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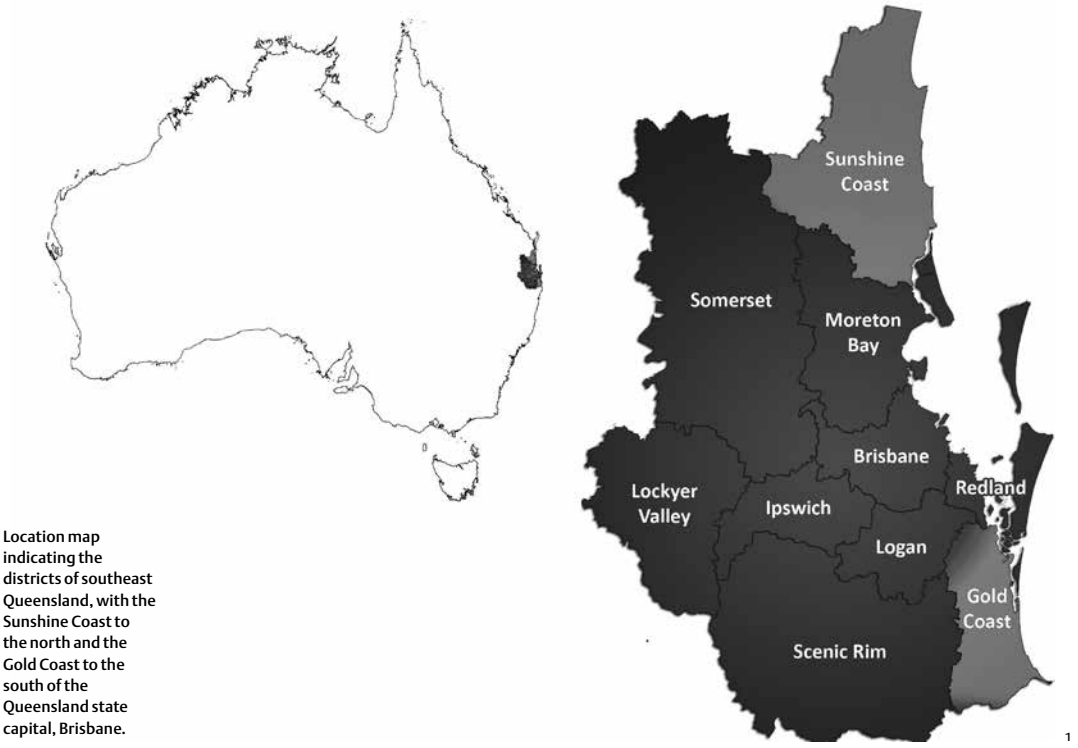
Southeast Queensland's postwar fibro beach architecture is explored in terms of the nostalgic, preservationist impulses of recent initiatives including the *Fibro Coast* exhibition.

Can't touch this

Amy Clarke, Stuart King, Andrew Leach, Wouter Van Acker

Australia's laid-back, sun-drenched beach lifestyle has been a celebrated and prominent part of its official popular culture for nigh on a century, and the images and motifs associated with this culture have become hallmarks of the country's collective identity. Though these representations tend towards stereotype, for many Australians the idea of a summer holiday at the beach is one that is intensely personal and romanticised – its image is not at all urbanised. As Douglas Booth observed, for Australians the beach has become a 'sanctuary at which to abandon cares – a place to let down one's hair, remove one's clothes [...] a paradise where one could laze in peace, free from guilt, drifting between the hot sand and the warm sea, and seek romance'.[1] Beach holidays became popular in the interwar years of the twentieth century, but the most intense burst of activity – both in touristic promotion and in the development of tourism infrastructure – accompanied the postwar economic boom, when family incomes were able to meet the cost of a car and, increasingly, a cheap block of land by the beach upon which a holiday home could be erected with thrift and haste. In subtropical southeast Queensland, the postwar beach holiday became the hallmark of the state's burgeoning tourism industry; the state's southeast coastline in particular benefiting from its warm climate and proximity to the capital, Brisbane. It was here – along the evocatively named Gold Coast (to Brisbane's south) and Sunshine Coast (to its north) *[1]* – that many families experienced their first taste of what is now widely celebrated as the beach lifestyle *[2]*. As one reflection has it:

> *In the era before motels and resorts, a holiday at the Gold and Sunshine coasts usually meant either pitching a tent and camping by the beach or staying in a simple cottage owned by family or friends* [...] *Simplicity, informality, individuality* [...] *were the hallmarks of these humble places*.[2]



1. Location map indicating the districts of southeast Queensland, with the Sunshine Coast to the north and the Gold Coast to the south of the Queensland state capital, Brisbane.

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2. Sun Tan holiday flats on the Gold Coast Highway, Surfers Paradise, Queensland, c. 1960.

