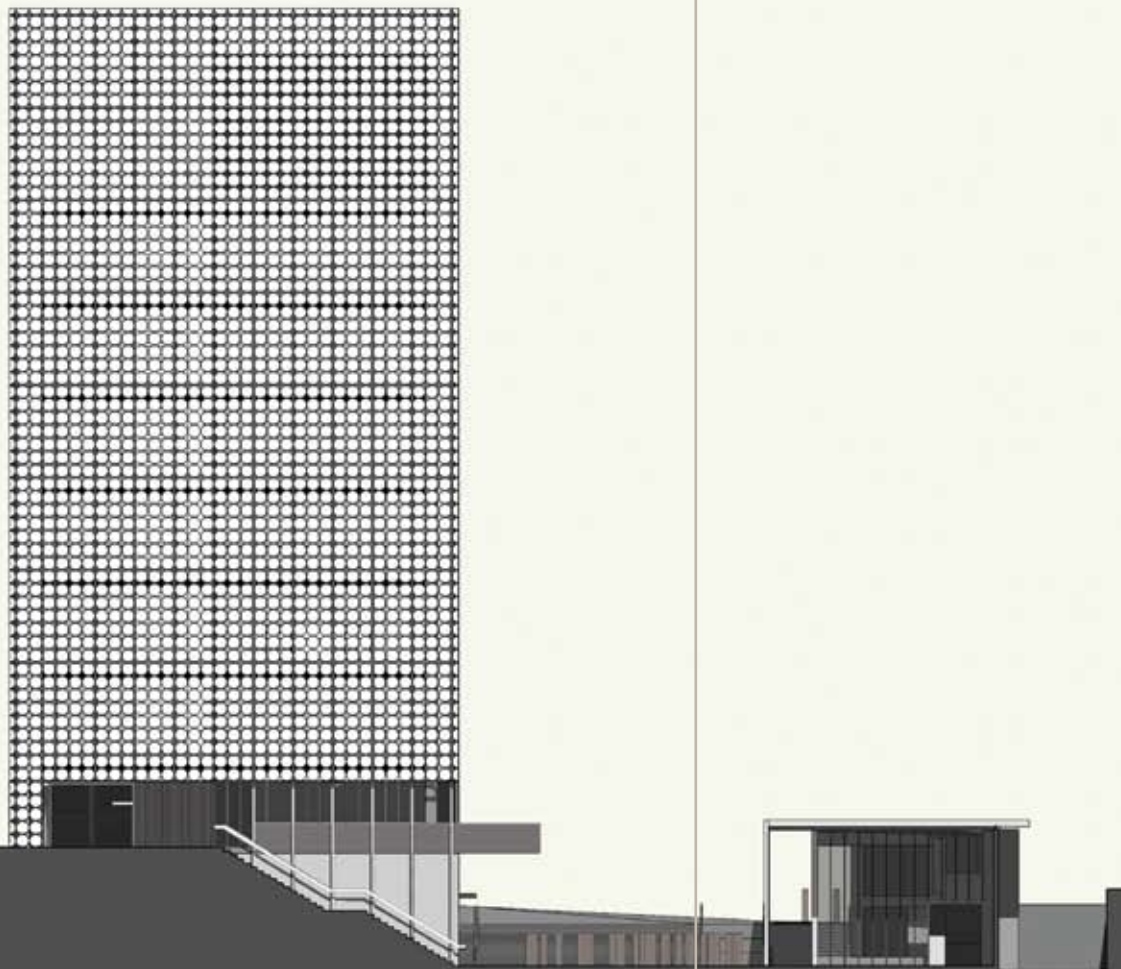


# RMIT DESIGN ARCHIVES

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN  
UPDATE 0110



## Enquiries

[rmitdesignarchives@rmit.edu.au](mailto:rmitdesignarchives@rmit.edu.au)

