional and contemporary roles within the evolving landscape of family and gender dynamics.¹⁶



Practically, our research findings have applications in both academia and industry. The numerical data we have collected can serve as a valuable resource for future research, allowing researchers to delve deeper into specific aspects of maternity fashion or expand the study to different time periods or geographical regions. Additionally, the visual data we have gathered represents a segment of maternity wear history, providing a visual archive that can be utilised by fashion historians, designers, and marketers for inspiration, trend analysis, and historical references.

Finally, our research project exemplifies the application of visual methodologies in fashion studies. By combining numerical and visual data analysis, we have demonstrated the potential of visual data-based research approaches, particularly with the rapid development of technologies such as artificial intelligence. This opens up exciting possibilities for further exploration and innovation in the field of visual data analysis and its application to fashion studies.

Impact and Applications

Vogue Australia Index

We take pride in developing the *Vogue Australia* Index, a comprehensive resource that enables researchers to track the availability of all published magazine issues, starting from the early days when *Vogue Australia* was regarded as a supplement to *Vogue UK*. This Index serves as a valuable tool for other researchers who wish to utilise VA as a source for their studies. Our publication has already made a significant impact, facilitating connections between industry professionals and the esteemed RDA. This collaboration was exemplified by linking the producer of the Australian fashion documentary to the RDA.¹⁹ We believe that this achievement highlights the exceptional holdings of the RDA, which should be actively utilised and promoted. Our *Vogue Australia* Index serves as a testament to our commitment to advancing research in Australian design history and providing accessible resources for scholars in the field.

AI Case Study

In our research, we collaborated with AI specialists from NextAtlas, utilising Clarifai's AI platform, to analyse and detect maternity fashion trends.²⁰ This collaboration provided us with advanced image recognition and trend detection capabilities, enhancing our ability to interpret the visual data collected.

By incorporating AI into our case study, we expanded the scope of our research and showcased the practical applications of AI in the analysis of design history. The collaboration exemplified the potential of AI in the field of fashion studies, demonstrating its ability to uncover valuable insights and patterns.

Our case study not only deepened our understanding of maternity fashion trends but also highlighted the benefits of combining traditional research methods with AI tools. This collaborative approach opens up new avenues for research and analysis in Australian design history, leveraging the power of AI technology for future investigations.

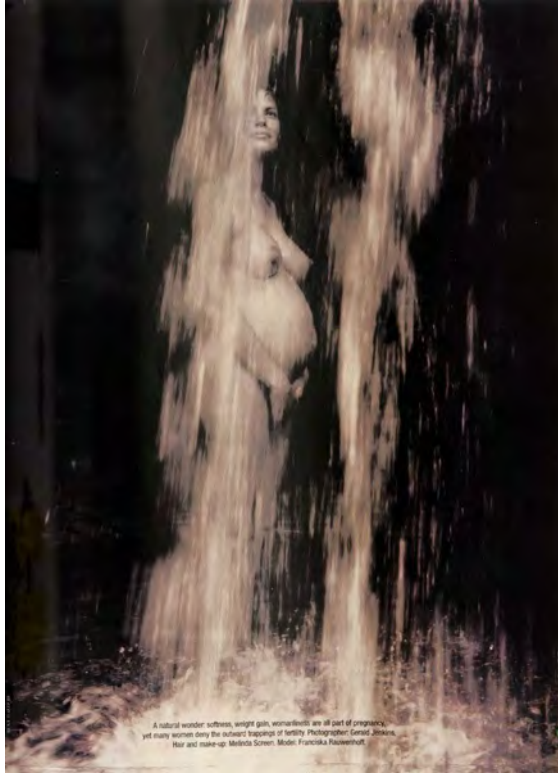
Further Research Avenues

We acknowledge the pioneering work of US researchers, including Lev Manovich and his team from the City University of New York, who have made significant contributions to the field of cultural analytics.²¹ Their exemplary project with *Time* magazine covers has been influential.²² We are also inspired by the research conducted by the Yale University Digital Humanities Lab and their project Robots Reading *Vogue*.²³

As we continue to push the boundaries of research in Australia, we are excited about the potential for future applications and further exploration in this fascinating area. Building upon the foundations laid by these notable projects, we aim to delve deeper into cultural analytics and advance the use of automated methodologies in the analysis of fashion publications. This includes investigating the possibilities of AI-driven approaches, such as machine

Opposite
Polaroid of model
Franciska Rawenhoff
for *Vogue Australia*,
1996 -2018, photographer
Gerald Jenkins
©2023 Gerald Jenkins





Left
 “Big Expectations”,
Vogue Australia,
 January 1996,
 author Michelle Stacey,
 Model Franciska
 Rauwenhoff, photographer,
 Gerald Jenkins
 ©2023 Gerald Jenkins

Based on our study, which indicated that 93% of portrayed pregnant figures over a span of six decades were fully clothed, the emergence of undressed pregnant bodies in media—first appearing in the 1970s and reaching a peak in the 2000s—suggests a shift in societal perceptions of the maternal body towards normalization. This change also alludes to iconographic references to classical Roman goddesses, wherein bodily beauty and physique are emphasized and celebrated. This is a noteworthy transformation, especially considering that pregnancy was once perceived as an illness and the maternal body was often stigmatized as overweight and desexualised through clothing. In contrast, the contemporary series of photographs depict women as both goddesses and mothers, both dressed and undressed, thereby asserting that both representations are acceptable and beautiful.¹⁸

learning algorithms, to extract valuable insights from large datasets. Our commitment to staying at the forefront of this research domain will contribute to the continued growth and innovation in the field of Australian design history.

Conclusion

In conclusion, our research has highlighted the transformative potential of archives in studying design history, particularly in the context of Australian fashion. By decoding the source and analysing the body and garment, we have gained valuable insights into the evolution of Australian design and the shifting representations of maternity wear over the decades.

The VA collection at the RDA has played a crucial role in our research, offering a rich and comprehensive resource for understanding Australian fashion history. Its extensive holdings of *Vogue Australia* magazines has allowed us to track trends and examine the changes in fashion over time. We emphasise the value and richness of this unique collection in contributing to our understanding of Australian design.

The collaboration with the RDA has been instrumental in our research endeavours, showcasing the importance of preserving and curating archival materials. The accessibility and completeness of the collection have facilitated our exploration and shed light on the cultural heritage of Australian fashion.

Our research project also highlights the significance of visual data-driven methodologies in fashion studies. Analysing visual materials has provided nuanced insights

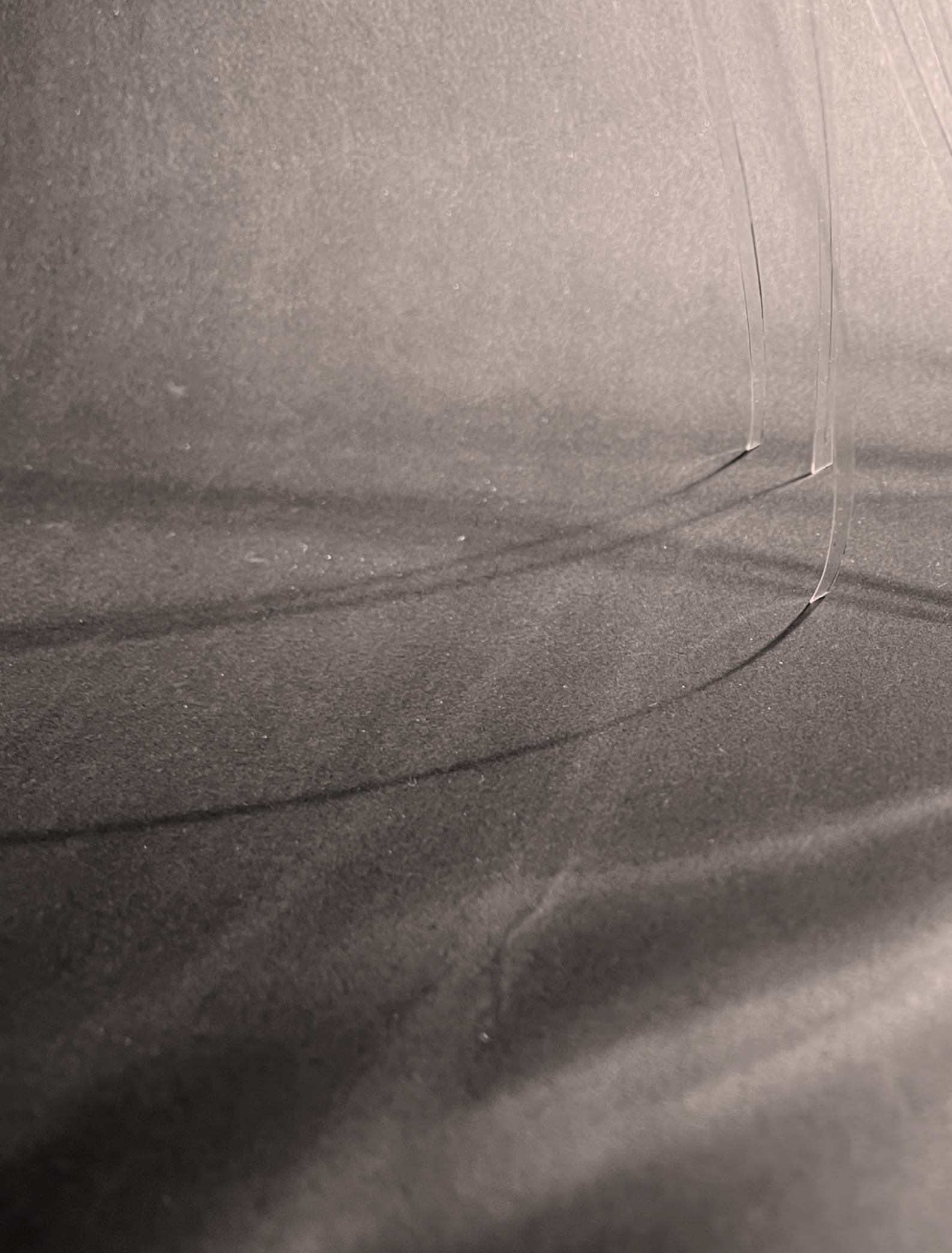
into trends and has the potential to inform future investigations. The application of AI technologies and the creation of the *Vogue Australia* Index demonstrate the possibilities for interdisciplinary research and further exploration in the field.

As we move forward, we recognise the enduring significance of our research and the importance of visual analysis in understanding design history. The collaboration between academia, archives, and technology specialists opens new avenues for uncovering hidden narratives and unravelling the complexities of design evolution.

In summary, our research findings, the value of the VA collection, and the utilisation of visual data-driven methodologies contribute to our understanding of Australian design history. This project serves as a stepping stone for future research and highlights the ongoing importance of studying design through archival materials and visual analysis.

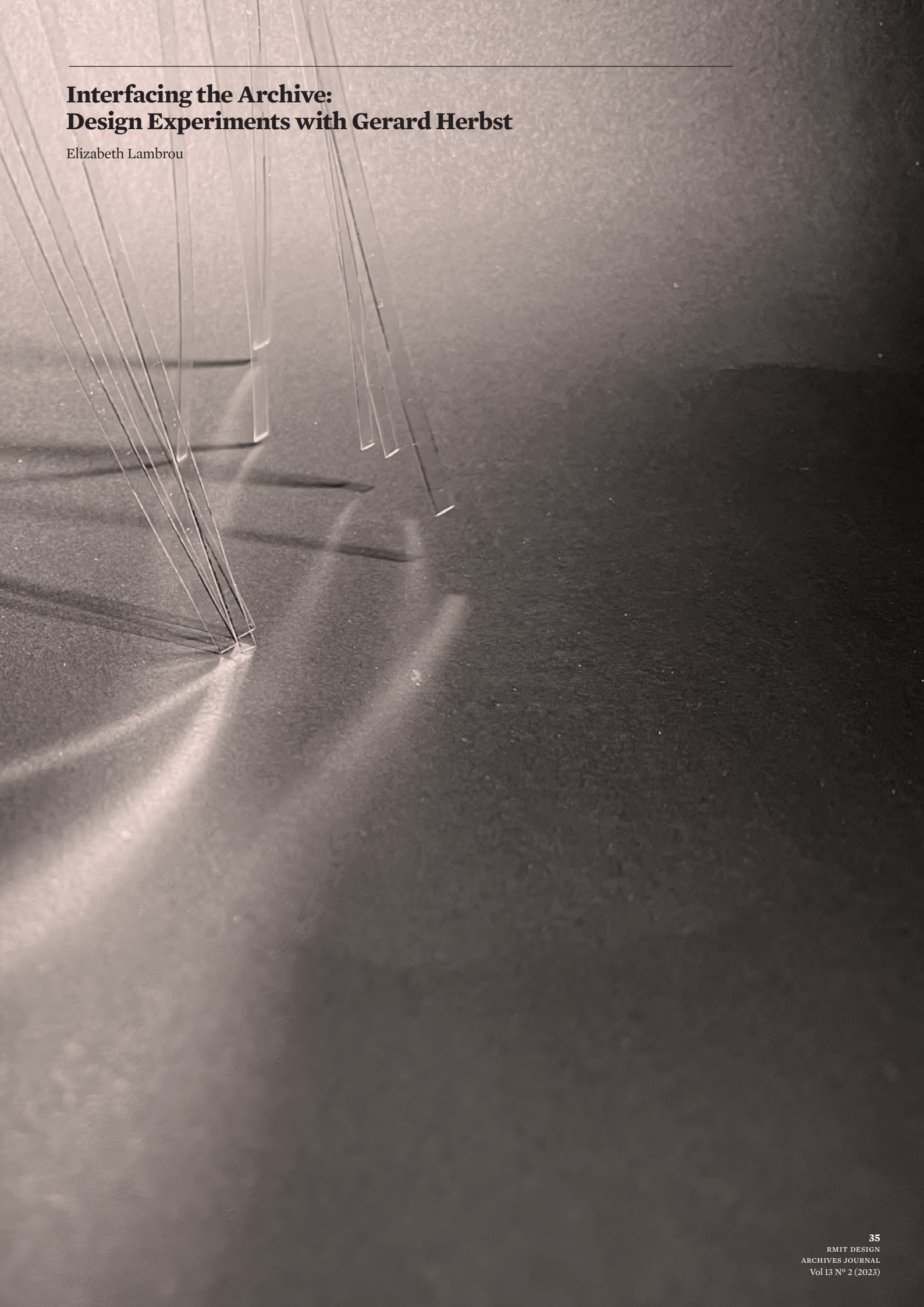
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Interfacing the Archive: Design Experiments with Gerard Herbst

Elizabeth Lambrou





RMIT UNIVERSITY Culture



RMIT DESIGN ARCHIVES

Interfacing the Archive: Design Experiments with Gerard Herbst

Elizabeth Lambrou

ABSTRACT

This visual essay showcases the collaboration between Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Interior Design and the RMIT Design Archives, focusing on the undergraduate design studio titled *Interfacing the Archive: Design Experiments with Gerard Herbst*.

