Contemporary Anti-Memorials and National Identity in the Victorian Landscape

Sue-Anne Ware

The success of the book *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape* has marked a resurgence of public interest in Australian memorials. The federal government has commissioned a number of new memorials as Australia reflects upon the centenary of its federation. Chilla Bulbeck describes the evolution of Australian memorials when she states:

To some extent, the recent history of Australian monument construction parallels the reorientation of Australian history from the deeds that won the empire or nation to the activities of ordinary men and women and the history of local communities.

Through a series of case studies of both built and proposed work, this article explores a contemporary movement in public commemoration: the anti-memorial. Anti-memorials critique the illusion that the permanence of stone somehow guarantees the permanence of the idea it commemorates. In contrast, anti-memorials formalise impermanence and even celebrate their own transitory natures. Anti-memorials encourage multiple readings of political and social issues, and prompt a different level of physical interactivity. The forms that anti-memorials take, their impermanence and the people they commemorate challenge the logic behind traditional memorials. Anti-memorials reflect a focus on unnamed victims as opposed to heroes, offering an alternative reading of Australian history. They emphasise the informal and the local as opposed to the formal and the national, and are sited so as to allow interaction and more personal forms of mourning. They are often temporary, embodying the changing, fading nature of memory as opposed to a structure built to preserve memory and withstand time.

Throughout the Australian landscape, familiar monuments erected by nineteenth-century colonists honour explorers and politicians. These proverbial makers and preservers of empire are highly visible in public gardens and adorning CBD streetscapes. Even more familiar are the digger war memorials, which helped Australia grieve the loss of its young men and women through avenues of honour, statues and monuments, and Anzac Day rituals. While the majority of official memorials are object-based icons or statues, there are also many spatial memorials such as shrines (for example, Melbourne’s Shrine of Remembrance) and the names of public buildings, streets and parks. Official memorials are highly formal and prescribe a certain ritual form of interaction. These memorials tend to be quite literal in form and offer a particular reading or view of history. Kirk Savage contends:

Commemoration was a process of condensing the moral lessons of history and fixing them in place for all time; this required that the object of commemoration be understood as a completed stage of history, safely nestled in a sealed-off past. The memorials of this period offer only official versions of history, not the lived, blurry history we tend to associate with the post-modern world.
Such memorials tend to rely on heroes or acts of heroism. They seem to exclude notions of the other or otherness and are predicated on notions of collective memory or singular histories.

In the 1980s, there was a shift away from normative memorial treatment to engage with the strengthening multicultural aspects of Australian society. In Melbourne, this trend manifested in a series of memorial additions or ‘tack-ons’. For example, in 1982 a second history was added to the statue of Captain Matthew Flinders in Fitzroy Gardens, reflecting a more politically correct and socially inclusive view of his arrival in Australia. There was also at this time a concerted effort to preserve and interpret sacred Indigenous spaces in Melbourne. In 1983, a corroboree tree was placed in the Fitzroy Gardens behind Brunswick-green railing and given a plaque that identified it as significant to the Wurundjeri peoples. Traditional Indigenous Australian ways of memorialising are diverse, and may rely on traditions such as oral storytelling or dance, face-painting or ceremony. They are highly contextual, varying with each performance, and rely on connections with the land. The Heritage Act design language of Brunswick-green fencing and a bronze plaque identified the corroboree tree as a memorial object recognisable to non-Indigenous (or non-traditional Indigenous) members of the public. This divorced the tree from its cultural origins and from the larger landscape, and was counter to how these trees operate in Wurundjeri memorial practice. While the attempt to acknowledge an othered history was an important gesture, the resulting memorial retained little of its Indigenous meaning. While such memorials may increase the visibility of othered cultures in Australian society, they may not always do so in ways that empower those memorials as genuinely alternative forms.