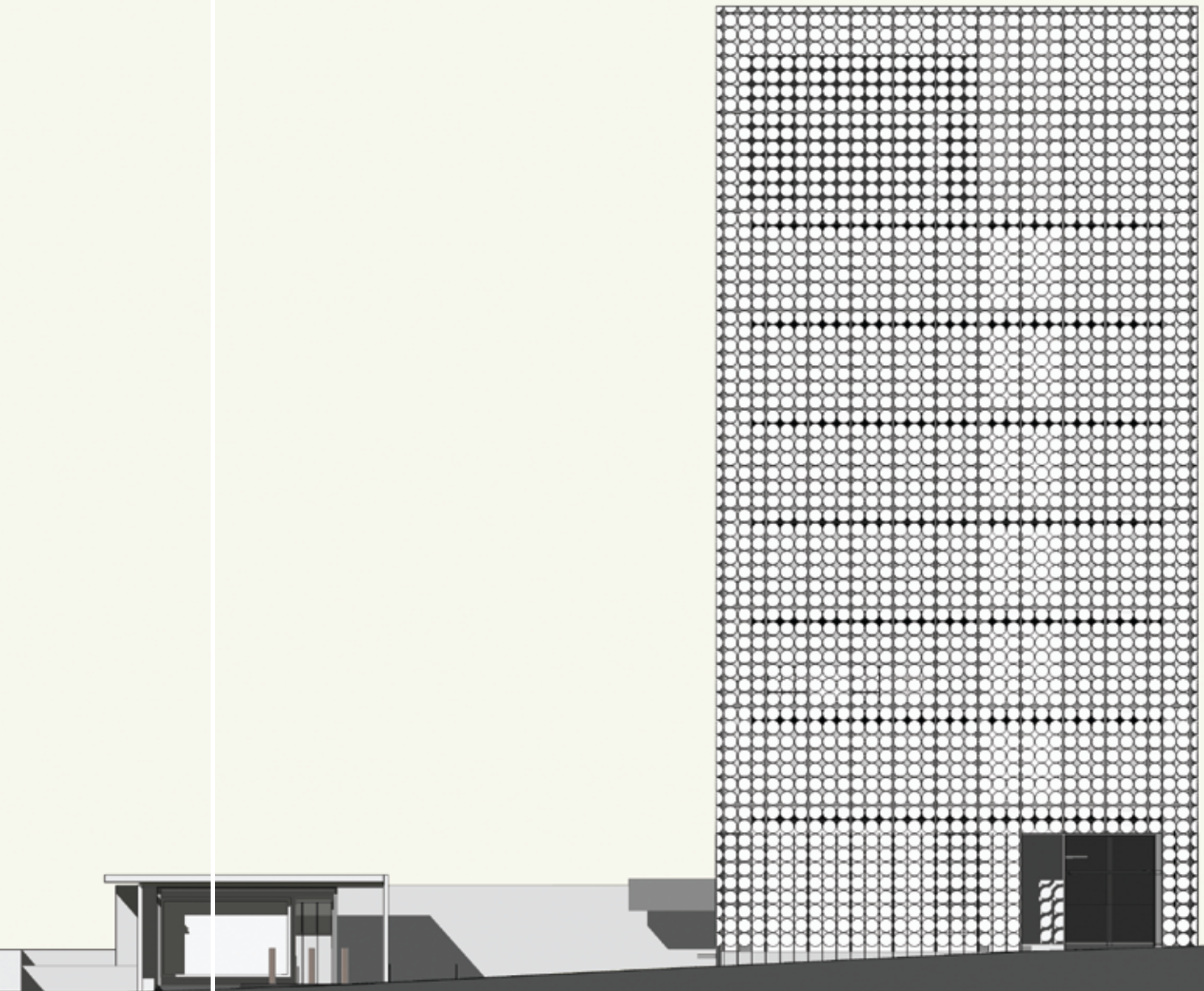
[www.rmit.edu.au/ad/designarchives](http://www.rmit.edu.au/ad/designarchives)

In 2011 the RMIT Design Archives will move into a new building on the RMIT Design Hub site at the corner of Swanston and Victoria Streets, Melbourne. RMIT's overall vision for the Design Hub development is to support and expand the University's design education and research, provide facilities and a collegial research base for its design initiatives, and to add further vibrancy to this part of Melbourne.

The RDA will complement this vision with its program of collecting, communication and research into Melbourne and regional design practice. It will do so in a purpose-built facility that will enable it to participate fully in the cultural life of the city, combining the research focus of a university facility with the civic presence of a traditional collecting institution.

It is a bold initiative of RMIT University to further invest in a specialist place where the artefacts (including sketches, drawings, models and computer renderings) that describe the history of design in Victoria can be collected, researched and displayed to the community.