The studio aimed to actively involve second and third-year students in exploring the collection of Gerard Herbst, an industrial designer, textile designer, and former design educator at RMIT from 1948 until his retirement in 1976.

Under my guidance, and in collaboration with the Archives' staff, the students effectively utilised the Herbst collection to navigate a series of design operations that were responsive to the immediate urban context surrounding the archive. Throughout the semester the students delved into Herbst's historical design work, design processes, and teaching methods, examining them from a contemporary perspective. Their efforts culminated in an exhibition installed in the RMIT Design Archives Gallery Window. This paper will visually depict how students closely engaged with the Archives, utilising a generative approach that eventually led to developing a final design proposal for the exhibition. This essay will visually showcase the processes and the exhibited built and film-based works that explored interior spatial conditions and their connection to the interplay between material, light, and surface. These works respond to the intricate complexities of the urban environment and investigate how this context shapes the experience of encountering the Design Archives' window gallery as a mediated experience. This encounter occurs through an interface, specifically the glass wall or window that separates the exhibition from the external environment.

Introduction

For the second semester of 2022, RMIT Bachelor of Interior Design (Hons) students were invited to participate in a partnered design studio with the RMIT Design Archives. The Design Archives was selected through archive visits and conversations with the Design Archives' Curatorial Officer, Ann Carew. The discovery of the Gerard Herbst Collection within the Archives revealed an exciting collection of imagery, models, films, and writings spanning his time as an industrial designer, textile designer, and design educator.

Although these works did not specifically address a conventional interior design project, Gerard Herbst's

transformative approach to design practice and teaching methods closely aligned with the RMIT Interior Design program's vision of interior design as a critical and creative practice, with a focus on dynamic relations and the potential of interior design as an ideas-led design discipline that transforms spaces and challenges assumptions. Over the semester, students moved through a series of design prompts, responsive to the relational aspects of the urban context to activate chosen works from the Herbst collection utilising operations of production and reproduction, including the *Design with Paper* exhibition¹ and the Prestige Fabric collection.

Through a series of case studies, this visual essay will examine how throughout the semester students worked closely with works from the Archives, accessed both physically and digitally, to inform an iterative body of work, utilising Herbst's historical design works, design processes, and teaching methods to explore ideas around surface to form, expansive patterning and relational activations from a contemporary and interior perspective. The essay will visually illustrate how this generative series of design operations were responsive to the immediate urban context surrounding the Archives and how, over the semester, this work informed a final exhibition designed and installed by the students in the Design Archives' window gallery. The site of the window gallery and its location within an urban context was utilised as a testing site and situation. Key design research questions included:

- > How is an interior produced through transferences between light, material, form, and surface?
- > How do varying speeds and intensities affect how form, surface and material are perceived?
- > How do the Design Archives' exhibition window and its situation within an urban context engage with these findings?

Preceding Pages

Relational activation, acrylic model, 2022, student, Yingqi Chen

Opposite

RMIT students installing *Interfacing the Archive* in the RMIT Design Archives Gallery Window, 2022, photographer Koby Murnane.

Continued



Surface to Form

In this task, students were asked to activate the design utilising a collection of paper model experiments produced by industrial design students taught by Herbst in 1970. The models explored the potential of paper to be manipulated from a flat surface into complex forms generated in response to a series of design instructions by their teacher Gerard Herbst.

Interior design students in 2022 were invited to critically observe, read, and document the archival contents, including various paper, card and acrylic models, photographs, and written documents, including the exhibition brochure.

Due to the models' fragile nature, students could not manipulate the flattened paper cut-outs into their intended forms. This led the students to explore a process of reverse engineering through sketching, model making, and notation to understand the following:

- > How do the models transform from 2D to 3D?
- > Is it clear how they transform?
- > What instructions are required to understand this process?
- > How can instruction function as an archival tool?

Below is an excerpt from the Prologue to the Design with Paper exhibition held at the National Gallery of Victoria from 1969 until 1970. Herbst's writing reveals a pedagogical approach that encourages students to embrace playful imagination, freely exploring paper's tactile and visual properties.

There is one way in which you may test my claim, provided you are willing to submit to your playful imagination. Take a sheet of my substance and explore its tactile characteristics, crumpling, folding and unfolding me. Explore my visual properties, my reflections, shadow play; soak me in paraffin, oil, stain me. Cut me, shape me into bodies to move in air and water. Doodle, or impress



a rubbing on me. What you will experience is not a reflection of yourself or your efforts. I am not a mirror. I make you discover yourself by always keeping one step ahead of your imagination.²

The interactive process with materials challenges students to go beyond predefined outcomes, fostering a sense of confidence and inventiveness in their own design practice. Interior Design students in 2022 were prompted to adopt this generative design approach by producing a series of their own transformational paper models utilising cutting, scoring, and folding operations. This emphasis on playful interactions with materials was extended through a documentation phase, where the models were recorded through drawing and photography, to demonstrate how the transformations from surface to form had occurred.

The students were prompted through this documentation process to produce a series of relational activations, emphasising the composition of the scene of the photograph to explore how the environment surface, background and lighting might articulate the transformational qualities and

activate perceived transformations—activated through movements of light and shadow. In this context, the term ‘relational’ suggests that the paper models are not considered in isolation but are seen in relation to other elements, such as the projected light source and the resulting shadows. By actively engaging with external stimuli and considering how they affect the model, the students gained insights into how the models’ surface, form, and materiality could transform based on these interactions

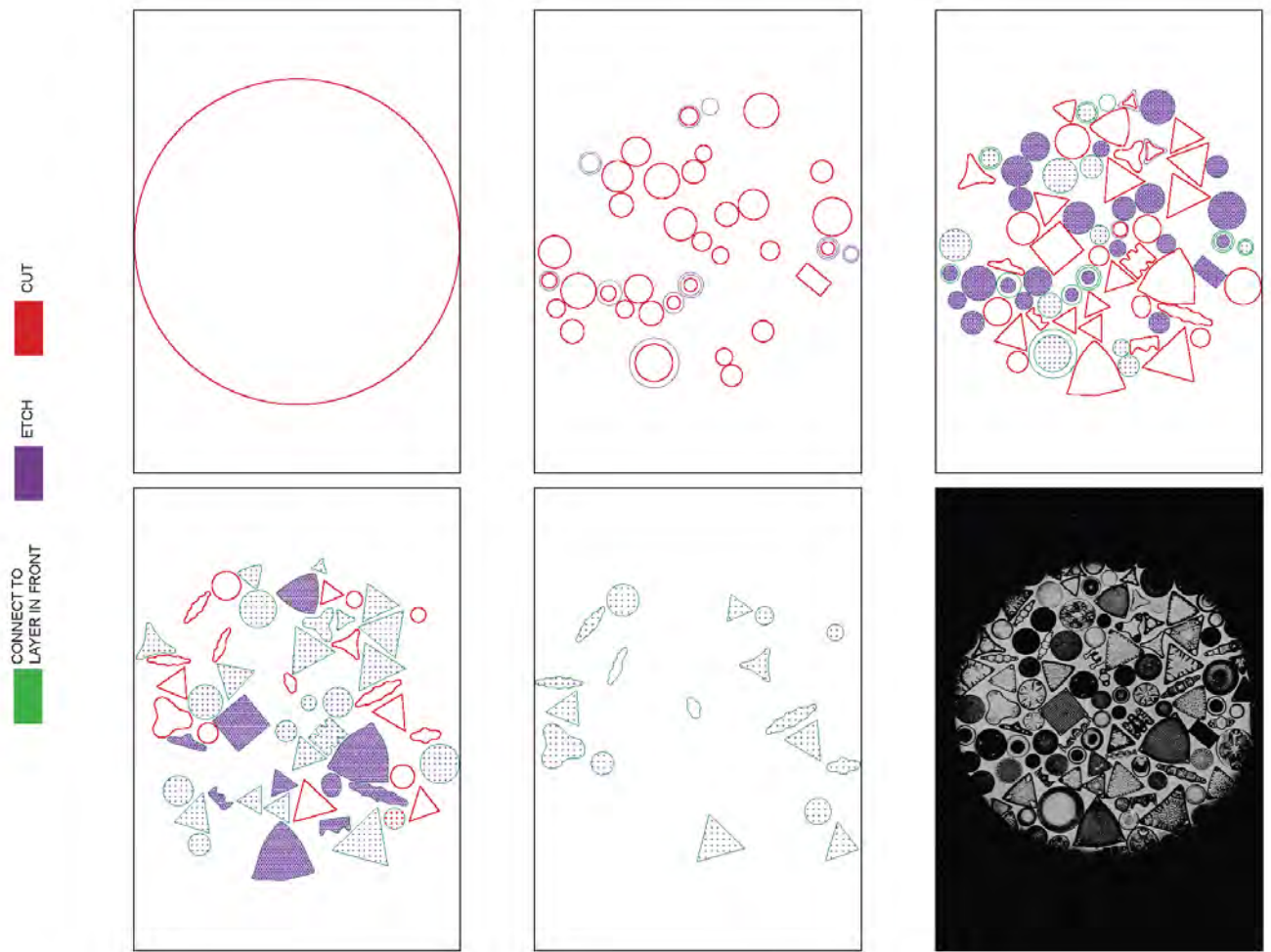
Employing Gerard Herbst’s reverse mechanism methods, I began to work with transparent plastic sheet material instead of opaque paper to see what would happen to surfaces activated by the light and shadow play when form is being applied to the surface. The translucent material is able to bend light in different directions when light hits the tip of the material producing this light ray that bends when the material is in motion. This array of light redirects the focus within the framed perspective.

Yingqi Chen (student)

Above
Relational activation,
paper model, 2022,
student, Koby Murnane.

Opposite
RMIT Students in Design
with Paper exhibition,
National Gallery of
Victoria, 1969,
RMIT Design Archives,
Gift of Gerard Herbst.

Continued



Expansive Patterning



In expansive patterning, the students worked closely with Gerard Herbst's renowned Prestige Fabrics Collection produced over the period from 1945 to 1955 when Herbst was the art director of the Prestige Textile Design Studio. Herbst's design process at Prestige was heavily influenced by the Bauhaus sensibilities, including the inventive use of photograms—a method of capturing images without a camera, reminiscent of artists like El Lissitzky and László Moholy-Nagy.

The photogram technique involves exposing objects directly on light-sensitive plates in a dark room, creating unique and abstract images that translate three-dimensional forms as images onto the surface of the photo-sensitive paper. The students were invited to explore how they might invert this technique through a process of expansion such as drawing out spatial forms from the two-dimensional patterns.



The students were invited to closely examine each textile pattern, and through drawing, visualising it as a compressed sectional view. Employing a legend, they assigned hatches, colours, and notations to understand the unique characteristics of each element—whether solid, transparent, translucent, void, open, or closed.

Having produced a series of imagined sectional views expanded from the chosen textile patterns in the Herbst Prestige Fabrics Collection, students returned to model making to connect these seemingly disparate parts by creating a series of imagined connections.

Finally, the students were asked to translate these models into acrylic utilising the laser cutter and experimented with light and shadow to discover new potential connections.

I also captured the transformation of the model under different lighting conditions and played with the effect of light in projecting the reflection and patterns and how it creates immersive experiences. The blend between the tangible and intangible becomes strong as the blurry edges and shadows overlay onto the model. The intangible model created with the light source extends the physical object and creates a new experience as it travels within the space, which then could create a new imaginary space.

Sandy Le (student)

Opposite top

Expansive patterning, Sectional drawings, 2022 student, Thomas Marriott.