In the late 1980s, counter-memorials by contemporary artists began to appear in the Melbourne landscape. James Young describes this change as a:

metamorphosis of the monument from the heroic, self aggrandizing figurative icons of the late nineteenth century celebrating national ideals and triumphs, to the antiheroic, often ironic, and self effacing conceptual installations that mark the national ambivalence and uncertainty of the late twentieth-century postmodernism.
A striking example of a counter-memorial is ‘Another View Walking Trail’ by Megan Evans and Ray Thomas. In 1989, they strategically placed Indigenous symbols and markers alongside traditional government-built memorials in the Melbourne CBD, highlighting another version of the history of colonisation and subverting the traditional memorials’ meaning. For example, underneath the statue of Captain Matthew Flinders, the artists buried a cross-shaped glass box of bones and ribbons. The cross symbolised local Indigenous beliefs about spiritual connections to the Southern Cross constellation, and exposed its contents like a museum display or an archaeological find within a well-manicured lawn. While there was a powerful juxtaposition between the traditional monuments and their counter-monuments, these memorials lacked the cohesiveness of a memorial designed to be open to multiple readings. Counter-memorials such as Evans and Thomas’s exposed the complex layers of historical interpretation and offered a way for dated memorials to evolve with historical perspectives. However, they ultimately served as permanent memorial ‘band-aids’, existing only in relation to representations of a historical ‘wrong’. The anti-memorial differs from the counter-memorial in that it denotes impermanence and even celebrates ephemeral notions of time and space, thus contradicting the perpetual memorial and established notions of collective memory.

Counter-memorials and tack-on practices continued well into the 1990s, when acknowledging alternative interpretations and cultures became acceptable in official memorial practice. The text included on memorial plaques and interpretive signs shows an evolution from a singular view of historical events to more descriptive attempts to contextualise moments in history and their effects. The plaques within the 1997 Enterprise landing memorial, located on the first site of colonisation in Melbourne, acknowledged the traditional land-owners, the first European landing party, the pre-colonisation landscape, the postcolonial city grid, and various other cultures who are thought to have contributed to the beginnings of the city of Melbourne. While this memorial was inclusive of many histories, it relegated the memorial form to text on signage. It offered a transition in meaning...
Colonial Post

and representation without a physical or formal metamorphosis of memorial design.

At this time, there was also a revitalisation of the memorial event beyond Anzac Day parades. Memorial events like Sorry Day and the Port Arthur Massacre Remembrance Day became popular communal manifestations of commemoration.\(^\text{14}\) At the same time, in addition to poppies worn in commemoration of Anzac Day and the rosemary sprigs made popular after the first world war, there was a resurgence of wearable memorials.\(^\text{15}\) This can be attributed to the worldwide phenomenon of the AIDS red ribbon, which not only symbolised the tragedy of the virus but also made a personal political statement.\(^\text{16}\) Wearable memorials are becoming increasingly popular and are often coupled with an event to show community support, as in Daffodil Day, which supports research into cancer. This development signifies a shift in memorial form away from statues or objects to events — which are, by their nature, transitory and dependent on community involvement for their success. The changing nature of both the meaning and the form of memorials allows further interrogation of whom Australians memorialise and how they choose to remember. With the growth of memorials based around personalised acts, the subject matter also shifts dramatically, from heroes of war and colonisation to victims and social problems. In this way, anti-memorials intervene directly in political debate and promote social change.

The 2001 White Wreath memorial event in front of the Victorian State Library for victims of suicide deployed a combination of traditional and anti-memorial strategies. The event included a white wreath installation for every Victorian suicide in 2000, and a very political public memorial service. The use of white wreaths to symbolise the death of innocents is a well-recognised trope of traditional mourning. Some wreaths had stories, letters, poems and photographs attached as an act of personal remembrance. While this is not unusual, the tendency for anti-memorials to tackle social issues in ways that acknowledge their victims, and to offer public space for private mourning, places the White Wreath memorial closer to the realm of the anti-memorial. Participants of this event were offered a wearable white wreath as a way to publicly identify themselves with the political goals of the memorial. Perhaps more significantly, this event originated in a mother, Fanita Clark, who before her son committed suicide had been
frustrated by her experience of trying to get treatment for his illness. This is not to say that artist- or designer-commissioned and competition-based memorials do not have significance, it is merely to point out that a combination of institutionally (top-down) driven design responses as well as community (bottom-up) driven approaches have emerged in memorial design over the last decade.

The following sections will reflect on three case studies: the Stolen Generation Memorial Competition, the ‘Anti-Memorial to Heroin Overdoses’ and the ‘Road as Shrine’ project. These case studies are further explorations of ideas central to anti-memorials and are representative of an ongoing discourse in landscape architectural design practice.

