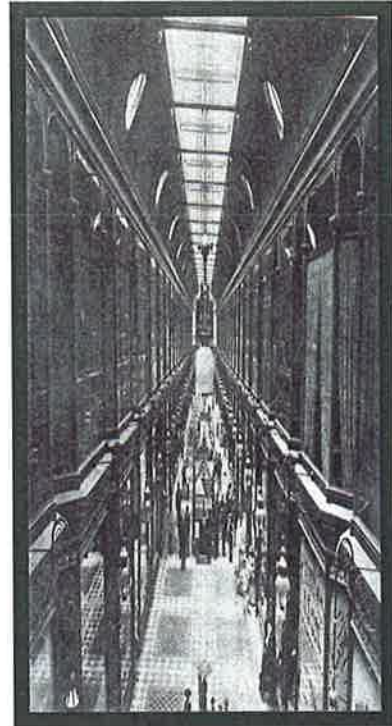


**Maintaining Cultural Significance:**  
**An Interpretive Analysis of**  
**Architectural Conservation in**  
**South Australia**



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**Abstract**

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According to the Burra Charter, the most widely accepted guidelines for architectural conservation in Australia, the aim of architectural conservation is to retain the 'cultural significance' embodied within the built environment.

However, problems arise in the interpretation and implementation of this aim as it remains inadequately defined in the Burra Charter, and related policy documents. In actual practice, the term 'cultural significance' tends to be interpreted in a variety of ways. One form of cultural interpretation may see the significance of the built environment in terms of its active construction of social practices, values and requirements. In this respect the built environment may develop gradually; change to the built form is dictated by social need. A second point of view locates the most significant culture of a place in its original historical conditions. The built environment is valued as a record of the past and may be conserved in order to maintain this representation. A third point of view regards the contemporary and future economic use of the built environment as the most significant measure of the cultural value of a place. In this respect the built environment may be conserved to accommodate a cultural need of the present. It therefore remains useful and has economic importance.

Such widely divergent views often result in equally divergent and sometimes conflicting outcomes. Whether such architectural conservation practices are affectively carried out determines if the cultural significance of the built environments in question is maintained. Therefore, the effectiveness of a set of guidelines such as the Burra Charter is put into question.

An interpretative analysis of particular examples of conservation practice carried out in and around Adelaide will look at the question of how relevant a term such as cultural significance is within the practice of conservation.

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**Declaration**

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This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

I consent to the thesis being made available for photocopy and loan if accepted for the award of the degree.

Kirsty Loveys

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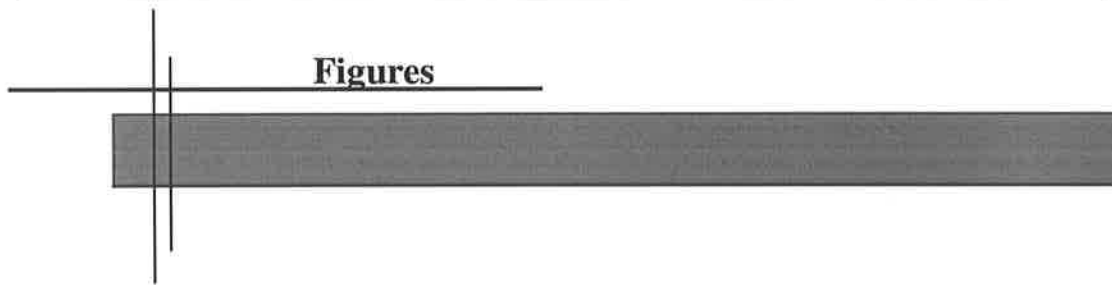
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Note- all photos have been taken by the author unless otherwise stated.

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