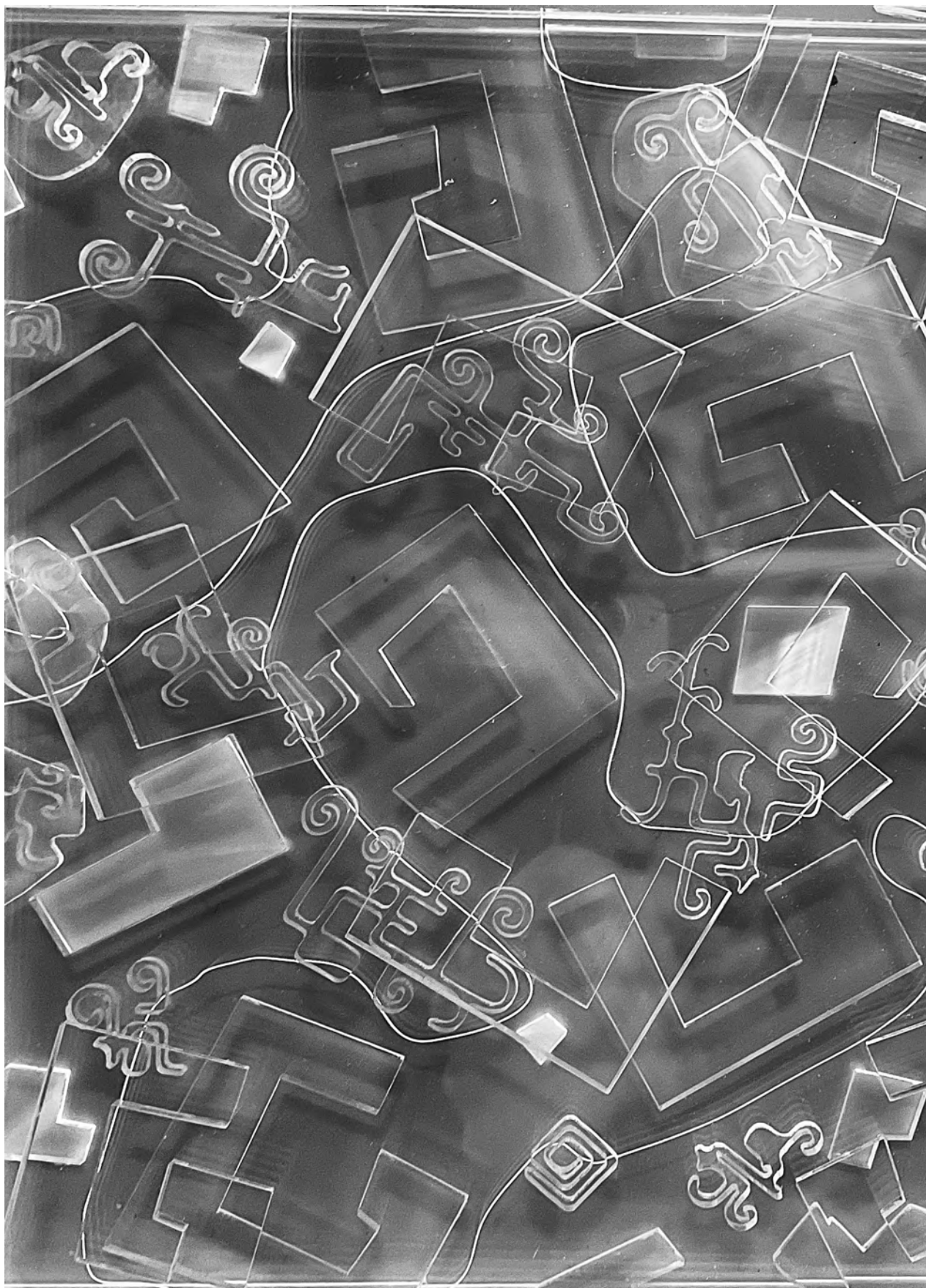
Opposite Bottom

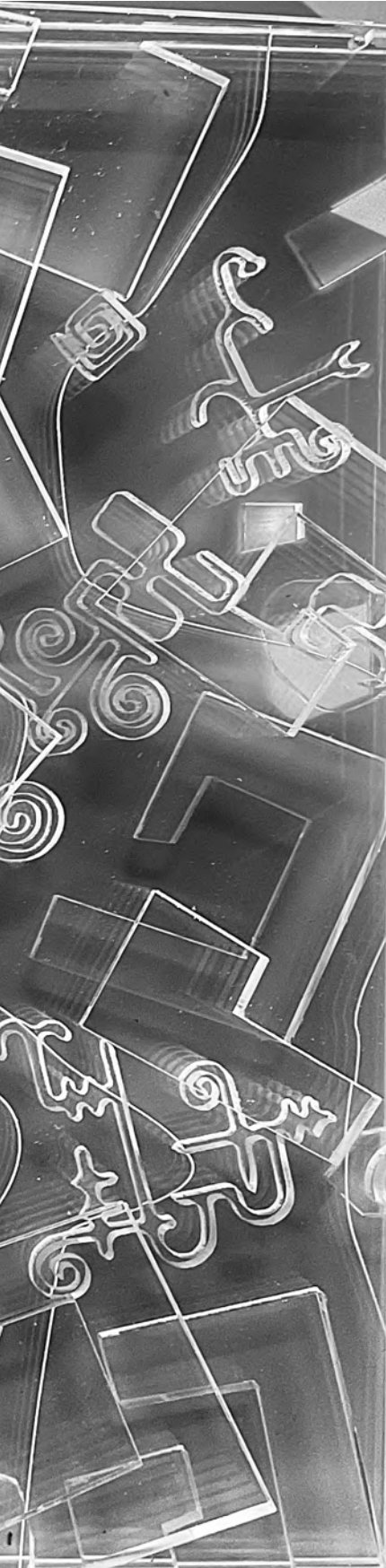
Prestige Fabrics textile, 1952–1953, designer Stanislaus Ostoja-Kotkowski, RMIT Design Archives.

Above

Imaginary space, acrylic model, 2022 student, Sandy Le.

Continued





Left
Expansive patterning,
acrylic model,
2002, creator,
Koby Murnane.

Above
Interfacing the Archive,
reflections in the
RMIT Design Archives
Gallery Window,
2022, photographer,
Koby Murnane.

Continued



The Exhibition: *Interfacing the Archive*

Above
Interfacing the Archive
RMIT Design Archives
Gallery Window,
2022, photographer,
Koby Murnane.

Opposite
Interfacing the Archive
RMIT Design Archives
Gallery Window,
2022, photographer,
Koby Murnane.

Throughout the semester, the interior design students immersed themselves in the design work, processes, and teaching methods of Gerard Herbst. They carefully examined and analysed these aspects from a contemporary perspective, seeking inspiration and insights to inform their design explorations. The students' journey of exploration and discovery culminated in an exhibition displayed in the prominent RMIT Design Archives Window Gallery in the heart of Melbourne's city.

Students were invited to consider how this exhibition could act as a platform for meaningful encounters between viewers and the curated works by critically observing the shifting complexity of the urban condition and exploring how this context informs ways of encountering the complex interior situation of the Design Archives Window Gallery, as a mediated experience located through an interface—the glass wall or window. It was interesting to note the significance of the window in relation to Gerard Herbst design career where he began as a self-described window dresser. Herbst passionately championed the improvement of Australia's lacklustre window displays. He consistently emphasised the significance of shop windows in visual education, drawing inspiration from the Bauhaus

ideology of design simplicity. According to him, the shop window artists in Melbourne during the 1950s understood that the street environment could act as an extended educational platform, positively influencing the overall quality, character, aspirations, and living conditions of the Australian populace.

Through working with Gerard Herbst Archive, the students developed a critical understanding of certain spatial conditions related to ideas of the moving properties of material, light and surface. The exhibition design prompted students to expand upon this learning to consider an 'exhibition as research'; a concept where Suzie Attiwill emphasises the idea of exhibitions as interior designs, capable of creating new encounters and subjectivities: "...the concept of material thinking as an engagement for the participants—both artists and viewers—resonated. Movement, light, matter, surfaces, lighting and sightlines engaged viewers in the production of encounters."³

The design proposal developed by the students aimed to create a meaningful encounter between viewers and the curated works within the Gerard Herbst Collection. They recognised the importance of considering various factors, such as the city context, the viewer's vantage point and approach, speed, and the uncontrolled light conditions, including the changing states from day to night. These considerations influenced how the exhibition design could be responsive to its surroundings to create an engaging and dynamic experience for visitors. In addressing the design



of the exhibition, the students worked closely with the Archives' staff to explore and implement various elements, each serving a specific purpose:

- > The window surface was used as a canvas for decals that would catch the attention of passersby and draw them into the exhibition space. The selected quote "Cut me shape me into bodies to move in air and water" described a design prompt Herbst gave to his students in 1970 during the *Design with Paper* exhibition.
- > The screens were utilised to display films demonstrating their body of work in motion interwoven with excerpts from Herbst's experimental films. The use of screens allowed for the manipulation of light and movement, adding an interactive and dynamic element to the exhibition.
- > In the exhibition window, the acrylic cut-out expansive patterns were hung at different angles in relation to light sources producing projections, inviting viewers to explore the ever-changing interplay of light and shadow on various surfaces over time.
- > The students creatively used angled mirrored plinths on the floor to arrange and multiply visual elements from both inside and outside through reflection.

During the exhibition design and installation phase, the students received invaluable feedback and mentorship from the Archives' staff, including Ann Carew, Simone Rule, and production officer Tim McLeod. This guidance transformed their interest and dedication, providing real-world design experience and engagement. They navigated the intricacies of designing for clients, adhering to timelines and budgets, and navigating site-specific processes, preparing them for the demands and challenges of the design industry.

The Partnership with the RMIT Design Archives, and deep dive into the Gerard Herbst collection brought numerous benefits to the students. It deepened their engagement with and appreciation for the Archives' collections, allowing them to work with existing physical and digital resources within the RMIT Design Hub. This partnered

learning experience enriched their understanding of their role as design students within an established lineage.

Interfacing the Archive: Design Experiments with Gerard Herbst showcased the profound impact of Gerard Herbst's work on interior design students. Through their critical exploration and thoughtful exhibition design, the students celebrated Herbst's legacy and demonstrated their ability to create meaningful encounters that bridge historical and contemporary design perspectives. This exhibition stands as a testament to the enduring influence of the Gerard Herbst Archive, inspiring future generations of designers to engage with history, context, and innovation in their creative pursuits.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The exhibition *Interfacing the Archive: Design Experiments with Gerard Herbst* features works presented by students Yingqi Chen, Anna Glatz, Xiwen Gong, Aura Jirathitiwanitkun, Alanna La Spina, Sandy Zhan Qiao Le, Xiao Liu, Xinyi Ma, Tom Marriott, Emily Michaelides, Nicholas Myrskylainen, Koby Murnane, Jonas Olden, Angelina Niranjana Sreshthaputra, Xinran Tian, Ruby Walker, Naqi Wu, Yiwen Jin, Malka Yota, and Shutong Zhan. This design studio was partnered with the RMIT Design Archives. The students worked closely with RDA staff Ann Carew and Simone Rule and were assisted by Tim McLeod in the exhibition installation.

ENDNOTES

1. *Design with Paper*, National Gallery of Victoria, Educational Section, November 10, 1969, January 10, 1970. The exhibition was prepared and presented by the Industrial Design Department, School of Art and Design, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (now RMIT University).
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Studiolo

Matija Dolenc

In the latter half of 2022, I embarked on the final semester of my Master of Architecture program at RMIT University. Alongside my major project, which served as my architectural thesis, I simultaneously engaged in an internship at the RMIT Design Archives.

Surprisingly, despite spending the last five years studying in the adjacent Design Hub, I had never ventured into the Design Archives... It seemed telling that at the time the Design Archives Gallery Window showcased a model of the Design Hub, where the Archives' building was missing. In a sense, it was exhibiting a model of its own absence.

Accessing the building for the first time, I could immediately correlate the RMIT Design Archives' (RDA) architectural elements to its larger complex. However, one aspect that stands out is the deliberate disconnection of the Archives from the central courtyard of the site. The RDA building purposefully screens itself off from the courtyard. The black steel ribbing creates a distinct visual and physical boundary that seems to emphasise an exclusive view on the nature and purpose of the Archives.

Moreover, the primary connection between the RDA building and the Design Hub is sited underground, where the Archives' ramp rises up from level one to the sliding door of the Archives. Although this subterranean promenade serves as a rather poetic ascent, providing access and a sense of continuity between the different areas of the complex, this disconnection from the central courtyard as a missed opportunity for integration and communal interaction, results in a deliberate isolation of the Archives from the Design Hub and its broader complex.

My journey at the Archives provided me with invaluable insights into the practices and workings of archival work. Together with two of my peers, I had the opportunity to delve into the world of cataloguing under the guidance of Simone Rule, focusing specifically on the Edmond and Corrigan Collection.

Engaging in this process went beyond mere manual labour. It became an investigative task aimed at organising, cataloguing, and archiving the various artifacts for future accessibility. As we meticulously handled each item, we sought to understand its significance and context, piecing together the stories that surrounded them. This process aimed to create cohesive assemblages of documents stored in polypropylene sleeves and archival boxes and folders, ensuring their preservation and ease of access.

Through this experience, I came to realise the profound impact that the act of cataloguing has on how architecture, in this case, is recollected and understood. As we carefully arranged the artifacts, I couldn't help but reflect on how the process itself shaped the narrative that will emerge from our labour. It was very clear that the Archives play a vital role in shaping our perception and interpretation of architectural history, determining what is recued and what is lost. While the documents recorded a representation of architecture, they fell short in capturing the intangible experience of it. Through this sense of loss, I began to question whether alternative forms of recollection could rescue, or, at least partially, evoke the experience of the architecture recorded. I embarked on a design based research that led me to discover the typology of the *studiolo*. The *studiolo* emerged during the Renaissance in Italy as private studio spaces dedicated to intellectual pursuits, contemplation, and the display of prized collections. By featuring elaborate and highly decorative elements the *studiolo* served as the enclosure for the rediscovery of the artifacts of antiquity. These rooms had a pivotal role in fostering the humanist ideals of the time.

Through the use of cabinets, niches, and alcoves, the collections were highly curated to provide a narrative context for the objects on display and to emphasise their relationship to the overall ensemble. The architecture of the *studiolo* enacted an experiential link with the artefacts held within it.

The proposal extends the RMIT Design Archives by proportionally echoing the Design Hub, with the aim of establishing a reciprocal relationship and emphasising their interconnectedness. This is achieved through the inclusion of an elevated plinth that serves as a connecting element between the two volumes, facilitating direct access between the buildings. The design encompasses a suspended bridge that envelops the courtyard, while a long colonnade forms an open cloister reflecting the collegial nature of the complex. Additionally, a prominent spire, featuring two clerestory windows, rises from the plinth, leaning against the Design Hub.