*Professor Harriet Edquist, DIRECTOR*



## RMIT DESIGN HUB

The Design Archives will flank the western forecourt of the Hub. Designed by Sean Godsell Architects, it occupies three levels, the two basement floors will house storage facilities as well as visitor access on the second level. On the lower level an 80-metre long gallery following the contours of the site will link the RDA with the Hub and will be used to exhibit the Archives' collections and its research. The top floor, which can be entered from Victoria Street, has glazed eastern and northern elevations which overlook a forecourt situated between the Hub and the Archives.

This floor, like the lower two, is multi-functional and it is envisaged that part of its function in the future will be as a rallying point for Melbourne's young and emerging designers. The Victoria Street elevation is a glazed window which includes a digital screen to display the RDA's collections and activities to the public who can gather in the space in front of the building. This facility will give the Archives an urban presence which will be used to engage the public in issues relating to Melbourne's significant design heritage.



ALTERNATIVE  
PRACTICES  
IN DESIGN  
SYMPOSIUM



**Top**  
Fashion\*88 postcards.  
Illustration: Robert  
Pearce

**Middle**  
Presentation by  
Dr Jess Berry,  
Griffith University

**Bottom**  
Images from  
presentation  
by Marius Foley  
*The collective as  
a creative space*

**Teledex** (cover open)  
Author and designer:  
Ted Hopkins  
Champion Books  
Metal, printed card  
publication

*The Book of Slab*  
Author and designer:  
Ted Hopkins  
Champion Books  
Hardback, die cut cover  
Insertions: 45rpm vinyl  
record, letterheads,  
found object

**Teledex**  
(cover closed)

**Opposite page**  
Participant notes  
from Digital Archives  
Workshop



# Alternative Practices in Design: The Collective – Past, Present & Future Symposium

RMIT 9–10 July 2010

**The rise of social networking and open source technology development, the return of community-focused activities (eg. gardens, knitting groups, food cooperatives) and creative collectives across the fields of the visual and performing arts, and design, has reawakened the discourse around human capital, flat structures and collectives as a means for ‘making’ the things of everyday life.**

In response to this developing context, the RMIT Design Archives with the RMIT Design Research Institute convened a two-day international Symposium: *Alternative Practices in Design: The Collective – Past, Present & Future*.

The Symposium brought together practitioners, historians and theorists from the UK, India, New Zealand and Australia to examine the boundaries and practices that the idea of the collective affords. It was an occasion to uncover historical and contemporary examples of the design collective and share knowledge of associated collective modes of practice around the world.

Presentations examined collective practices in architecture (*Matrix* and *muf*), posters (*Earthworks* and *Backyard Press*), music (*Flying Nun Records* and *Xpressway*) and fashion (*Fashion Design Council*). Ken Friedman remembered Fluxus, Tom Barker reflected on the pedagogy of the design studio as a form of collective enterprise while Pia Ednie-Brown, Hélène Frichot and Romaine Logere tested the theoretical premises that might frame collective practice today.

Fittingly, Robyn Healy closed the Symposium with her paper on the Fashion Design Council (FDC) whose archive is housed in the RDA and had been the catalyst for the Symposium. Established in Melbourne in 1983, the FDC pioneered a multidisciplinary model of creative practice of the kind that is valued today, ‘successfully merging with the larger design community, interacting with practitioners from fine art, music, architecture, dance, communication and industrial design.’ (*Healy, 2010*)

# Digital Archives Workshop

RMIT 18 July 2010

**This Workshop was part of a series of investigations on the digital archive initiated by the RDA and sponsored by the RMIT Design Research Institute.**

The Workshops are intended to explore ways in which information (historic, contemporary, ephemeral, permanent) is collated and communicated through digital technologies. The 2010 Workshop was an opportunity for scholars from RMIT (RDA, RMIT Archives, RMIT Library, the Schools of Media and Communication, and Architecture and Design), the NGV, ACMI, University of South Australia and elsewhere to share their knowledge of approaches to the challenges facing collecting institutions today.





**This page:**  
**Zmood-Designing  
 Holds Exhibition**

**Right**  
 Panels provided insight into Zmood's contribution to the early Monaros, Toranos, and the GTRX. In this case Zmood's iconic drawing for the Monaro GTS wheel trim can be seen on the top left of the horizontal panel. An original example of the wheel trim was lent by a member of the Monaro Club of Victoria.

**Bottom Left**  
 Phillip Zmood in front of the display showing the original design for the Gannet 1000 and associated documentation. Current students of Industrial Design at RMIT assisted by modelling the 1963 design from original drawings and producing a scale model for the exhibition.