**Stolen Generation Memorial Competition**

The Stolen Generation Memorial Competition (2001) was collaboration between Link-Up Victoria (an agency that helps members of the stolen generation to find their families), the Melbourne Museum and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, School of Architecture and Design. Participants were asked to design a memorial to those people whose lives were affected by the protectionist policies that led to the removal of Indigenous children. The project’s outcome was an exhibition of competition entries and a website gallery. The following represents a mix of approaches and projects aimed at commemorating the stolen generations.

‘The Curiosity Box’ (2001), by Liz Herbert, offered a memorial in the form of a box that unfolds to reveal a collection of tags. The memorial was located on the southeast side of the museum’s plaza forecourt, where every morning the box was unfolded and maneuvered into a freestanding wall. The unfolding was a ceremony that visitors could stop and watch. The memorial wall displayed small acrylic tags dedicated to every child of the stolen generations. The number of children stolen is highly contested, but the memorial wall had the capacity for 25,000 tags. Each tag was engraved with information known about the individuals from text adapted from the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission’s report on the stolen generations, *Bringing them Home.* Many tags were blank, signifying a lack of information. Under the sunlight, the text on each tag cast a shadow on the wall. At the end of day, the wall was reconfigured back into a box,
Colonial Post

and there was no footprint of its unfolding. This memorial offered an educative
and engaging approach. It was inclusive of all stories, acknowledging that many
have not been told and will never be told. The design brought the museum
collection and acts of collecting to the exterior of the museum space, the everyday
public space. It was touchable, and changed over time with the shadows
throughout the day. It also engaged with notions of indexing, selective histories,
and knowledge. Similarly to traditional memorials, this project struggled with
notions of identity and acknowledging the enormity of a tragedy. However, it
attempted to represent the individuals and their stories while evoking a sense of
the scale of the number of people, including descendants of members of the stolen
generations, who are still affected by these policies. While normative memorial
practices offer an educative approach, this project humanised the statistics of the
stolen generations.

Another un-built project, ‘The Act of Uprooting’ by Damien Pericles and
Annabel Stanton (2001), proposed that the Carlton Garden lawns were stencilled
with text from the Archie Roach song ‘Took the children away’. Song lyrics were
to be cut out, letter by letter, and displaced, flipped (roots-up) and stacked across
the museum forecourt entry plaza. The act of cutting, lifting and displacing the
grass was a direct metaphor for the removal and dislocation of the stolen
generations. The designers chose the lyric ‘Acting white, feeling black’ for its
powerful communication of the experience of the stolen child.21 Visitors were then
asked to participate in a gesture of apology by lifting the sod from any stack,
placing it back on the exposed soil and laying it flush with the grass. This
proposition sought to invade the Carlton Gardens and bring the museum outside
its building. It used a powerful metaphor and a simple gesture to engage the
public. The design also subverted the role of the sacred Australian lawn and asked
the public to reconsider its importance in the everyday park landscape.22 Unlike a
conventional memorial, this project emphasised the memorial’s role in a public
expression of remorse. Traditional memorials often engage in politics, but rarely
offer censure for past actions. However, this project was critical of the federal
government and its inability to promote reconciliation through an official apology.
Additionally, it placed the memorial event well within current conventions of
Sorry Day practices and utilised public participation as an integral part of an event-based gesture. This project offered an apology, through physical action, to all those affected by the racist policies that created the stolen generations.

In her design for ‘Hessian Wall’ (2001), Renee Romyn hung two layers of hessian fabric in the passage between the East Exhibition Space and the Birrarung Gallery space. The protectionist policies of each state that provided for forcibly removing Indigenous children from their parents were printed on the first layer of the hessian. The second layer, hidden underneath the policy blanket, was a composition of stories shared by people of the stolen generation. Visitors were encouraged to remove a thread of hessian and drop it on the ground. The hessian barrier disintegrated, allowing the impact of the policies to be revealed. As visitors left the passage, they were confronted with a large screen, which replayed them and others pulling threads out of the fabric. This helped them to recognise themselves as part of the memorial and part of the process of reconciliation through understanding and acknowledging the realities of the stolen generation.

The physical location of this proposition was pivotal. The work’s proposed location in a transitional space recognised Australia’s position at a political threshold regarding acknowledgement of the stolen generations. As members of the public moved through that liminal space, it literally became a passage to understanding. The video playback encouraged visitors to understand that this was a collective action with collective consequences for a nation.