The incorporation of these architectural elements not only enhances connectivity but also visually and symbolically establishes the interdependence between the RMIT Design Archives and the Design Hub. The proposal fosters a sense of unity within the complex. The extension of the building incorporates a polycarbonate facade that bears a resemblance to the polypropylene sleeves commonly found in archival storage, resulting in a reversal of the relationship between the building envelope and the archival one contained in it. To maintain the operability of the site, the columns and cores of the extension are aligned with the existing structural grid and are strategically positioned to lean against the pre-existing walls. In order to create a proportional relationship with the Design Hub's gallery on level 2, the existing mezzanine level of the Archives is entirely removed, extending the volume of the space to match the footprint of the building. This generates a void that corresponds in proportion to the gallery and establishes a harmonious spatial connection. By removing the black steel ribs and implementing a series of revolving doors, the Archives' space becomes accessible from the central plaza, fostering an interface between the Archives and its surrounding environment. The close integration of the Archives and the gallery create a *studiolo*-like setting, where preservation and display coalesce.

The proposal entails the incorporation of new archive spaces alongside several *studioli*, which are collections of fragmented experiences from various projects completed throughout the semester. These *studioli* serve as a form of archival repository, rescuing stages of their own conception. This approach stems from the belief that performative methods of recording can rescue architectural experiences that would otherwise be lost. By holding the *studioli*, Archives, and Design Hub together, the project assumes the role of a *studiolo* itself, where different conceptions of recollection lie in dispute.

'*Studiolo*' forwards the conviction that holding architecture requires us to be held by it.



Above
RMIT Design Archives
exterior, 2022,
photographer,
Matija Dolenc.

Opposite
Zachary Henderson
and Matija Dolenc with
Edmond & Corrigan
Collection, RMIT
Design Archives, 2022.
Photographer Ann Carew.

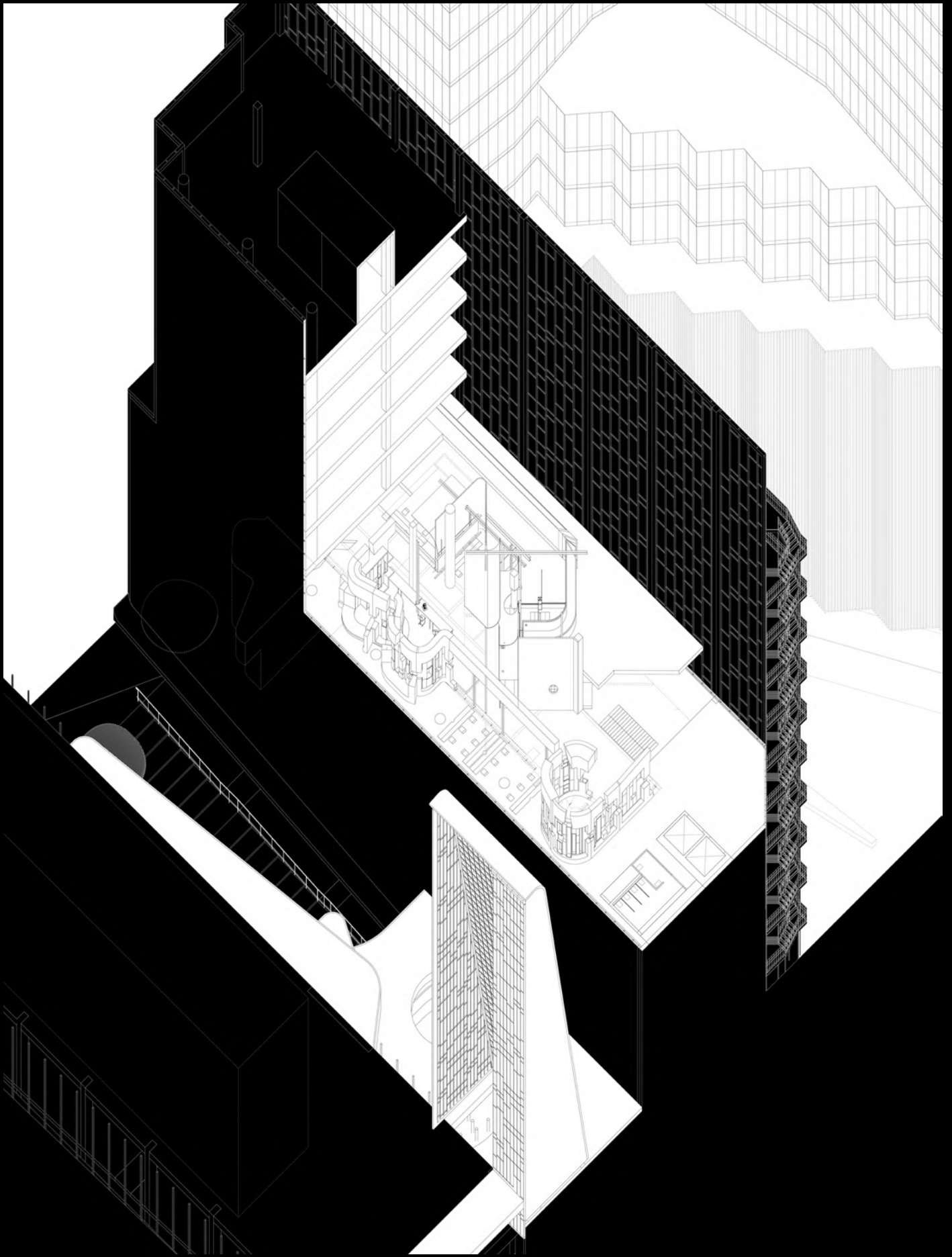




Above
Saint Jerome in His Study,
1474–1475, Artist,
Antonello da Messina,
The National Gallery,
London.

Opposite
Studiolo exterior view,
Melbourne, 2022,
creator, Matija Dolenc.





Above
Studiolo,
View of the Courtyard,
Melbourne, 2022,
Creator, Matija Dolenc.

Opposite
Studiolo,
View of the Spire,
Melbourne, 2022,
Dolenc Matija

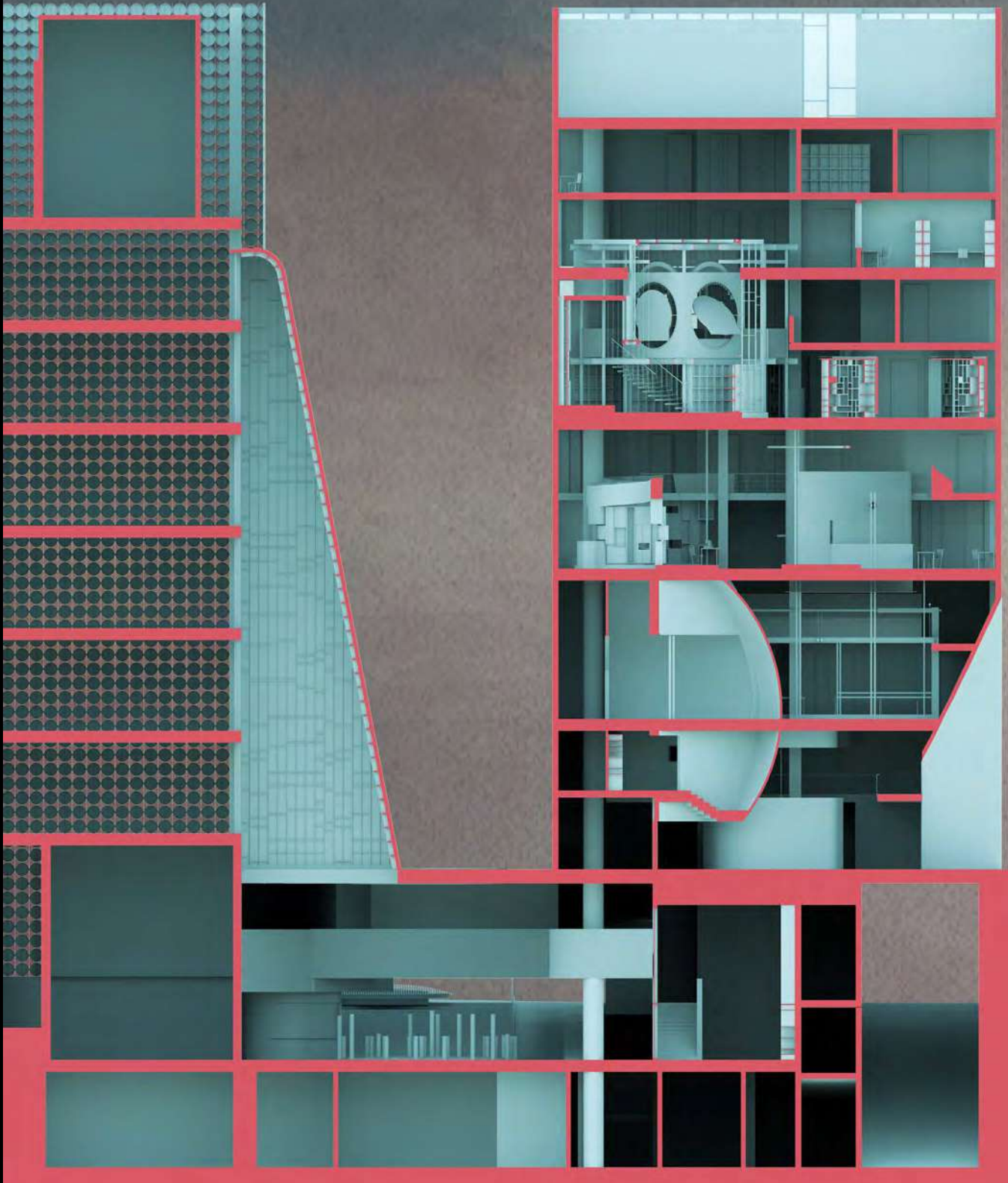




Above
Studiolo, View of the
new Archives Entry,
Melbourne, 2022,
creator, Matija Dolenc.

Opposite
Studiolo, Section,
Melbourne, 2022,
creator, Matija Dolenc.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
I would like to thank Dr. Michael Spooner, who provided
invaluable guidance in supervising my thesis.



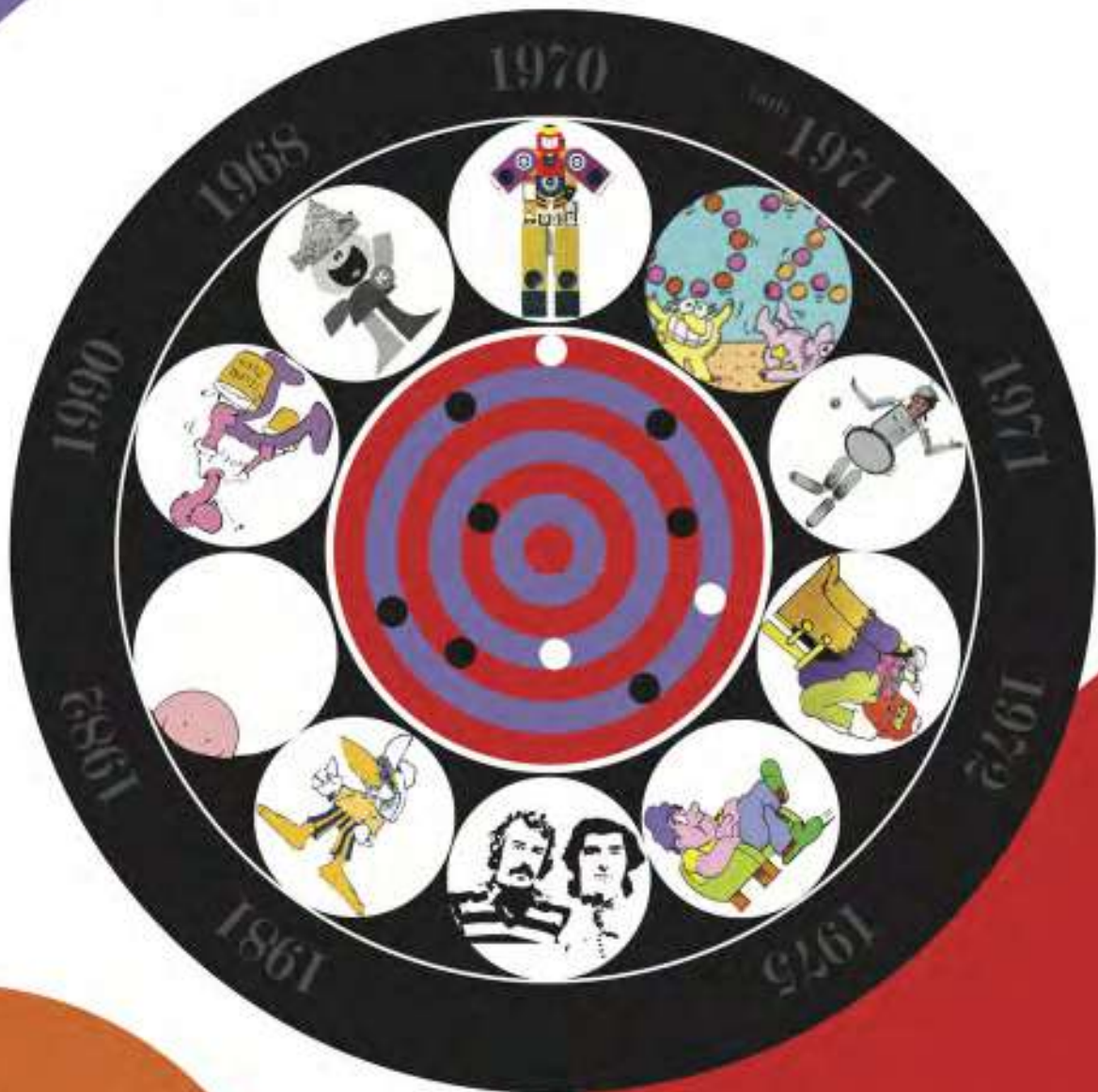


Beyond Borders: Curating and Exhibiting Transnational Design History Through Practice

Noel Waite



Zoetrope to Jigsaw toy factory



POSTER DISTRIBUTIONS:

With your hands ready, this is a poster you can play with. With the concept of 'fun for everyone' (I have just discovered the wonders of an amazing fun toy board. Please, read carefully and try to understand and follow the steps below. REMEMBER: You are to make your own poster for the board and to use it to create a story. You will be the key to the key, by engaging with the main characters on the poster done by a few and a good design.