**Bottom Right**  
 General view of *Zmood - Designing Holds*. The transparent entrance panel featured Zmood's international award-winning design for the Gannet 1000 completed when he was a student in the Industrial Design program at RMIT. It can be compared with the full size display print of the HK Monaro tape drawing on the rear wall. The Exhibition featured Zmood's *Australia's ablest car* a futurist design for 1970, completed in 1956 when Zmood was twelve.

**Opposite Page**  
**175 Years of Design  
 in Victoria Exhibition**

Art Direction,  
 photography and  
 design: Paul Marcus  
 Fuog, Coöp.

Event Photography:  
 © Tobias Titz





## 175 Years of Design in Victoria

MELBOURNE EXHIBITION BUILDINGS July 17–18  
Curator: *Ian Wong*

Part exhibition, part open forum, *175 Years of Design in Victoria* was a key feature of the State of Design Festival's – 2010 Design Made Trade event at the Royal Exhibition Buildings.

It was intended to be provocative by reflecting on Victoria's design history, but encouraging visitors to share their stories, or champion omissions, by adding comments on large yellow post-it dots. Curated by Ian Wong, supported by the RDA and designed by Co-öp, the exhibition drew on photographs, archival material, graphics and sketches to retell tales of design in our daily life from 1835 to the present day. Reflecting on creations such as the Furphy water cart, the décor BYO wine cooler, the Wiltshire Staysharp Knife and the Rosebank Stack Hat, *175 Years* brought together images of design objects, imprinted in our consciousness through everyday use, highlighting the pivotal role of local designers and manufacturers.

Presented by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

## Zmood – Designing Holdens

MELBOURNE MUSEUM July 16–August 8  
Curator: *Ian Wong*

*Zmood – Designing Holdens* was staged as part of the State of Design Festival 2010 program and profiled the career of Phillip Zmood, General Motors Holden's first Australian Head of Design.

Drawings, correspondence and other documentation from the RMIT Design Archives together with scale models produced especially for the exhibition and items lent by the public showcased Zmood's career from industrial design student at RMIT to Design Director of Holden.

*Zmood – Designing Holdens* was supported by the RMIT Design Archives, RMIT Design Research Institute and Melbourne Museum.



## Sara Thorn Archive (b.1961)

*Gift of Sara Thorn*

Sara Thorn studied Fashion and Textiles at East Sydney Technical College in 1980 and Sydney College of the Arts in 1982. In 1983 Thorn and Bruce Slorach established the Abyss Studio and Funkessentials labels and Galaxy Emporium in Melbourne.

Thorn cites influences including Vivienne Westwood, Malcolm McLaren, Afrika Bambaataa, Keith Haring, and fashion and art that challenged convention. Thorn believes the dislocation to these overseas 'shakers' created an imaginative environment in 1980s Melbourne, expressed through a vanguard of music, dress, theatre and art: 'Artistic voices formed various Melbourne communities...Australia's isolation led to a type of purity that's not around now'.

After twelve years the Thorn-Slorach partnership ended in 1994. In 1995 the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) acquired over one hundred works on the recommendation of Robyn Healy, Senior Curator (now Program Director, RMIT Fashion). Living in Paris in the late 1990s Thorn designed textiles for Christian Lacroix and Michiko Koshino and for Bella Freud in London.

Thorn found opportunities to experiment and develop original textiles locally limited. In 2001 she researched traditional textile techniques in Europe and India and took up a Winston Churchill Fellowship residency at the Lisio Foundation, Italy, studying jacquard silk weaving. An Asialink artist residency in 2002–2003 took Thorn to Borneo to research and collaborate with Tribal ikat hand weavers.

Thorn facilitated design and textile workshops for master weavers in Southern India in 2005, for children in Soweto, South Africa, in 2007 (part of the South Project, Craft Victoria) and in Melbourne, for the Council for Adult Education (CAE), the Sudanese community and primary schools.

Thorn was Curator of Design at Museum Victoria in 2004. WorldWeave, a Fitzroy-based design/homewares business established in 2008 with Piero Gesualdi produces collections designed by Thorn and produced in India, using natural fibres including Australian merino wool. State of the art textile technology and hand made artisan skills translate Thorn's drawings into embroidered cushions, complex jacquard designed scarves and floor rugs.