While the previous project relied on community participation to enact the message of an apology, this project relied on the visitor’s interaction to transform the memorial. The work challenged the notion of memorials as static objects and encouraged a highly interactive and reflective engagement. It was tactile and was not made to be preserved, while being sited in a museum environment that tends to display materials in ways that protect against the possibility of contact.

All of these entries acknowledged the generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people separated from their families and communities, providing avenues for the expression of an apology to the stolen generations. However, a sense of hope or celebration of the resilient spirit of Indigenous culture was not addressed. Most of the entries concentrated on educating the public about the stolen generations and their stories. The Stolen Generation Memorial Competition examined contested histories or ways in which to memorialise a rewritten history. The removal of Indigenous children was thought to be ‘in the best interest of the child’. Cultural critics, social advocates and victims have criticised and challenged this view until another view of ‘history’ has become widely recognised. The Stolen Generations Memorial Competition is a part of the resultant dialogue. The primary way in which these competition entries depart from traditional memorial modes is in their reliance on multiple participants for their effectiveness. Each person who interacts with the memorial alters it and contributes to the whole, claiming some level of authorship. Multiple designers and authors are central to the idea of an anti-memorial. This first case study is valuable in that it offers speculations beyond landscape-driven responses, multicultural definitions of memorials, and shows a strong engagement in political debate.
The Anti-Memorial to Heroin Overdose Victims

The ‘Anti-Memorial to Heroin Overdose Victims’ was a public event that sought to humanise Victoria’s 331 overdose deaths in 2000.25 The memorial commemorated a group of people whose loss is not usually mourned in the public realm. It was constructed in St Kilda’s politically contested landscapes as part of the Melbourne International Arts Festival in October 2001. The anti-memorial consisted of three design insertions: a floral tribute, a landscape narrative and a memorial collection. Poppies, stencilled narratives and resin plaques formed a memorial along St Kilda’s streets. The work was sited within three socially complex streetscapes in St Kilda: intravenous drug users, sex workers and social support services occupy the Grey Street corridor; the Fitzroy Street commercial end is frequented by the café latte crowd, backpackers and pub-crawlers; while tourists and shoppers populate the Sunday craft market on the Lower Esplanade.26 The anti-memorial confronted each group, asking them to reconsider how they perceived intravenous drug users.

The floral tribute consisted of red poppies, which were planted on median strips, in planter boxes and other key sites as floral tributes and a recognisable Australian symbols of remembrance. While they also alluded to opium poppies, the use of these flowers provided another meaning and reading of the already memorialised red poppy. Adjacent to the poppy planters, text was stencilled on the footpaths. The text included letters and stories about the overdose victims and their lives. The stories were gathered from a series of interviews with current intravenous drug users, friends and families of victims, and community workers — all of whom have been deeply affected by overdoses. The memorial collection consisted of a gathering of objects, photographs, text and images from an overdose victim’s life. These objects were cast in clear resin plaques and attached to the side of the poppy planters. The resin plaques were vulnerable and tactile: to engage with them, people had to crouch down and get very close to discern what the plaques contained. This was an attempt to encourage physical interaction with the work, in contrast to the traditional monument, which is represented as sacred and untouchable, and is often out of reach on a pedestal.
The anti-memorial was a public event: it was part of a temporary arts festival. The temporal nature of the work was bound to the Melbourne Festival, and event culture requires that one must make the time to travel, see the work and be a part of the event. This anti-memorial challenged traditional conceptions of memorial objects as permanent, in that the event itself ultimately disappeared: the text faded as the flowers came into bloom; the flowers wilted and the resin became more noticeable; and then it was removed. The work offered a brief moment of commemoration, while fundamentally questioning the nature of what is being memorialised. The memorial was deeply connected with the landscape — as are many traditional memorials, but seldom in a way that forces people to confront a social problem that affects their own locality. The anti-memorial, in addition to its transient nature, differs from a traditional monument in that it is not precious but is disturbing and provocative. It offers a way of reconsidering our values and rethinking our relationship to the world. The ‘Anti-Memorial to Heroin Overdose Victims’ honoured people not often acknowledged by society as worthy of commemoration, people at the core of a contemporary debate about drug use, youth homelessness and prostitution. A central aim of this project was to shift ideas about commemoration away from reconsidering history toward a discussion of what Australian culture selects as worthy of remembrance, as well as how we as a society choose to memorialise.