STEP 1: Look at the poster. **STEP 2:** Pick up a character you are interested in. **STEP 3:** Pick up the board. **STEP 4:** Place the character on the board. **STEP 5:** Put an illustration of the character & design background of the character. **STEP 6:** Choose a character to play with. **STEP 7:** Read the text on the board.

By following the historical timeline of the characters, the retail conversation of the poster is to be used as a guide to create a story. The poster is designed to be a such idea of design design for everyone is similar to the 'interaction design' concept of a poster. The poster is designed to be a such idea of design design for everyone is similar to the 'interaction design' concept of a poster.

Jigsaw

Beyond Borders: Curating and Exhibiting Transnational Design History Through Practice

Noel Waite

ABSTRACT

RMIT University's Master of Communication Design program has had a close relationship with the RMIT Design Archives since 2017, seeking to activate the archives through curation, exhibition, and publication design.

Beyond Borders is the sub-title of a retrospective exhibition on the Dutch-born designer Pieter Huveneers (1925–2017), which was held in Tasmania in early 2023. The exhibition, publication and website were designed by students in the Curating and Exhibiting Communication Design course in the Master of Communication Design at RMIT University in 2021 and 2022.

The design was carried out transnationally, in that, due to the global pandemic, the 2021 and 2022 student cohorts were working remotely online, across national borders, and were unable to access the Archives, or carry out site visits to the Gallery in Tasmania.

The Master of Communication Design program has had a close relationship with the RMIT Design Archives (RDA) since 2017. This began initially with the Design Culture and Commerce (now Design Studies) course, where a selection of archives of Australian graphic designers were selected in consultation with Archives Officer Simone Rule prior to the start of the semester. In 2017, All Australian Graffiti (later All Australian Graphics), Jigsaw Factory (Alex Stitt and Bruce Weatherhead) and Les Mason were selected and in 2018, Firestone Embossed Showcards and the Australian Architecture Students Association collection (which documented the visit of Buckminster Fuller to Australia in 1966) were included.

Two visits were scheduled each semester to familiarise the students with the selected archives, and then independent research was carried out, utilising primary and secondary sources, to communicate insights into Australian design history through a poster.

Yiwei Qi's poster is, in fact, an interactive game, inspired by the 1971 children's book *Zoetrope to Cinemascope* published by Jigsaw Factory, which explains moving pictures. The poster also features a thaumatrope-like disc on the back that can be flipped over to reveal descriptions of the works designed by Alex Stitt and Bruce Weatherhead pictured in the circles.

In the second semester of 2017, students in the Curating and Exhibiting Communication Design course curated, designed and installed the first of six exhibitions held at the RMIT Design Archives.¹ Each exhibition focussed on a discrete archive, including the Fashion Design Council and Jigsaw Factory (2018), automotive designers Chris Emmerson and Phillip Zmood (to coincide with the fourth annual conference of Automotive Historians Australia, 2019), Alex Stitt (2020) and Clarence Chai (2023). Until 2018, the course included a Curated Digital Portfolio assignment, where each student designed a website communicating their own practice but this reduced the time available to curate, design and install the exhibition to eight weeks of the semester.

From 2019, the course was expanded to the full twelve-week semester,² moving from an exhibition concept to blueprint, and then design and production of all elements of the exhibition, including installation and de-installation. This required establishing small teams to develop discrete elements of the exhibition and clear channels of communication to ensure exhibition coherence and continuity. Regular milestone presentations were included to present concepts and work in progress to RDA staff, Ann Carew and Simone Rule, as well as receiving professional advice and support from the RMIT Culture Production Coordinators, Erik North and Tim McLeod.

Preceding pages

Educator and social activist Lorna Hannan explaining the value designers Alex Stitt and Bruce Weatherhead brought to educational publishing as part of the 'Save Spaceship Earth' exhibition preparation, RMIT Design Archives, 2018, photographer Ann Carew.

Left

Zoetrope to Jigsaw Toy Factory, 2017, designer Yiwei Qui.

Pandemic Pivot

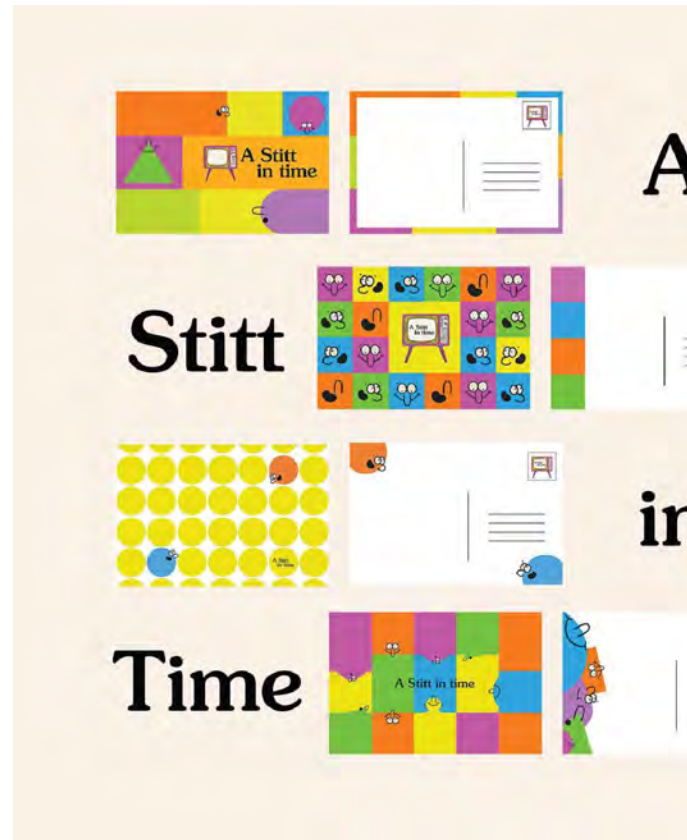
On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organisation declared that the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was a worldwide pandemic, and by March 19, Australia's borders were closed to all non-citizens and non-residents. By the end of March, Melbourne began a strict forty-three-day lockdown, followed by a 111-day lockdown from July–October. By October 21, 2021, Melbourne had spent 262 days, or half of that eighteen-month period in strict lockdowns.³ This required all studio teaching to be carried out online via the Canvas learning management system and Microsoft Teams. International travel restrictions meant that some students completed their entire two-year Master of Communication Design program remotely, negotiating two time zones and without ever attending in-person classes in Melbourne.

Newly appointed lecturer Dr Fayen d'Evie led the first semester of the Curating and Exhibiting Communication Design course in 2020 that was to focus on art director and graphic designer Les Mason (1924–2009) in a physical exhibition at the RMIT Design Archives. However, the RDA was closed to both staff and visitors by March 23, and as Ann Carew recorded in "Mindplay: Curating and Exhibiting Design During COVID-19," d'Evie "argued that there were strong precedents for innovation in online curation, and for the design of digital archival exhibitions, but also significant scope for students to innovate."⁴

The result was a playful and interactive website⁵ that was both an homage to Mason, a showcase of the RMIT Design Archives, and a game platform that was shared via Instagram (@mindplay.lesmason). Carew also noted that the Microsoft Team channel "Epic Cure" (named after the *Epicurean* magazine that Mason designed from 1966–79) "facilitated an increased [asynchronous] level of engagement with individuals and teams, as we [RDA staff] had more time to reflect on the students' ideas and provide written commentary."⁶

This digital-first model advocated by d'Evie was followed in the second semester—following Melbourne's second 111-day lockdown—with an online exhibition *Alex Stitt: A Stitt in Time* focussing on graphic designer and animator Alexander Stitt (1937–2016),⁷ and included a live-streamed panel discussion *Humour in Design* with Julian Frost and Dan and Lienors Torre on October 14, as well as a downloadable children's activity book, *The Stitt Kit*.

In addition, a fitness app was inspired by Stitt's "Life. Be in it" healthy living campaign for the Victorian State Government in 1975. As Minh Le Hong Anh explained in "A Stitt in Time (UI/UX Case Study)": "The current Covid-19 has influenced our lives in various ways including requiring people to stay at home. We think this is a great time to create an App that use[s] the artworks and inspirations from [the] Alex Stitt Archive Collection to encourage people to exercise more indoor[s] and outdoor[s]."⁸ The enforced isolation of the pandemic also inspired a series of e-postcards "to help you deliver words of encouragement, no matter where you are",⁹ and face masks are "guaranteed to put a smile on anyone's face! (literally!)"¹⁰



Both websites were designed to be available only for twelve months, but a partial archive remains on social media on dedicated exhibition Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest sites in the case of "A Stitt in Time," including process work on branding a digital exhibition and the UI/UX case study mentioned previously.¹¹ This experience informed the development of an Expo website for the 2020 Master of Communication Design cohort¹² designed by alum Zenobia Ahmed, as well as a dedicated Instagram account (#rmit_mcd) to support program and exhibition communication. *seeChange*, a 2020 print-on-demand Yearbook designed by Michael Bojkowski and featuring typefaces designed by alums Dennis Grauel and Thy Hà, was also delivered to all students and remains available digitally or in print from Magcloud.¹³ The issue of digitally archiving student work, including the exhibitions, became the focus for Curating and Exhibiting Communication Design in the first semester of 2021, and resulted in the development of <https://itsongoing.com/> to communicate and archive student work from the program.

Pieter Huveneers I.O

In February 2021, travel restrictions were briefly relaxed between Victoria and Tasmania, enabling me to visit Launceston a second time to review the remaining private collection of designer Pieter Huveneers (1927–2017), in preparation for a special issue of the *RMIT Design Archives Journal* and to discuss the potential for an exhibition of Pieter Huveneers' work, including never-before exhibited



Opposite

e-postcards and phone wallpapers inspired by Alex Stitt for the *A Stitt in Time* online exhibition, 2020, designers Exhibiting and Curating Design students, Master of Communication Design, RMIT University.

paintings. I had last visited in 2018 to carry out a heritage assessment with Professor Harriet Edquist that led to the gift and accessioning of a significant archive of graphic design from the Netherlands, United Kingdom and Australia from 1946 to 1990 to the RDA in 2019. This acquisition is detailed in my editorial introduction to the “Huveeneers” special issue of the *RMIT Design Archives Journal*.¹⁴ I stayed at the UNESCO World Heritage convict site, Woolmers Estate in Longford, to assess the Nigel Peck Long Gallery and Frances Mary Archer Gallery with Woolmers Foundation Chairman, Peter Rae as a venue for a Huveeneers exhibition (perhaps, optimistically, in hindsight) in 2022.

The arrival of the Delta variant of Covid in 2021 saw three more lockdowns of twenty-nine days in total between February 12 and July 27 in Melbourne, making further travel to Tasmania impossible. The sixth lockdown of seventy-nine days covered the entire duration of Semester 2, and so Curating and Exhibiting Communication Design was taught entirely online by Fayen d’Evie and Chris Mether.

The thirty-six students enrolled in the course were provided, through a shared OneDrive folder, with “Pieter Huveeneers: A Catalogue of Artworks”¹⁵ identifying 111 framed paintings spanning a period from 1945 to 2011, and reference photographs of sixty-six lithographic posters (1946–64) available for exhibition in Tasmania, some of which were also viewable on the RDA Huveeneers Collection Highlights page.¹⁶ There was also the architect’s floorplan

of the Nigel Peck Centre, and a montage of photographs of the galleries I had taken in February. As curator, I provided a lecture on “The Graphic Arts of Pieter Huveeneers” and provided an overview of the two connected galleries available in the Nigel Peck Centre. Toni Roberts also provided a lecture on exhibition interpretation strategy, including site analysis, orientation and how to shape and pace visitor experience, and PhD candidate Mariana Bertelli Pagotto presented the results of two co-design workshops held in late 2020 and early 2021 to explore interpretation strategies for a Pieter Huveeneers exhibition.

In small groups, students carried out their own background research, including exhibition design precedents, for the first assignment, before forming four larger teams focussed on Identity and Promotion, Physical Exhibition Design, Publication Design, and Digital Exhibition Design. All communication and presentations were again documented through a dedicated Microsoft Teams channel to ensure coordination between the groups, informed by the overall exhibition identity.

The centrality of identity design was also informed by Huveeneers’ significant contribution to corporate identity in Australia—even though this was not the focus of this particular exhibition. *Beyond Borders* emerged as a title theme that communicated Huveeneers’ national border crossing from the Netherlands to the United Kingdom and Australia and the blurring of borders between graphic design and art. The title also resonated strongly with

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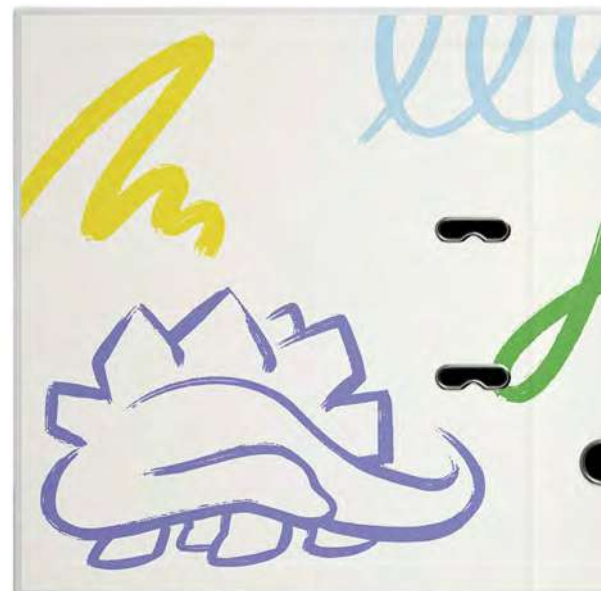
students, many of whom were unable to cross national or even state borders with pandemic restrictions, but worked collaboratively across continents, languages and time-zones.