Powerhouse Museum and the National Gallery of Australia also hold Thorn works. *Musing the Thread* a solo exhibition of watercolours, digital printed fabrics and hand embroideries, opens 13 October at Husk, Albert Park.

The Thorn archive includes textile samples, drawings, photographs and media clippings which document Sara Thorn's design practice with a focus on who and how people wear her designs and how products are displayed in retail and client environments, the reality often challenging mainstream media representation.

**Pictured from left:**

Cus Gollings wearing screenprinted Robot and Bees cotton shirt with Marcos Davidson wearing screenprinted No No singlet and Graffiti pants from Sara Thorn and Bruce Slorach '84 Shnooko No No Fluoro Collection.

Photographer:  
©Kate Gollings c.1984

Selection of  
WorldWeave  
homewares.

Photographer:  
©James Widdowson.  
2009







## RMIT DESIGN CONSULTANCY | **the works Archive** (est.1991)

*Gift of School of Media and Communication*

The RMIT DESIGN CONSULTANCY | **the works** was established by the previous School of Applied Communication (now consolidated into the current School of Media and Communication) at RMIT's Bundoora Campus in 1991 with a cohort of two students. Over twenty years the studio has provided a platform for Communication Design Honours students to learn professional practice principles in a commercial environment. When possible client selection has been based on an alignment with the social justice and environmental goals and ethics of the studio's guiding principles. This has resulted in The Works actively providing graphic design services to community and cultural sectors whose messages may otherwise fail to penetrate the mass market due to lack of resources. The studio also seeks out opportunities to initiate debate about the role of graphic design. Since 1991 the following Academic / Creative Directors have supervised The Works – Niko Spelbrink (1993), Niall Meehan (1994), Alan Scholz (1997), Bronwyn Clarke (1998 - 2001), Tony Gilevski (2002 – 2005) and since 2006, Russell Kerr.

In 1994 The Works' studio moved from Bundoora to 410 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, then in 1998, to 440 Elizabeth Street, and in 2010, to Building 9 on the city campus.

Works' graduates have established successful businesses in Australia and overseas and attracted awards including Fringe Festival Identity, Design Institute of Australia's Victorian Graduate of the Year, Student Designer of the Year and Young Fashion Designer of the Year.

The Works' archive traces the transition of design education over two decades, from manual techniques to new technologies, the fashioning of the studio's design philosophy, and reflects the commitment of ongoing clients and associated industries to The Works.

The Works archive includes printed materials and documentation.

*Thank you to Lorraine Conway whose history of The Works this article references. Lorraine was employed as the Studio Manager from establishment until 2009.*

Communication Design 'Open Day 1979' poster promoting RMIT University Open Day 9 August 2009 and 3 pages from pre-selection kit for 2010 Bachelor of Design (Communication Design).

Design:  
RMIT DESIGN CONSULTANCY | **the works**

**Below**  
Interior Design students on the roof of Building 2. c.1946–49.

Photographer:  
not known



## **Paula Rushbrooke (b.1927) Archive**

Paula Rushbrooke was among the last cohort of students to graduate with a Certificate in Interior Decoration from the Melbourne Technical College (now RMIT) in 1948. This was the year that the College appointed Frederick Sterne a full-time Senior Lecturer to upgrade the Certificate into a four-year Interior Design Diploma, the first program of its kind in Australia (Update 08). The program that Rushbrooke remembers was partly shared with Architecture, and included visits to the Trade School to learn about plumbing and electrical installation as well as lessons in upholstery and typing.

Much of the course was conducted on the roof of Building 2 in what Rushbrooke remembers as a shed, but which was later transformed into the *Penthouse*. Rushbrooke went on to a successful career as an interior designer focussing on colour, initially working with Taubmans Paints and later as an independent colour consultant in Singapore, England, Nigeria, Hong Kong and briefly in Mumbai. She established and ran colour centres and training courses in the use of colour for professionals, businesses and the general public. Later, in Hong Kong, she established a health and nutrition clinic. The RDA holds a transcript of an interview with Rushbrooke conducted by RMIT Alumni in March 2010, and digital copies of photographs of Interior Design students in the 1940s.