The Road as Shrine

The ‘Road as Shrine’ project (2003), a collaboration between La Trobe City, RMIT University and Landcare Victoria, further considers community involvement in memorial design and how memorials can be symbiotic with landscapes. It also begins to explore what Christina Leimer defines as spontaneous memorials. Spontaneous memorials mark the deaths of people who don’t fit into the categories of those we expect to die. They include those who may be engaging in routine activities in which there is a reasonable expectation of safety, such as driving their car to work. This process does not replace traditional funerary rites; instead it emerges as an adjunct ritual, extending the opportunity for other types of mourning. According to Leimer, spontaneous memorialisation is characterised by private, individualised acts of mourning that are displayed publicly, are not formally organised at their inception, and often occur at the site of death.

Contemporary shrines are composed of an eclectic combination of markers, personal objects and mementos. The use of common, secular objects as ritual objects disavows the traditional separation of the sacred and the profane. For instance, the common plastic flowers that adorn roadside markers become important signifiers and tributes to the dead; outside of this context they are less precious. This is also true of the site of death. The site, which previously may have had no special meaning, takes on a sacred quality once human blood has been spilled there, a quality that formal memorials cannot replace. The hand-crafted marker allows a personal connection between the maker of the memorial and the act of marking. A formal memorial creates a peculiar distance between mourners and site. An example of this type of memorial is the roadside markers between South Australia and Victoria. Victoria Roads and South Australia Roads started the formal marker system in order to appease family members of tragic road accidents.
and to campaign for safer driving practices. They also felt that the homemade markers that were littering the freeways were unsightly, and could cause further accidents. A recent survey after five years of this practice has concluded that the formal markers are either added to and appropriated by mourners or simply removed.

Roadside memorials are often erected soon after the victim’s death, in a manner meaningful to the individuals who create them, unlike the funeral, which is formal and structured and which must be planned to accommodate many people. Spontaneous memorials give shocked and grieving survivors a way to react quickly, directly and urgently to a situation that is out of their control. In addition, they are available to disenfranchised mourners who are not closely associated with the victim or those who are not permitted to participate in conventional funeral rites. Such memorials also enable members of the public to express the identification they feel with the victim or the circumstances of the death. Leimer states:

No one is automatically included or excluded from these practices and they extend the boundaries of who is allowed or expected to participate in the mourning process. They may reflect anger and vulnerability, emotions that are usually felt but not displayed in traditional death rituals. These memorials are not constrained by culturally based norms which prescribe the amount of time allotted for ritual action or the appropriate time for bereavement. Unlike traditional funeral rites which occur at set times and continue for a set duration, spontaneous memorials ebb and flow.

Mourners can make their pilgrimages to these memorial sites and contribute; while they commemorate the deceased, they also extend the focus beyond the victim and the private mourning of friends and family to the social and cultural implications of death. There are often messages that relate to public issues and concerns exemplified by the death, such as more effective law enforcement or regret at the loss of life. Spontaneous memorials often share qualities of anti-memorials in that they allow personal contact and engagement with the memorial and its building process, include alternative memorial designs, and engage in critiques of local political processes.

The ‘Road as Shrine’ is a series of memorial garden insertions in the landscape. It is sited on a 500-metre section of a rural road near Churchill, in the La Trobe Valley, Victoria, where it acts as a memorial to highway fatalities while also providing space for more personal commemorations. Hazelwood Estate Road is a notorious section of road where two recently erected spontaneous memorial markers are currently in place. The memorial reveals itself in several stages as it evolves from a native plant remembrance garden to a roadside revegetation program, eventually reverting back to a paddock. The first native plant remembrance garden (November 2003) was planted in the road’s verge such that growth and bloom cycles would coincide with significant dates: the Christmas holidays, a peak accident period; and the one-year anniversary of the deaths of two teenaged boys on Hazelwood Estate Road. This first garden was a literal garden of remembrance and involved a collaborative effort between numerous sectors of the community. The second phase of the project, scheduled for April 2004, involves a cold burn and revegetation through seed mat technology. The cold-burn
cycle matches the peak accident period of the Easter holidays and thus carries a ‘drive safely’ message to motorists. After the vegetation is burned, the scorched earth will briefly reveal a series of seed mats. The re-seeding will help to construct a new ecology while acting as a memorial gesture from the community. If left unmown and without weed removal, the verge will become indistinguishable from the surrounding paddocks; the memorial is changing and impermanent. The community is actively involved in all stages of the planting of this new kind of avenue of honour. The gesture is open-ended, allowing other spontaneous memorials to take place within the garden. The garden design is meant to be a framework to encourage current spontaneous rituals and memorials, which are part of this landscape. The memorial is designed to be ephemeral in two respects: it is usually seen in fleeting glimpses while driving at speed, and its materials mean that it will ‘return to nature’ of its own accord. One of the fundamental principles guiding this work involves ideas centred on landscape entropy: the eventual return of the memorial site back to paddock is intended. The analogy of landscape ephemerality offers a unique proposition in an anti-memorial. While
this project utilises a normative memorial framework — the remembrance garden — its form evolves to embrace spontaneous memorials and changes in the landscape over time.