The geometric sans-serif typeface Futura (Futura Renner for display titles and FuturaPT for subheadings and body text) was selected as it was specified in some of Huveneers' Australian corporate identity manuals. This was to be supplemented by sparing use of animal and human figures and abstract lines distilled from his United Kingdom poster designs. These graphic elements communicated his moving and playful approach to graphic design in this period, as opposed to the more formal and systematic approach he brought to corporate identity in Australia.

However, one proposed multi-format catalogue was designed to be contained in a ring-binder that was a central part of Huveneers' Australian corporate identity manuals. A website and digital gallery guide were also developed, and elevations for the two galleries were produced, with a chronological focus on Pieter Huveneers' design in the Nigel Peck Gallery, and paintings in the Frances Mary Archer Gallery. However, the inability to have a site visit and obtain more detailed specifications for the space and some of the artefacts hindered the development of a detailed model. Final submission for the integrated physical and virtual exhibition took the form of team handover documents and working files to be revised and finalised the following year.

It was not until the end of February 2022 that all regional border restrictions were removed, and I was able to return to Woolmers Estate at the end of April to take detailed measurements of the galleries, including exhibition furniture, and test the cable hanging system in the Frances Mary Archer Gallery and the lighting system. A final selection and measurement of all works to be exhibited was carried out and developed into an interpretive matrix spreadsheet for the final design and production of the exhibition by a second cohort of Curating and Exhibiting Communication Design students beginning in July.

With a confirmed opening date of January 7, 2023, running until March 5, I returned to Melbourne to produce a 1:20 scale gallery model in my living room in preparation for the start of Semester 2. Although lockdowns had ended, many international students were still unable to travel to Australia and hybrid teaching (concurrent face-to-face and online studios) remained in place until the end of the year. This posed challenges to physical production and installation of exhibitions and led Fayen d'Evie and Chris Mether to adopt a two-semester approach to the *Folding Social: 100 Finnish Social Innovations* exhibition at RMIT's First Site Gallery in 2022. While more international students were able to return to Melbourne in the second half of the year, it was decided that the second iteration of "Pieter Huveneers: Beyond Borders" would appropriately be completed in an online studio with the remaining seventeen international offshore students.



Top

Entrance to Pieter Huveneers: *Beyond Borders* Nigel Peck Gallery, Woolmers Estate, Longford, Tasmania, 2023, photographer Angela Casey.

Bottom

Proposed Publication for Pieter Huveneers: *Beyond Borders*, design by publication team 2021, Kaitlyn Chai, Alice Chang, Yao Zhang, Girivarshan Balasubramanian, Hongyi Zhai, Mingdi Gong, Lichen Shi, Yijie Wei, Yuansheng Shi and Sushi Fu.

Following Pages

Pieter Huveneers: *Beyond Borders*, Nigel Peck Gallery, Woolmers Estate, Longford, Tasmania, 2023, photographer Angela Casey.



Pieter Huveneers 2.0

The final iteration of “Pieter Huveneers: Beyond Borders” involved a review of all handover documents from 2021, including the more detailed interpretive matrix and gallery specifications to develop a Sketchup 3D model by Randa Abdelkarim. Once the overall interpretive strategy had been refined, five teams were formed; Branding and Social Media, Digital Website and Visitor Guide, Physical Exhibition Design, Print and Publication, and Public Programs, to produce developed designs ready for production in December, and installation at the start of 2023.

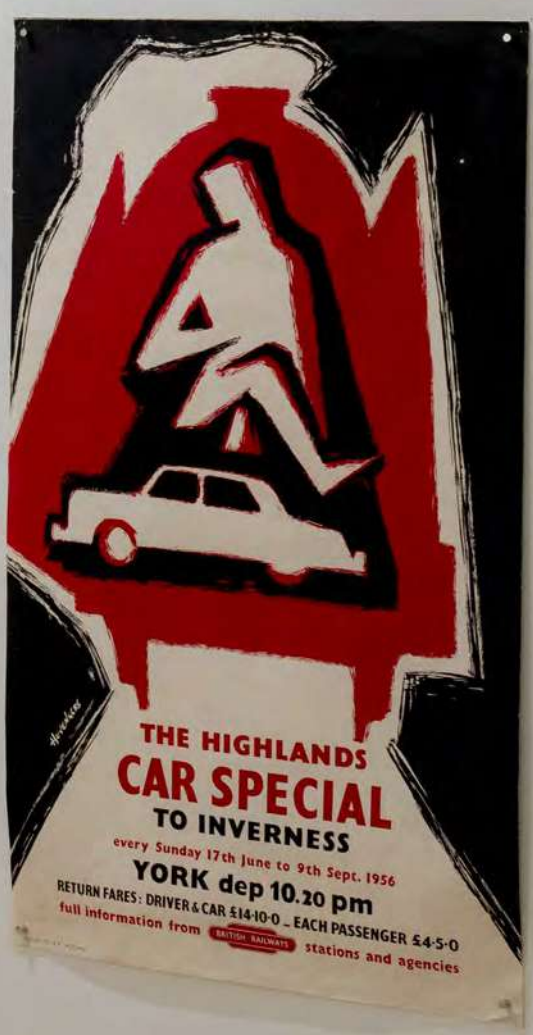
The *Pieter Huveneers: Beyond Borders* exhibition held in the Nigel Peck Long Gallery in Longford Tasmania in 2023¹⁷, surveyed Pieter Huveneers’ design career chronologically beginning with *Crossing Borders*, a brief biography on the right of the entrance. On the opposite wall was *De Stichtsche Tuin* (The Beautiful Garden) (1946), his first commissioned poster while still a student for an international flower exhibition in Utrecht and *Harwich Hook of Holland* (1950) for the British Railways ferry service, which brought

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BY B·R·S·PARCELS SERVICES



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Left
Australian corporate identities, *Pieter Huveneers: Beyond Borders*, Nigel Peck Gallery, Woolmers Estate, Longford Tasmania, 2023, photographer Angela Casey.

Right
Entrance to Frances Mary Archer Gallery with view of two *Metal Reflections* paintings. *Harwich Hook of Holland* (1963) left and 1959 version at right in Nigel Peck Gallery, *Pieter Huveneers: Beyond Borders*, Woolmers Estate, Longford, Tasmania, 2023, photographer Angela Casey.

Huveneers to the United Kingdom. Floor-mounted black vinyl circles marked off the decades from 1940–1990, and featured corporate identities he designed in each period (Heemaf Motors, Woodmansterne Slides, Philishave, Corporate Identity Programming, Huveneers Pty. Ltd. and *Metal Reflections*). The majority of the posters were unframed and mounted with magnets, presenting as they would appear on a billboard or on the street, which revealed the colour sharpness of the lithographic printing. The General Post Office, Post Office Savings Bank, and British Railways were strongly represented, along with posters for Mullard Valves, Pepsi-Cola and British Aluminium. The display at the end of the Nigel Peck Long Gallery juxtaposed his advertising design for Philips in the Netherlands and the seventy corporate identities he designed for Australian firms, as well as his own consulting firm Huveneers Pty. Ltd.

On either side of the two entries into the Frances Mary Archer Gallery were three further designs for *Harwich Hook of Holland* (1954, 1959, 1963) which demonstrated Huveneers' development from "The Dutch Artist," as he was dubbed on his arrival in Britain, to a global Creative Director at Philips in the Netherlands. This also marked the transition to his paintings, the majority of which he painted in his retirement at The Ridge in the Blue Mountains between 1990 and 2011. It also included four charcoal portraits completed between 1945 and 1948 in the Netherlands. In the left rear corner of the FMAG was one of the four wry self-portraits, mounted on the large easel Huveneers frequently used. Two walls featured fourteen of his *Metal Reflections* series of paintings that incorporated carefully crafted metallic strips, which shimmer and sculpturally curve out of the acrylic paint. Three of these even featured a small adhesive *Metal Reflections* label on the side of the frames, a graphic identity he created for this body of work,¹⁸ and reflected the porous border between art and design in Huveneers' creative life. This large gallery provided the opportunity to showcase industrial design he had undertaken in the United Kingdom, including the design of cane furniture for G.W. Scott & Sons, and

prototypes and finished designs for Smiths Clocks, modernising the appearance of their Selectric range in the late 1950s, as well as a range of publications featuring his design between 1952–82 in two display cases.

The exhibition catalogue expanded to 110 pages, featuring forty-eight full-colour reproductions of his posters designed between 1946 and 1965 in the Graphic Arts and Design section, and thirty-two paintings from 1945 to 2001 in the Art section. The final section acknowledged the role of the RMIT Design Archives, along with the fifty-two Master of Communication Design students, who activated the archive and designed the exhibition across two years. The cover of the exhibition catalogue features a 1975 photograph of Pieter Huveneers in Sydney holding a blank corporate identity manual, while the back cover featured his more painterly and exuberant *Graphic Worker* self-portrait (c.1952), illustrating how Huveneers bridged his Dutch applied art education with the needs of public and private organisations that sought to engage and communicate with more diverse publics. The exhibition catalogue was available for sale at Woolmers, along with the "Huveneers" issue of the *RMIT Design Archives Journal*,¹⁹ and a preview is available on the website²⁰, as well as a store function to purchase the catalogue at the conclusion of the exhibition. The website also features an archive page which redirects visitors to the RMIT Design Archives and the Huveneers collection.

My personal definition of exhibition design is of a collective enterprise, filled with individual surprise, and *Huveneers: Beyond Borders* is a manifest example of a collective enterprise involving the collaboration of fifty-two Curating and Exhibiting Communication design students across two years, ably lead by Dr Fayen d'Evie and Chris Mether. This could not have been possible without the support of Tanis Wilson, Peter Rae and Sue-Ellen Groer of Woolmers Estate, Ann Carew and Simone Rule of the RMIT Design Archives, and Amanda Floyd and Ellen Waite who installed the exhibition with me in January, alongside Ashley Bird.



Each individual contributed an essential element, linking curation, exhibition, interpretation, publication and editorial design, with a focus on visitor experience, whether at Woolmers Estate in the first two months of 2023, online or in ongoing conversation with the catalogue publication. All of this was achieved through, what Donald Schön called, a “conversation with the materials of the situation.”²¹ These materials consisted of the 20th-century tangible archives and the intangible design legacy of Pieter Huveneers, but also a 21st-century reflective communication design practice and online dialogue that transcended the physical isolation and distance brought about by a global pandemic. Pieter Huveneers had physically crossed three national borders to pursue his design career in the 20th century, inspiring the title of this exhibition, but “Beyond Borders” is also a fitting homage to all students and teachers in the Master of Communication Design between 2020 and 2022 who navigated the intricacies, challenges and opportunities of online and hybrid learning to communicate design.

DEDICATION

This article is dedicated to the *Beyond Borders* graduates: Randa Abdelkarim, Girivarshan Balasubramanian, Kaitlyn Chai, Yu-Pei Chang, Yisheng Chen, Ziwen Chen, Yuchen Dai, Sijing Duan, Larissa Francis, Sishi Fu, Hermione Gilchrist, Mingdi Gong, Qin Guo, Ningzehui Han, Anqi He, Josephine Hermanto, Jie Ji, Woying Lam, Jennifer Lea, Vivienne Lee, Jia Li, Yifei Li, Yixiao Li, Langcheng Liu, Qingyuan Liu, Brendan Matasuyama, Jai Vyankatesh Mudgerikaar, Chiarra Paton-Dowling, Vrushali Nitin Pawar, Anagha Nitin Pednekar, Sumit Saha, Yuansheng Shi, Yichen Shi, Yixuan Song, Marleena Tedja, Gerson Gilrandy Tirasbudi, Yuhan Wang, Ziyi Wang, Longwen Wei, Yijie Wei, Natassia Williams, Shangxiao Wu, Yunyi Xie, Chenyi Ye, Ru Yue, Ruihan Zeng, Hongyi Zhai, Alice Zhang, Yao Zhang, Yongchun Zhang, Yang Zhao, Jiarong Zheng, and Yangzi Zhou.

