



“Queensland architects are generating some of the most exciting designs in Australia”

PLACEMAKERS, 2008

BROOKS STREET HOUSE, JAMES RUSSELL

## Brisbane Architecture: A Celebration of Climate

With the recent developer driven design boom that Brisbane has been experiencing over the past 24 months, a flowon effect has occurred with local and boutique practices exhibiting some truly innovative and inspiring design. With 27 new developments occurring within Fortitude Valley alone, Brisbane is experiencing a period of boom which has never before been experienced in Brisbane history. With a rapidly expanding population, estimated to reach 4 million by 2026; an emphasis has been placed on the development of Brisbane as a desirable alternative to Sydney or Melbourne. In order to be competitive in addition to the necessary infrastructure, Brisbane must provide a strong cultural presence.

Whilst it is the large scale multiresidential projects which are providing the large volume of housing required to accommodate a swelling population, it is the local designers who are creating a design standard worthy of the cultural epicentres that are Sydney and Melbourne. Local firms such as Owen, Vokes and Peters, Shaun Lockyer, James Russell and Richard Kirk are leading the charge after steadfast design institutions such as Cox Rayner, Donovan Hill and Wilson Architects continue to pioneer the way.

The Brisbane climate has been a major influence on the evolution of Brisbane architecture. Local firms, with an expertise of the unique sub-tropical climate are able to work with this, allowing a great freedom in design which is simply not possible in other parts of the world. Architecture here offers the potential to blend the in and outdoors, celebrating the natural environment as part of the architecture.

“There is an awareness of climate that comes from this approach and a heightened experience and appreciation of our surroundings.”

- James Russell

The evolution of Brisbane architecture is strongly tied to the climatic and cultural conditions which exist, the notion of communities has always been strong in Queensland with the unique climate providing a perfect setting for social interactions to occur in an outdoor setting. Life in Brisbane is defined by its climate, encouraging locals and tourists alike to revel in the outdoors, creating unique architectural possibilities and opportunities.

With such a well entrenched understanding of cultural and climatic conditions local architects are providing a benchmark for design standard, encouraging and challenging interstate architects to utilize a similar contextually based approach to design. With large interstate firms such as Elenberg + Fraser making forays into Brisbane developments it is heartening to see a focus on designs which respond to Brisbane's climate and culminate with integrated indoor/outdoor living environments.

With a resurgence in Brisbane architecture a trend is also becoming noticeable of developers who are typically driven by cost efficiency, seeking to implement and introduce better and more cohesive design to their developments. A healthy balance is developing between large scale developers, large multinational and interstate firms and local boutique firms, all working towards a unified vision for the future of Queensland.

Rapid urbanisation coupled with the movement in architecture has continued the development of a unique Brisbane and Queensland style, evolving from the timber and tin vernacular. Based on sound design principles which respond to contextual and climatic conditions, modern architects are inspired by and respond to this vernacular. As architects continue to expand and develop this "Queensland school" of architecture, we as residents are the benefactors, experiencing an improved standard of living which embraces our beloved climate.



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