## RMIT Graduate Research Conference (GRC) Archive

*Gift of the School of Architecture and Design*

**This gift documents the history of RMIT's School of Architecture and Design's Graduate Research Conference from its inception to the present. The GRC Archive includes thesis, abstract catalogues, posters, audio tapes and DVDs of thesis examinations.**

The Graduate Research Conference is a twice-yearly gathering of research candidates enrolled at RMIT in disciplines associated with architecture and design. It was established by Professor Leon van Schaik in 1987 when he came to RMIT as Professor and Head of the Department of Architecture, now incorporated into the School of Architecture and Design.

The GRC's prime purpose is to be the tangible focus of a learning community; a gathering of peers. Van Schaik, explains the GRC's origins: 'In 1987 I called several meetings of practitioners who already had a notable body of work behind them, and challenged them to undertake a program that would do two things: surface the evidence about the origins of the mastery that their work displayed (revealing its local authenticity) and equip them to take part on equal terms within the discourses that nourished the "stars" that they so avidly sought out and brought south to worship in assemblies of a thousand people – a recipe for one way transmission if ever there was one!'

In addition to being a long weekend of informal peer review, the GRC brings together candidates with visiting critics from Australia and internationally. The weekend commences with public lectures followed by a social occasion. Two days of work-in-progress reviews follow. There are up to two hundred people involved in any GRC. Review sessions can comprise up to ten parallel streams.

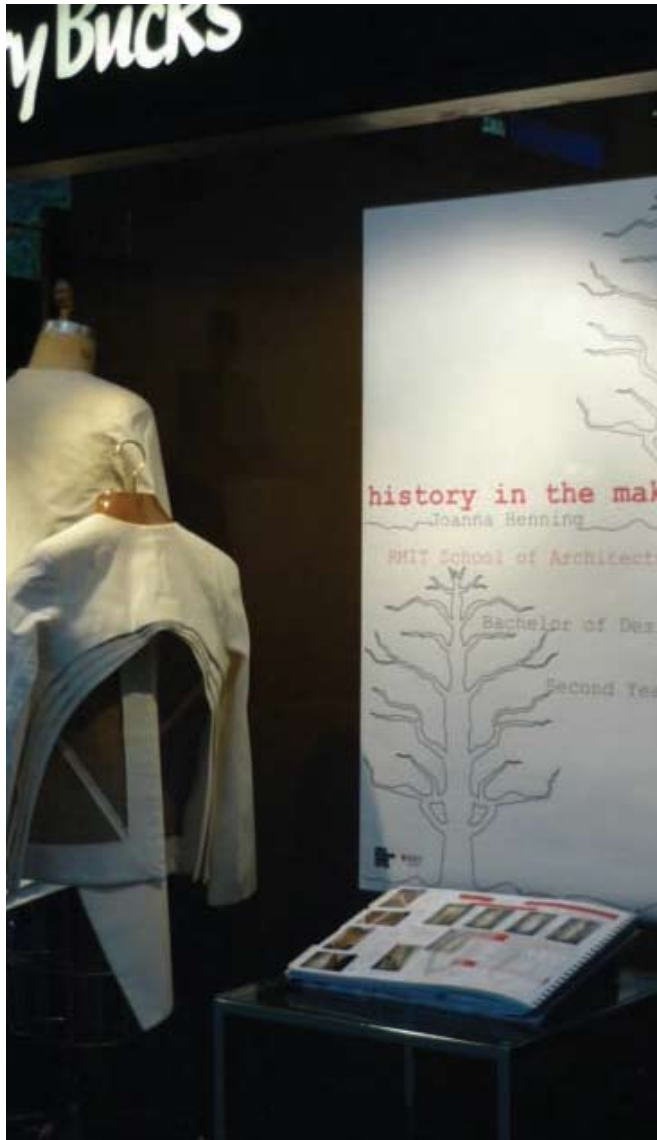
The secondary purpose of the GRC is to structure the work of supervisors and their research candidates. Candidates are asked to present their work-in-progress to panels across the whole term of their candidature. Initial presentations scope the candidate's proposition, while subsequent presentations cover project and literature reviews, leading to the penultimate review where the candidate is judged as to their readiness for examination. Given that postgraduate research can be conducted either by project or thesis mode, examination is either by *viva* (oral), a final presentation through exhibition, web, film or performance, or written thesis examined in the traditional manner.

From 2011 the GRC and its associated activities (public lectures, presentations to panels, examinations, exhibition and social functions) will be held in the new RMIT Design Hub building on the corner of Swanston and Victoria Streets.