ENDNOTES

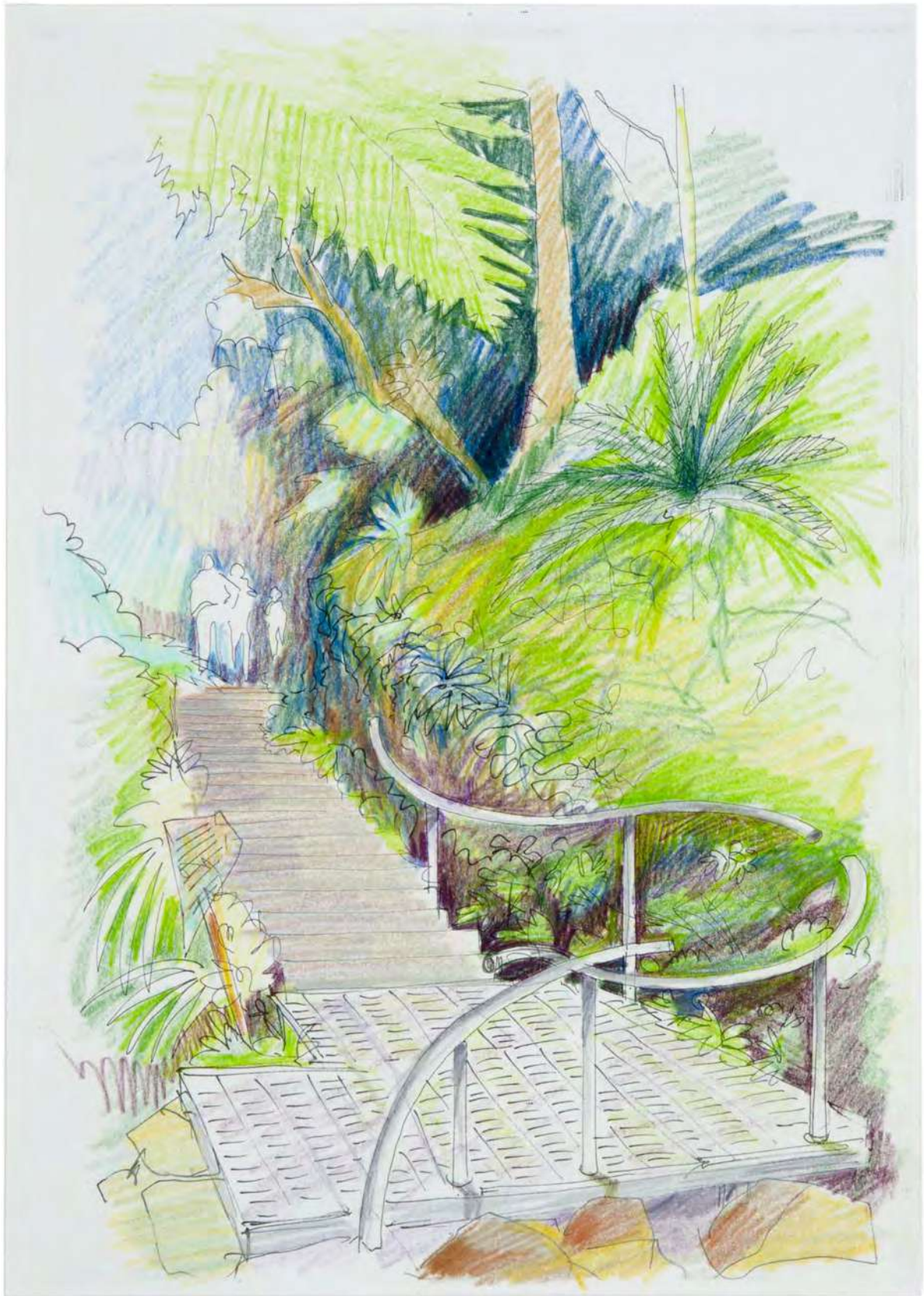
- 1 *Archivia* (2017) Suzie Zezula and Brad Haylock; *This is Not an Exhibition* (2018) Žiga Testen and Brad Haylock; *Save Spaceship Earth* (2018) Suzie Zezula and Noel Waite; *The Joy of Motoring* (2019) Hope Lumsden-Barry and Noel Waite; *A Stitt in Time* (2020) Fayen d'Evie and Chris Mether; and *A Guy Called Chai* (2023) Fayen d'Evie.
- 2 The Curated Digital Portfolio was subsequently embedded in GRAP2681 Advanced Communication Design Studio.
- 3 Ian Macreadie, “Reflections from Melbourne, the world’s most locked-down city, through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond,” *Microbiology Australia*, 43 (CSIRO Publishing, 2022): 3–4, <https://doi.org/10.1071/MA22002>; Victorian Parliamentary Library and Information Service, “Chronology of Victorian Border Closures Due to COVID-19” (2022), accessed July 28, 2023, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-3131962501>.
- 4 Ann Carew, “Mindplay: Curating and Exhibiting Design during COVID-19,” *University Museums and Collections Journal*, Vol 12, no.1 (ICOM, 2020): 20, accessed October 25, 2023, <http://umac.icom.museum/umac-journal/>.
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Looking In Looking Out: Student Experiences of the RMIT Design Archives Window Gallery

Sarah Teasley interviews Mei Leong and Ellen Waite





Looking In Looking Out: Student Experiences of the RMIT Design Archives Window Gallery

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The RMIT Design Archives Window Gallery provides an accessible entry point for student engagement with the RMIT Design Archives, and more broadly, design research, curation, spatial design, and exhibition design.

Since the Window Gallery's inception in 2012, installations have been developed by the RMIT Culture team to provide a public-facing window into exhibitions underway at the RMIT Design Hub Gallery. Student groups have also designed installations as part of coursework for programs in the schools of Fashion and Textiles, Interior Design and Communication Design.

In 2022 there was a renewed push to reactivate the Window Gallery, focusing on the space's ability to provide an aperture into the Design Archives, highlighting the collections and encouraging student-led research and curation. The Window Gallery was identified as an ideal learning environment for communication design students by former students, Mei Leong and Ellen Waite, who undertook independent internships with the Design Archives in 2022.

At the time of writing, three student groups have requested the use of the Window Gallery space to showcase student-led exhibition design and curation. These groups have utilised a document of design specifications put together by Ellen Waite during her time with the Design Archives in 2022. Waite's work proposing a window installation as a solo project and synthesising the Window Gallery's guidelines, specifications and resources has paved the way for other student designers to engage with the Window Gallery. Mei Leong completed a solo internship at the Design Archives in 2022, producing a window installation highlighting David Lancashire's archive. *Nature Echoes: David Lancashire Design* was a culmination of Leong's independently led research project, which they undertook on-site in the Design Archives.

In this interview, Sarah Teasley discusses with Mei Leong and Ellen Waite their experiences of their time spent working with the RMIT Design Archives' collections and designing for the Window Gallery space, and the impact of these experiences on their respective personal creative practices.

First Encounters: The Building

SARAH TEASLEY (ST): When did you first learn about the RMIT Design Archives?

ELLEN WAITE (EW): I was introduced to the RMIT Design Archives in a smartly unconventional way. I first discovered the RMIT Design Archives through working with RMIT Culture, which "unites the University's public cultural spaces, creative programs and cultural collections."¹ I was asked by Erik North, who is the Senior Production

Preceding Pages

Photograph of Holden styling studio showing stages in design, c.1975, photographer unknown, Gift of Chris Emmerson, RMIT Design Archives.

Opposite

Interpretive Pathway for MacKenzie Falls, (Gariwerd) Grampians National Park Victoria, 1999. David Lancashire Design, RMIT Design Archives.

Continued

Coordinator for RMIT Culture, to assist with some graphic design work, including creating an accessible series of technical specifications for RMIT Culture sites (the Design Hub Gallery, The Capitol and RMIT Gallery).

Through my work with Erik North, Tim McLeod and Simon Maisch of the RMIT Culture production team, I found out about the RMIT Design Archives and the wealth of resources and knowledge that are held within that building.

During my first two years of study at RMIT I really had no idea the Archives existed. I think the beauty of Building 9 (where you undertake the majority of your Communication Design studies), is that it's in the centre of the city—you have so much at your fingertips (a range of shops, diverse food spots, libraries and galleries). Exploring the campus can easily slip your mind. I was halfway through my studies when I discovered the RMIT Design Archives. Once I found out about it, it felt like this wave of “Oh my God, this resource is here. How can I get involved? How can I find out more? How can I dive in?”

MEI LEONG (ML): Like Ellen, I discovered the Archives independently of the School of Design. I was a pathway student in my final year, looking for creative facilities on campus, when I found the Design Archives' Instagram. This feed about design history in Melbourne significantly overlapped with my interests in collection's cultural heritage.

When I studied art history, I would compare the artist's study against a finished painting. There was a direct relationship between the process, materials and creative work. From the outside, looking in, what constitutes a design process (histories), or artefacts seemed more slippery.

It may be a lack of teaching of Australian design history but I sensed the Design Archives was where you go to gain a perspective on the role of design in terms of cultural impact and legacy. Despite the high threshold to entry for undergraduate students, I was eager to find a way into the Archives. So, when I had a spare elective, I reached out to the Archives via email, introduced myself and secured an internship!

EW: It's interesting that the nature of an archive is to be a protective, restricted building but there's also a fragility and care amongst all of that. Particularly as a very early career designer, it feels like you could not possibly be at a level to interact with a building that could house archives that hold such gravitas.

I feel like it's hard to get to a point where you feel capable of handling objects with care, or understanding the amount of care that goes into these spaces, let alone being able to be in (what feels like) such a protected place. It is really daunting, but so rewarding and so exciting when you feel comfort in that kind of space. It's beautiful.



First Experiences

EW: The first time I visited the Design Archives I walked into the public access space, called the Active Archive, with its beautiful high ceiling, and full-height glass windows—and the first thing that struck me were the cupboards, these shelving units on the western wall. Why are they empty?

I had an understanding that this was an active archive, and from this descriptor and the bare floor-to-ceiling shelves giving the impression that there's so many objects here, but they're all hidden—there's this sense of opportunity. I met Ann Carew, Curatorial Officer for the RMIT Design Archives, for the first time at that moment as well, and I asked why there were no objects in the shelves.

In hindsight, there are obvious reasons as to why there are no objects in those spaces, for example, conservation of the collection. But my curiosity was piqued. I started speaking with Ann about how the space was used, finding out more about what the physicality of that space was, the collections that were housed there, student engagement, and finally the RMIT Design Archives Window Gallery. My engagement with the Archives snowballed from there.

To witness this open space, this window of opportunity, to be generously taught about the Archives, to voice my excitement and then to immediately have the response be “OK then, let's be really proactive about this—how can we make this space even more open and welcoming?” It was a very special moment.



ML: I first crossed the precipice into the Archives to discuss an internship program, meeting with Ann Carew and Simone Rule. They outlined my program for researching the David Lancashire Design collection and to develop an exhibition proposal for the Window Gallery program. It was my dream placement! Being an undergraduate, the opportunity to research design history in a cultural institution exceeded my expectations.

On my next visit, I delved into the collection and learned how to safely handle materials. One of the early highlights was seeing the original illustrations for the *Outback: A Journey* booklet, a paper sampler for Raleigh Paper.² This experience allowed me to witness the magic of the Archives firsthand, seeing the illustrations being transformed into the finished publication.

My attention shifted within the collection when I stumbled upon environmental concept drawings for the MacKenzie Falls in the Grampians National Park (Gariwerd). These pencil sketches piqued my curiosity, leading to questions about their purpose, origin, and the David Lancashire Design studio's involvement in designing a structure in a national park. These materials began my research into the studio's environmental interpretation projects for natural heritage sites, including national parks, reserves, and gardens.

The Window Gallery

ST: Ellen and Mei, you were both involved with the Window Gallery. Maybe you could tell us about the Window Gallery and what appealed to you. So why? Why the Window Gallery?

EW: The Window Gallery was this huge window of possibility and opportunity. It's a beautiful public facing gallery. It's small and compact, which means it's accessible (in the sense that you don't necessarily need access to specialised resources to design for the space, and you don't need a huge number of works to be able to fill the space) and it gets a significant amount of foot traffic.

One of the first things that I actively investigated about the Window Gallery was how people interacted with it. I sat outside the Design Archives and studied the people who were passing by—so many people were unconsciously spending time near the Window Gallery—often without realising it.

The Window Gallery is a beautiful space on the boundary of the RMIT city campus and life on Melbourne streets. You have design students who have spilled out of Building 100, locals heading towards the Victoria Market, tourists exploring the city, and children on their way to and from school. It was an exciting challenge to consider the design decisions that would need to be made to use the Window Gallery to introduce the Archives to such a diverse audience.

It's a very special place on campus and can be used as a resource to make public projects from a variety of student groups, regardless of year level, prior experience or creative discipline. You can fill the space with just one or two pieces or focus on a singular key idea. Alternatively, you could fill the space with a densely curated show—regardless of the volume of work, a gravitas to the work is afforded because of the form of the Window Gallery. It's raised above the ground, like a podium, with a floor-to-ceiling glass window—it's also the primary access point to the RMIT Design Archives, and is an integral element of the beautiful Building 100 (which in itself is a beautiful piece of design and architecture, designed by Sean Godsell, and awarded the Victoria Architecture Medal and the William Wardell Award at the 2013 Victorian Architecture Awards Awards). The Window Gallery really offers a vast amount of opportunity.

The Window Gallery Guide

ST: Ellen, your major outcome from working with the Design Archives was the development of the Window Gallery Guide. Can you tell us more about this project?

EW: The space itself is an almost entirely blank canvas—so you have complete flexibility with what you exhibit and how you present your ideas and concepts. To have an opportunity as a young, early career designer to experiment, learn and be able to make mistakes in a supportive environment is invaluable. When you get into a bigger space, there are more restrictions on how you're able to work but in a smaller space, you can work through problems at your own pace.

Putting together the Window Gallery Guide was about developing technical specifications that could be read and understood by anyone—how do you create a set of technical specifications that are suitable for high level production

Left
Active Archive,
RMIT Design Archives,
2013, photographer,
Georgina Matheson.

Continued



designers and engineers but also fine artists, graphic designers, industrial designers, architects, and everyone in-between, at a variety of education levels—from first year students to career professionals. How do you design specifications for this broad audience in such a way that everybody has access to the same amount of information and all the information they require to utilise the Window Gallery to the best of its abilities? I think it's so important that anyone can communicate their ideas, regardless of skill-level, experience or background.

Working with RMIT Culture's production team, I felt incredibly lucky to have been introduced to a variety of areas of production design in such an inclusive, open and caring environment. My hope for the Window Gallery Guide was that other people could access this learning too.

