



An Artists Impression

For some time now the Queensland Government has been implementing the 'ART Built In' policy, which specifies the 2 percent of all government building funds must go towards public art. In August 2002 the Public Art Agency (PAA) in relation to an upcoming opportunity at the new Brisbane Magistrates Courts approached me. After a process of application and a set of meetings with the PAA, the architects Cox Rayner, the project consultants Brecknock Consulting, and the projects Curator Jay Younger, I was

awarded site A1, in other words the site outside the entrance to the building.

Although my artistic career had been moving along steadily it was, at first, a bit of a shock to find myself designing the entry statement to such a prestigious institution and also a great leap of faith on the organisers on this project. This was my first public art project and a big one at that. After a few months of concept development I had arrived at a design that all parties felt represented the values the new courts wanted to project. In principle my design is about overcoming an obstacle, it is about an approach, the large curved form moves toward the L-shaped

concrete form by building momentum on itself, it climbs and therefore has the presence to pass through the obstacle without destroying it.

'Confluence' emerged from a notion associated with the judicial experience. The first is that life inherently presents obstacles which are either seen as overwhelming or resolvable. This work begins with a sense of calm, building up intensity towards the 'obstacle' before penetrating it and returning to a 'resolved' state. The second is the notion that in order to comprehend something, it first needs to be not only confronted but absorbed.

Other references are more physical in nature; it alludes to paper or script, an echoing voice. The work is also site specific, responding to and engaging the build-

ing's architecture, and shifting in impression from different vantage points. It lies within my practice of deriving complex meaning from minimal form and material.

Now began the problem of finding someone to build this 21 metre long artwork (65 metre developed). After discussing the project with a number of companies around Brisbane only one gave me a strong confident feeling, only one seemed up to the task and excited by its' potential, that company was the Albert Smith Group. From my first conversation with Elizabeth Easton and meeting Mitchell Smith and Mark Smith I new that ASG would rise to the challenge.

So began a two-year process of nutting out the potential ways of building and installing the work. At every stage I was

involved in making decisions with the ASG team and their interest, enthusiasm and knowledge base was commendable. In early September 2004 the work, now titled Confluence, was installed and thanks to Keith Jose (Project Manager) and Lewis Hoad (Installations Manager) the work went in without a hitch; it is without a doubt the highlight on my emerging artistic career.

Recently I have picked up another public art project this time through the Queensland College of Art / Griffith University and again I have procured the skills and vision of the team at Albert Smith Group. I hope to continue with what I trust both parties believe is an exciting partnership.

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