**Left**  
GRC Poster:  
Malte Wagenfeld

**Right**  
GRC Poster:  
Craig Barkla





## Mapping the Tailor

Curators: Peter Allan and Sue Thomas

**Inspired and validated by the successful outcomes of two second year (2009) fashion design studios: *Mapping Melbourne Tailors* and *History in the Making* (RDA Update 0209), a proposal for a project titled *Mapping the Tailor* was submitted and accepted for the Cultural Program of L'Oréal Melbourne Fashion Festival 2010.**

The *Mapping the Tailor* project consisted of the work of seven students which was installed in the windows of tailoring establishments in the Melbourne CBD and nearby suburbs.

A map legend was displayed at Mr Tulk's Café within the State Library of Victoria. Students and local tailors engaged with the opportunity of displaying the resulting work including garments, sketchbooks, illustrations and development books – making new contacts and friends, leading to spontaneous, impromptu discussions over sleeves, collars, and lapels.

The design press, both local (*Artichoke* magazine) and international (*Magaz* magazine) responded positively.

The outcomes from these three studio projects confirm the value of a research-led approach to teaching, and in the forthcoming project *Mapping the Diaspora* students will research artisan tailors of selected immigrant cultures of Melbourne in collaboration with the Immigration Museum. This research forms part of the RMIT Design Archives' long-term project, *Mapping Melbourne Design*.

Students: Remie Cibis, Jacinta Oliver-Cook, Anna McLaren, Christina Manousakis, Anthony Tandiyono, Joanna Henning and Candice Majoos.

'*Mapping the Tailor*' is supported by the RDA's '*Mapping Melbourne Design*' project.

### Right

Jacket toiles by Joanna Henning in Henry Bucks window on Collins Place.

Photographer: Sue Thomas

### Left

Map legend featuring jacket toiles by Remie Cibis and Candice Majoos displayed at Mr Tulk's Cafe at State Library of Victoria.

Photographer: Remie Cibis.



## Drawing Out Conference RMIT 7–9 July

**The RDA contributed to this Conference, which was a collaboration between RMIT and the University of Arts London, by lending work for two exhibitions.**

### *A Common Language, Drawings by Acton and Bouret*

RMIT Swanston Library and City Library,  
Flinders Lane

Curators: *Claire Wilson and Amy Middleton*

*A Common Language, Drawings by Acton and Bouret* grew out of an initiative instigated by the RMIT Design Archives, RMIT School of Art Project Space and RMIT Arts Management program. The idea was to open the RDA to two postgraduate Arts Management students to select material for an exhibition to be included in the *Drawing Out* Conference program.

The idea behind the project was twofold. In the first instance, it was to give students the opportunity to learn about archival procedures, gain knowledge in the basic care of archived works, including documenting, cataloguing and condition reporting. Secondly, it was to provide the content of a curated exhibition which would also have the benefit of displaying the RMIT Design Archives' collection to a wider audience. The exhibition space was complex in that it was small, but situated in a public domain which exposed it to a broad audience. Within these constraints *A Common Language* was able to tease out elements which represented the diverse contribution drawing has made to the contrasting creative journeys of fashion designer, Prue Acton, and fashion illustrator, Alfredo Bouret.

### *Constellations: A Large number of Small drawings*

RMIT Gallery, 8 April – 26 June 2010

Curator: *Vanessa Gerrans*

*Constellations* brought together drawings by Australians from diverse disciplines such as art, architecture, cartography, design, fashion, film, photography, science and music.

Drawing is both a verb and a noun; it is both an act and the resultant image. *Constellations* explored how drawings are used, from schematic 'thinking through' studies, to objects for delectation. Alongside complete drawings of high artistic value, the exhibition included provisional, or preparatory drawings, and applied drawings for professional outcomes such as scientific drawings, designs for installations and sketchbook notes.

*Constellations* also documented the distinction between hand-drawn images and those that had been made digitally. It raised the question – does the immediacy of the human presence in hand-drawing extend to those made using new technologies?



#### Top

Gloucester Apartments  
Cnr Spring and Latrobe  
Streets, Melbourne,  
1946. Drawing:  
Frederick Romberg.  
Displayed in  
*Constellations* Exhibition  
at RMIT Gallery.

Photographer:  
©RMIT Gallery 2010

#### Bottom

Display of Acton  
and Bouret works at  
RMIT Swanston Library.

Photographer:  
©Kaye Ashton.

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