I had a really special moment this year when I got to witness the Window Gallery Guide in action. I currently work as a Studio Assistant, based in RMIT's Building 9 Makerspace. During one of my shifts, I was able to watch a group of students use the Gallery Guide to develop their upcoming exhibition *A Guy Called Chai* (2023). It was a unique opportunity because it meant that cohort of students were all able to design despite not being able to be in the physical space. Most of the time, if there's a show on, you can't enter the space. So how are you able to provide as much information as possible without having to be in that space, or particularly for international students or offshore students, without even seeing the space in person? That was the goal of the Window Gallery Guide—it was so special to see it fulfil this purpose in person.

ST: Was there anything different that you needed to consider when developing the Window Gallery Guide for

the Design Archives, in comparison to, say, if you were creating it for an academic building?

ML: Two things come to mind; curatorial intention and preservation of materials.

EW: I think creating an opportunity for students to engage with the Window Gallery and giving them an outline of the support they are able to access was essential. For example, outlining some of the fantastic resources that RMIT offers like the Design Archives themselves, the Library Makerspace, the Building 9 Makerspace (if they're a student studying communication design), RMIT's libraries, RMIT Culture's production team, their tutors, lecturers, etc.

What also makes the RMIT Design Archives so unique is their collection of process materials—this is encouraged to be at the forefront of curating/designing for the Window Gallery.

Telling Stories in the Window Gallery?

ST: Mei, how did you land on the field of interpretation design in the David Lancashire Design (DLD) collection?

ML: I first became interested in the field of interpretation design, after taking the Care for the Rare Studio led by Dr. Toni Roberts and Chris Mether. It's a bit of a niche field that aims to enhance visitor experience. When I came into the Archives and viewed the DLD archive, I realised the influence of the DLD studio on interpretation design in cultural and natural heritage sites across Australia. Looking at David Lancashire's archive was a rare opportunity to get a back-end view of how a designer becomes involved in environmental storytelling.

I studied designs from three projects across Australia;



MacKenzie Falls in the Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park, First Creek Wetlands in Adelaide Botanic Gardens and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve (the last two were in collaboration with the landscape architects, Taylor Cullity Lethlean). The projects involved creative concepts and design proposals for signage, physical timelines, handrails, pond walls, and didactic sculptures. It's interesting how all these deliverables work as visitor touchpoints, creating a connection to nature.

I started carefully looking at the original materials in the archive, and they led my research journey. One of my first finds was a hand drawn sketch for MacKenzie Falls. It was a concept drawing in coloured pencil of the walkway down to the Falls. The undulating hand-rail in the drawing sparked my curiosity. My generation of designers would expect to see a digital rendering. The design process evident in DLD's drawing was hands on and artistic. I wondered what it had been used for. Was it a finished concept? Was it going to the client? I thought about what sort of design process had led to this drawing, and it encouraged me to explore the DLD archive further.

Responding to the Archives

ST: By working with David Lancashire's process or working with the materials to understand his process or his studios' process, do you feel like there was an impact on your process as a communication designer?

ML: Absolutely. The impact is that it changed my outlook and understanding of design processes. I started to look at this work and realise that actually this is a really effective way of showing a concept. A pencil sketch is an expressive way to use gesture and colour to communicate nature.

By using a sketch and using pencil, you're also saying this is not a finished idea. This is a proposal of how it can be that is cost effective and efficient. So, you see that this is a really smart way to approach these drawings that end up going into client documentation.

Some of the themes of this project were about creating a work that echoed the terrain. It's using shape, material and colour with the signage and the rails, and you could see this 100% in the expressive quality of the drawing. The impact is that it made me interested and curious about sketching and drawing and thinking in a way that was not mediated by a screen interface.

EW: One of the many idiosyncrasies of the Design Archives is this ability for us, as young designers, to see a variety of different processes. It's a unique and special opportunity that isn't afforded often—even working in a design studio or even under a teacher, you often only get to see a portion of their process. To be able to see every step of the process is such a rare opportunity. It puts the emphasis on the design process and the diversity of design thinking and what has influenced that thinking.

ST: Ellen, what drew you to research the process drawings in automotive designer Phillip Zmood's archive?

EW: Ann recommended I investigate the Design Archives' vast collection of sketches, photographs and memorabilia, relating to automotive design—I quickly fell in love with the dynamic designs of Phillip Zmood. While I didn't have a background in automotive design, it was easy to slip into Zmood's world. It was an exhilarating experience to be able to start from scratch and to learn about his process, his design choices, and his legacy. It was an opportunity to bring his work out of the vault and into the public eye.

Above

Illustration for interpretative panels for the Royal Botanic Gardens, Adelaide, 2012, illustrator David Pryce, designer, David Lancashire Design, landscape architects, Taylor Cullity Lethlean, Gift of David Lancashire, RMIT Design Archives

Opposite

Window design for the RMIT Design Hub exhibition *John Gollings: Learning From Surfers Paradise*, curated by Fleur Watson, 2014. Photographer: Tobias Titz

Continued



Top
Drawing of styling
proposal for TA Torana,
1974–1975, Phillip Zmood,
Automotive designer,
RMIT Design Archives.

Bottom
Styling proposal for
Holden Torana GTR-X,
c. 1970, Phillip Zmood,
Automotive designer,
RMIT Design Archives.



When I first began my research in 2021, there was a small exhibition featuring some of his work at the City Gallery titled *Dream Factory: GMH Design at Fishermans Bend 1964–2020*. It was fantastic to have such a relevant exhibition design precedent to experience and unpack and to question why they made the design decisions that they did, and why they worked or how the experience could be improved.

I remember the first image that caught my eye was a staged photograph of the studio where Zmood was working. Two things really piqued my attention—the illustrations that were being completed and the full-scale car murals pasted to the walls. This method of working to scale prioritised the form of the car over its internal workings, while allowing for close attention to details and finishes. I felt like, by understanding these processes, I gained a far better understanding of their design choices.

The illustrations shown in the image championed Zmood's stylistic choices—they were dense, and lush with colour, texture and movement. The focus gravitated towards how light might hit the car and how it might move, placing an emphasis on sleek, effortless speed.

Designing for the Window Gallery was an occasion to share, not only Zmood's work, but to highlight Zmood's processes and my own process of researching this work (and the work of other designers whose material is also held in the Archives, including Ken Foletta, Ian Edgar and Chris Emmerson) in the RMIT Design Archives.

ST: Mei, can you tell us about the window that you designed?

ML: My window design, *Nature Echoes: David Lancashire Design* explored interpretation design for natural heritage projects in the DLD's archive. The design was inspired by my site visit to MacKenzie Falls. I was on site witnessing the interpretation relationship to the natural environment. Reflecting on the collection and this experience - what stood out to me, was the subtle way the built form echoed the landscape. This theme of the echoing nature shaped my response to the collection, which I expressed in this display.

With my window design, I wanted to explore the materiality of the collection, the design process of interpretation, through this theme of echoing. I created a video sharing the process designs with site photography of the First Creek Wetlands from John Gollings and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve from Ben Wrigley, to provide the real-world context for these drawings.

In terms of materiality, I had finished art and designs for sculptures from the collection, that I wanted to articulate in the window. I did not want them to become flattened on a screen, so I gave them dimensions by fabricating laser-cut panels. They were displayed on the window's floor, just as they were embedded in the ground in the real world.

I met David Lancashire when I was developing the exhibition. He encouraged me to be hands-on, draw on a palette from the nature. In past projects, he discussed painting signs by hand. In response, I hand painted the interpretive themes for each project on linens, which evoke naturalistic texture and tone.

The window was an opportunity to experiment with different design collateral and production to convey a feeling for the collection. In the greater context of RMIT design disciplines and the Archives, I wanted to showcase the niche field of interpretation design expressed in landscape architecture and graphic design.

Impact on your practice

ST: Can you talk about how the experience of working with the RMIT Design Archives and the Window Gallery have impacted your creative practice as an early career designer?

EW: For me it was a real, tactile understanding of designing for three-dimensional space. In the past, during my communication design degree, I'd chosen to undertake electives about public art and interior design—my focus has always been on public practices.

There's such a difference between mocking things up in 3D versus actually bringing designs into a three-dimensional space and walking through them—you have to figure out how you're going to build a story in that space. I now work with the exhibition design team at the National Gallery of Victoria as an exhibition graphic designer and although I am still learning and growing in that role, the learnings from my time with the RMIT Design Archives has been such a fantastic foundation.

As I mentioned earlier, it was this beautiful opportunity to make mistakes and to learn, play and explore. Mei and I worked together to complete these quick student-led design sprints where, over the course of two days, we would create a brief, develop a concept, design, and then install it in the Window Gallery. That experimentation, that understanding of three-dimensional space was an integral part of the learning experience.

ML: I've built multi-disciplinary skills across design research, curation, and exhibition design during my time with the Archives. I have been interested in cultural collections, galleries, libraries and the GLAM sector, which is why interpretation design fascinates me. But I felt as a student designer, it's such a high barrier to access, to find a way into this field. So having this access into the Archives, into exhibition design, and finding where my practice intersects as a student was empowering. It was outstanding to have the Archives and RMIT Culture support me to research and curate and produce an exhibition by myself in an academic context. During Melbourne Design Week, David Lancashire appeared in conversation with Dominic Hofstede in a session called *A Sense of Place*³ Dominic selected an image of the *Nature Echoes: David Lancashire Design* window and an image of Jenny Grigg's research as a reference point in the discussion of David's legacy.⁴ It is really interesting to see my work in dialogue with other people and other ideas. At that moment the invisible disciplinary barriers disappeared and I realised that I can create work or be in research, while in dialogue with multiple practices. That is such a unique opportunity, connecting emerging and established designers through the Archives, that I wouldn't get anywhere else.

Continued



Above
RMIT Design Archives
Gallery Window for
*Nature Echoes: David
Lancashire Design, 2023.*
Photographer, Mei Leong.

Right
Design drawing,
Interpretation for
Tidbinbilla Nature
Reserve for Environment
ACT, 2004, creators Tony
Galeski, David Lancashire
Design, Landscape
Architects Taylor Cullity
and Lethlean, RMIT
Design Archives.

Opposite
Installation view, *Nature
Echoes*, RMIT Design
Archives 2023. Detail,
Feature Panel and
Stenciled Interpretive
Themes, photographer,
Mei Leong.





ST: I think that's really beautiful—the continuity or the legacy of practices, and multiple skill sets, and the recognition that you can plug a research practice, including archival research, into your practice as a designer, whether that leads you to interpretation design or working in the GLAM sector.

Anything final that you want to add as closing remarks?

ML: What stands out from my experience is the dedication of the Design Archives' staff to facilitate students. I felt supported through my research, exhibition design and installation, which I could not have done without their guidance and feedback. I really want to thank Ann Carew, Simone Rule, Leah Martin, and Jenna Blyth from the Design Archives, and Tim McLeod from RMIT Culture, for being generous with their time, sharing their skills and knowledge, and welcoming my explorations in the Archives. They are a fabulous team. If students want to get involved in the Design Archives, I highly recommend reaching out for an internship.

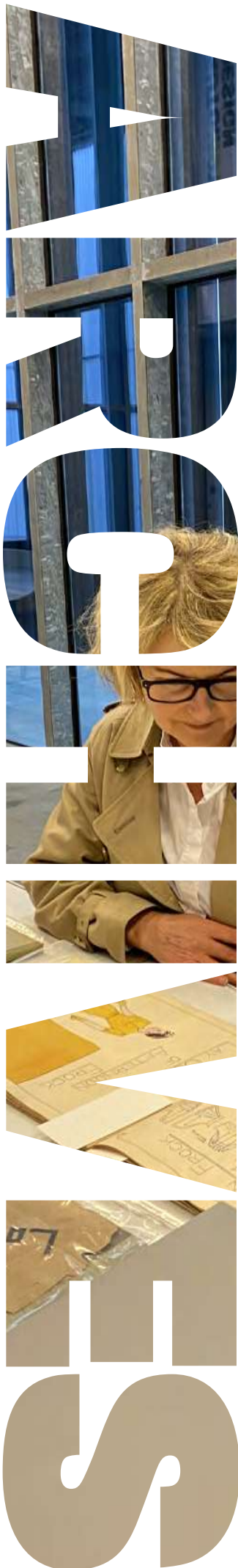
EW: Absolutely. I completely mirror that sentiment. Exhibition design is such a collaborative practice and to be able to experience that with such a giving, kind, and caring team (Ann, Simone, Leah, Jenna from the Archives and Erik, Tim and Simon from RMIT Culture's production team) is such a phenomenal opportunity.

The Window Gallery is such a unique space to both 'look in' to the RMIT Design Archives (calling attention to the Window Gallery as an exhibition space) and 'look out' by using the Window Gallery as a way of communicating the vast and diverse collections maintained within the RMIT Design Archives.

ST: Thank you so much for your generosity with your time, and it's fantastic to hear what positive experiences you've had in the world of archives and of going through the door, entering into those walls and then creating a window that shares some of the archive with the world. Thank you very, very much.

ENDNOTES

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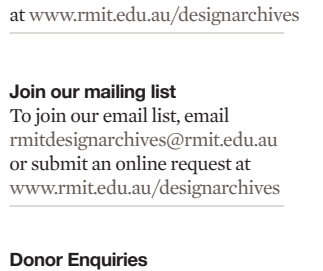
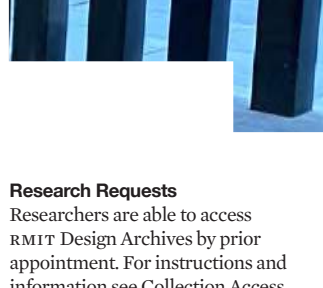
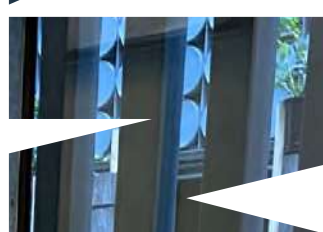
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This Page

Deborah Wills-Ives, RMIT Design Archives, September, 2023. Photographer, Ann Carew.

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