Conclusions

Australia’s memorial landscape is developing away from formal, official sites and objects of memory, which are separate from people’s daily lives. The artists, designers and community activists behind contemporary anti-memorials force members of the public to reflect on their own political and social beliefs, particularly regarding the role of memory in public space. The anti-memorials surveyed in this article begin to question the rationale behind traditional memorial designs, especially the ways in which they represent collective public memory. Anti-memorial projects offer alternative forms of remembrance — and design practice. Anti-memorial design, in the cases presented here, positions itself as a physical catalyst for social change. The 2001 Stolen Generation Memorial Competition challenged the parameters of cultural debate and proposed opportunities for members of the public to participate symbolically in the reconciliation process. The ‘Anti-Memorial to Heroin Overdose Victims’ contested perceptions of intravenous drug users as being unworthy of commemoration, instead positioning them as valued people who are sorely missed within their communities. The ‘Road as Shrine’ functioned as a protest against road fatalities and promoted safe driving practices.

Anti-memorials prompt a more intimate level of physical interactivity between the public and the memorial itself, and reflect a focus on victims as opposed to heroes. ‘The Curiosity Box’ encouraged physical engagement with the memorial tags while highlighting the many untold stories of the stolen generation. The resin plaques of the ‘Anti-Memorial to Heroin Overdose Victims’ required close inspection and humanised the people whose deaths were represented, while the text on the footpaths was a narrative of anonymous personal reflections. The ‘Road as Shrine’ project engaged the public through a series of planting days, and was easily accessible to the public as a framework for spontaneous memorial markers to commemorate individual deaths.

Anti-memorials often facilitate an alternative reading of history and emphasise the informal and the local as opposed to the formal and the national. The 2001 Stolen Generation Memorial Competition project brought a shameful aspect of Australia’s history to the fore, while appropriating official space in the form of a state museum. ‘The Act of Uprooting’ proposed to literally carve the Carlton Garden lawns with an apology as a direct local criticism of the federal government’s refusal to apologise to the stolen generations. The ‘Anti-Memorial to Heroin Overdose Victims’ and the ‘Road as Shrine’ projects connected directly to local communities while expressing issues that are of current concern at a national level. They both attempted to personalise contemporary Australian issues, and did so within communities significantly affected by those issues.

Anti-memorials are often temporary, embodying the changing, fading nature of memory as opposed to a structure built to preserve memory and withstand time. Renee Romyn’s ‘Hessian Wall’ (2001) proposed to exposed impact of racist policies through the slow destruction of the memorial itself. The ‘Anti-Memorial
to Heroin Overdose Victims’ was a memorial that decayed and disappeared when its umbrella festival ended. The ‘Road as Shrine’ project constructs and frames memorials to highway fatalities, but nature will eradicate the memorial’s traces. The project is an ephemeral landscape gesture that engages in landscape entropy and ultimately disappears.

Memorial practices in Australia are in constant change, as exemplified by this brief survey of the evolution of memorial design in and around Melbourne. The meaning and form of commemoration has shifted, illustrating a change in societal values. Rather than focusing on the memorial design, perhaps the debate itself, perpetually unresolved amid ever-changing conditions, is the true memorial. As James Young asserts:

Monuments at the end of the twentieth century are thus born resisting the very premises of their birth. Thus, the monument has increasingly become the site of contested and competing meanings, more likely the site of cultural conflict than one of shared national values and ideals.35

When the practices of public memory are temporary and ephemeral, recording trends in other forms becomes vital. The hope of this article lies in its ability to inform and record current and future debates about memorials and the public realm.
Notes to pp 119–126

131 As John Dower has noted, images can be ‘free-floating’, which enables them to reappear in response to the ‘exigencies and apprehensions of the moment’. John W Dower, War without mercy: Race & power in the pacific war, Pantheon Books, New York, 1986, p 309.


