

Practitioner's Statement

Contemporary Art Gallery

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A Summary of the Design Brief

The brief for this project concerns the development of a contemporary art gallery situated in the Botanic Gardens, in Adelaide. The gallery's purpose is to facilitate the viewing of modern art and to create a unique visual experience for its visitors. My creative goal was to design an iconic, memorable building, but I also understood that the gallery needed to be highly functional and contextualised to the site.

A description of starting points and influences

I began the design process by investigating designs incorporating a bold and imaginative aesthetic. Consequently, I researched designers who had created dynamic architectural "sculptures", including Shigeru Ban and Zaha Hadid. I also considered the works of Frank Lloyd Wright, Thomas Wright and SHOP architecture. I discovered that all these architects shared a common objective, to create designs that could stand in comity with their external environment. I was inspired by this design philosophy and I developed a structure that could be characterised as a "lantern" in park. I did not wish to settle on a traditional lantern design, so I researched a range of lantern and lighting concepts as inspiration for the gallery's shape and façade.

An Evaluation of how well the design resolution meets the parameters of the design brief

The design addresses the key points of the brief and is true to it in both form and function. That is, the design fulfils its purpose as a functional art gallery and as a progressive architectural sculpture.

The design is sleek, modern and it is likely to be an object of discussion and examination. The gallery is also highly-functional as it incorporates modular glass partitions, capable of becoming opaque, to enable the gallery to be subdivided to suit exhibitions of different sizes. Equally, amongst other environmental design elements, the gallery windows will be covered in photovoltaic film to reflect damaging sunlight. Internal beams and walkways will also protect sensitive works.

Moreover, I have taken advantage of the site and exploited the gallery's position to oncoming traffic along Botanic Road. The gallery is also situated near Adelaide's event district, which hosts events such as the Fringe Festival. The design, therefore, fits well within the existing scheme of entertainment facilities.

Evaluation of my own work and the connections with the other practitioners works.

Zaha Hadid's *Beethoven Concert Hall* is made up of intricately shaped windows, so that light glows from within the structure during the evening, creating a "lantern" effect. However, artworks deteriorate under natural light. I overcame this design constraint and relied on two intake portals for natural light, covered in photovoltaic film and located at the entrance and rear of the gallery.

The gallery's bold triangular form is also consistent with Thomas Wright's belief that '*A building becomes iconic when its form is simple and unique*'. Accordingly, I underscored the structures striking shapes with strips of light; which also highlighted the design's lantern narrative. More particularly, I was inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum and adopted his reliance on cantilevers, as elevated walkways, to enhance the user experience.

How I have developed my design beliefs or a philosophy about a personal design aesthetic.

The design process improved my architectural design style. I had previously created structures largely informed by their functional purpose. Whereas, I am now of the view that structures can mimic conceptual art, without undermining their purpose. Similarly, I have developed a design preference for a clean and crisp aesthetic, free of intrusive forms such as vertical supports.