

**School of Architecture and Design**

**Review of Candidature**

Semester 2, 2003

Name of Candidate: S tuart Harrison

Date: 31 August 2003

Commencement date: March 2003

Student number: 9708060P

Expected Completion date: March 2006

Full-time

Part-time

Senior Supervisor: S hane Murray

Second Supervisor:

Consultant Advisors:

Degree:  Master of  
OR  
 Doctor of Philosophy  
(Direct entry/Transfer from Masters)

By:  Thesis  
OR  
 Project

Stage:  First review

Research-in-progress  
review number #

## **First Review of Candidature**

### **A1. Title of study**

*Indicate the central theme you are exploring in one succinct phrase.*

The Civic Face: propositions for a contemporary architectural language for new Australian public buildings.

### **A2. What do you want to research and with what end in mind?**

*What is the research question you are asking? What is the material and area you want to study?*

In the past, public buildings were distinguished in the public environment. In particular, typically 19<sup>th</sup> Century Buildings were distinguishable from the general fabric of the city.

In recent times (since 70s), the climate of privatization and general politics, the traditional difference between public and commercial buildings is no longer clearly obvious within the built environment. For example, Post Offices are no longer to be seen as public, as they are subsumed into the commercial shop-front type. Similarly, municipal offices are often indistinguishable from commercial building types. Contemporary Architects are still called upon however to create "public" buildings.

How can Architects design civic presence into new buildings within differing Australian urban environments? The material is formed by Architectural precedents, both historic and from contemporary architectural discourse in practice. The area of study is the tradition and architectural methods of treating the civic in buildings (through both pre-20<sup>th</sup> century and Modern Movement examples); the aim, through design research, is to enter into and extend this tradition in our contemporary context.

### **A3. How will you conduct your research?**

*What research approach/ method/structure will you use? You need to carry out your work in a particular, advised and informed manner. Insert a work schedule for the next six/ twelve months and a separate schedule for the entire period until your submission for examination.*

Three projects will be completed based on existing briefs for public facilities. These are different in terms of program and location, but linked to the central question. These will be completed in an overlapping sequential manner, with common architectural precedents but also acting as each other's precedent in the development of an architectural language.

Refer <http://users.tce.rmit.edu.au/stuart.harrison> for graphical representation of the project structure and proposed timetable.

### **A4. Why is this research worth doing?**

*What do you expect to get out of this research? What do you see to be the value of the research and to whom? Is there an existing body of work, which is relevant to your research?*

The Outcome of this research is a strategy to aid the design of new public buildings in Australia. The research is of value as the contemporary public building can be viewed as lacking a language that separates it from other building types. It will be of value to those attempting to design buildings in this context, as a precedent.

### **A5. What will you produce?**

*Describe the form, quantity and depth of the research to be undertaken and presented.*

Three developed architectural design projects shall be the principal body of the design research. These projects will develop an architectural language and will be viewed together through an evolving website (<http://users.tce.rmit.edu.au/stuart.harrison>), which will carry written research and precedent material.

Presentations of the research shall be via this form, electronically projected in public form, and reviewed via the web at other times. Panels of the project will be produced at the conclusion of the research for display and permanent record, 4 portrait A0s nominally.

### **A6. Attach a concisely selected preliminary list of readings and references.**

*Please briefly note how the readings and references are expected to inform your research.*

The project will draw on the following:

The buildings and writings of Robert Venturi, esp.: *Iconography and Electronics Upon a Generic Architecture*

The late civic work of Mies and Wright.

The public building work of Edmond & Corrigan, Ashton Raggatt McDougall and Lyons.

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