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All photographs and image are from the Author’s collection. The following images have approved copyright permission from the respective authors as per a waiver signed when they entered the 2001 Stolen Generation Memorial Competition: Liz Herbert, ‘The Curiosity Box’; Damien Pericles and Annabel Stanton, ‘The Act of Uprooting’; and Renee Romyn, ‘Hessian Wall’.


2 Between 1999 and 2002, the National Capitol Authority in Canberra commissioned the following memorials to coincide with Federation: Reconciliation Place, Commonwealth Place, and the Emergency Services Personnel Memorials. See website: http://www.nationalcapital.gov.au/


5 Inglis, op. cit., p 29.

6 Bulbeck, op. cit., p 3.


8 The plaque commissioned and added to the statue in 1982 by the Koori Heritage Trust quotes a personal journal from the Flinders landing party: ‘The natives resolutely disputed the landing, although they were two and we forty at least’ . See website: http://www.koorieheritagetrust.com/


14 Memorial events have become a mainstay in our everyday lives. The Age in Melbourne lists them regularly in their ‘What to do this Weekend’ guide. They are part of popular culture. For example, they are now included in national television broadcasts; in January 2004 the ABC broadcast the commemoration ceremony for the destruction caused by the Canberra fires.

15 Inglis, op. cit., p 80.


18 My role in this project included its initial inception and the imperative to bring about this type of competition in a fairly conservative political environment. More specifically, I co-authored the brief with an Indigenous historian, Tony Birch; liaised between various Indigenous groups; acted as a member of the jury for the competition; curated the exhibition; and reviewed the work for publication.


21 Damien Pericles and Annabel Stanton, competition entry for A Memorial to the Stolen Generations, Melbourne Museum and RMIT University, Melbourne, 2001. (unpublished work)
23 HREOC, op. cit., p 12.
24 The website for this project still exists at: http://users.tce.rmit.edu.au/sgmemorials/
25 Melbourne Festival Events Programme, October 11 – November 3 2001, p 50. The project was collaboration with VIVAIDS, the St Kilda Needle Exchange, RHEDS (formerly the St Kilda Prostitutes Collective) and I. See website: http://gallery.tce.rmit.edu.au/131/anti-memorial/
26 As a resident of St Kilda, my intimate knowledge of these territories was pivotal in the memorial’s placements. A key aim of the project was to intercede in the everyday lives of the diverse population that occupies public space in St Kilda.
27 This project is ongoing collaboration with numerous community groups; my involvement has been primarily as the principal co-ordinator and the designer of the gardens. See website: http://roadasshrine.tce.rmit.edu.au/
31 The Vic Roads Website: http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/ details the history of these memorial markers and their intention.
33 ibid., p 671.
35 Young, *At Memory’s Edge*, op. cit., pp 120.

**The Probe-Head and the Faces of Australia: From Australia Post to Pluto**  
Patricia MacCormack

Thank you to Amanda James for permission to reproduce her photographs of Pluto’s performances.
2 Deleuze and Guattari, p 291.
3 Deleuze and Guattari, p 168.
4 Australia Post website.
6 For pointing this out to me I am grateful to Zoë Sofoulis in her response to my paper ‘Facial Futures: Deleuze, Guattari, Irigaray and (Christopher Walken’s) Becoming Probe-head’, *Casting New Shadows: New Talents in Feminism Conference*, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. January 2001.
9 Deleuze and Guattari, p 178.
10 The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in custody (RCIADIC), conducted from 1987-1991 found 106 deaths occurred between 1980-9, of which 11 were women. During the period of study it was found Indigenous Australians were 29 times more likely to be arrested and detained than non-Indigenous Australian persons. At the time of the inquiry Indigenous Australians comprised 1.5 per cent of the population yet 50 per cent of the total number of females imprisoned in 1988 were Indigenous Australians. Sources: Peter Farrer, *Legal Outcomes*, Jacaranda Press, Milton Queensland, 1999 and http://www.omen.net.au/~dicwc/windex.html
11 Deleuze and Guattari, p 178.
12 ibid., p 171.
13 ibid., p 177.