The resident populations of what are now called the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast were relatively small until the mid-1950s, with many properties bought and built with the express purpose of serving as weekenders' and holiday homes. Families from nearby Brisbane spent their summers there, as did families from the southern states, whose summers were just as intense at their height, if not more so, but whose winters were longer and bleaker than the brief cool season that passed for winter in Queensland [3]. One of the earliest real estate developments on what was then the South Coast was the Surfers Paradise Estate (1924) in Elsdon, which competed with the late nineteenth-century holiday homes of nearby Southport and the border town of Coolangatta. A similar development was undertaken a few years later on the north coast, with the Golden Beach Estate (1928) situated just south of Caloundra. Common to these developments were low levels of domestic or urban amenity and close proximity to waterways of the Nerang or Currumbin Rivers or the Pacific beaches that flanked the mouth of the Brisbane River and the mangrove swamps of Moreton Bay. While buildings ranged in quality, there was a distinct proliferation of cheaply constructed and decorated shacks that favoured the easy cladding solution offered by 'fibrolite' – an extremely common, domestically manufactured asbestos-based fibre-cement sheeting product, easily painted in whatever colours came most readily to hand. By the early 1960s the manufacturing process of fibrolite had become sophisticated enough that the material no longer seemed purely utilitarian, with different finishes and patterns addressing the needs of domestic do-it-yourselfers. The compatibility of this product with other modern materials and fittings, such as vinyl, laminated plastic, and fluorescent lighting made for often appealing and affordable design solutions in the mode of a bright and colourful vernacular, giving rise to the picturesque image of the informal shack in the landscape. The sheet-based construction logic meant that almost anyone could build with it, and one consequence of fibrolite's modular nature was its capacity for the uptake of popular modernist architectural forms; it was cheap and stylish, and marketed as such. This sense was compounded by the widely published designs of the higher end houses realised in a local modernist idiom at the same time, again on both coasts.

By the 1950s and the first postwar waves of large-scale real estate development, the waterfront sites on which many of the holiday homes that were built across the 1940s now sat became susceptible to a market logic that by the end of the century had completely transformed each of these once informal, village-centred coastal cities along Queensland's southeast coast. This occurred in different ways on the beach communities flanking the state capital to north and south, but both phenomena capitalised on the remarkable appreciation to which prized plots of land had been subject through the improved connectivity between Brisbane and its coastal neighbours. Since the 1980s, another wave of real estate development capitalised, in both cases, on the newer role of these cities as feeders to a state capital that had grown substantially enough to legitimately claim its place

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3. Elaine Campaner, *Tugun* (2013).

as Australia's 'third city'.[3] Intercity rail services, improved motorways, and the increased cost of property in Brisbane itself fostered middle-class building booms on the Gold and Sunshine coasts at a moment when baby boomers (with their well fatted superannuation accounts) entered the age of retirement, and the prospect of an apartment with an ocean view or of a house with a canal-side mooring was an achievable reward for a working life *[4]*.[4]

In many cases, the blocks of land that were being built on were not previously unoccupied, but were bought from, or developed by, owners who had once been much more casual about their occupation of the seaside. The most visible of the building types to disappear as a consequence of the natural growth of the city, spurred on by rolling booms in real estate development, was what has been described in shorthand as the 'fibro shack'. To some these cheaply constructed holiday homes were unnecessary reminders of an earlier, surpassed time, their once-modern materials now shabby and weather-beaten, and their occupation of prime real estate an insult to the aspirations and aesthetic tastes of cashed-up Queenslanders (and their southern compatriots). To others, the fibro shack was an icon of a simpler era, strongly connected with the innocence of childhood and the youthful energy of a state – and nation – still fomenting its identity in the wider world.

Fibro coast

A project to celebrate the cultural heritage of the fibro shack was initiated as a multi-agency assessment of the various aspects of this building type: once much more prolific than it is today, but still highly visible in pockets along the Pacific coast. It was a cooperative venture between the Art Gallery of the University of the Sunshine Coast (inland from Mooloolaba) and the Gold Coast Art Gallery (Surfers Paradise) in 2014, recognising the large collections held by each of these regional venues of art works and design objects relating to the golden age of the Australian beachside holiday, as well as the responsibility of each gallery to its respective constituencies to foster and promote local arts and culture.[5] *Fibro Coast*, as it was called, took its initial cue from a campaign led by Sunshine Coast architect Roger Todd to document and protect the fibro shacks of Moffat Beach – where he himself lives in one of their number – which had become increasingly subject, over time, to demolition in aid of larger-scaled property development. For Todd, alongside fellow campaigner Meredith Walker, the beach shack town, 'is the essence here of what living at the coast really means, but it is disappearing before our eyes'.[6] Similarly, the *Fibro Coast* exhibition and its public education project drew attention to the tenuous ephemerality of this material layer in the past of these coastal towns. Their presence is popularly regarded as an integral aspect of the towns' adolescent identity, undermined by their disappearance. By conflating anxieties around cultural identity with concerns about the architectural heritage of impermanent dwellings, the project's agenda was fed by a research programme on the part of the municipal councils of the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. Each venue took the cue of the public discussion around the fibro building stock to conduct a broad assessment

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4. View of Surfers Paradise from Aquarius, 2014.

of what has in recent years been increasingly recognised as a culturally significant but economically and materially fragile fabric.

Through an exhibition of collected and newly commissioned art, in situ installations, ex galleria events in *actual* fibro shacks, a temporary digital platform, public talks, walking tours, a play, and publications, the *Fibro Coast* project connected the growing body of art works of the two partner galleries (separated by 170 kilometres) to recent documentation and information sharing tools allowing for crowd-sourced accounts of experiences and memories in relation to the subject matter – in which the fibro shack more often than not served as a trigger rather than a subject in its own right.[7] The show therefore worked across two registers: as a historical exhibition, documenting extant examples of the fibro-clad home, and as an exercise in nostalgia through art, distilling the proper values of past experiences authenticated, in turn, through living memory. It demonstrated how the coastal towns that grew into the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast used to be simpler, more authentic, and are, today, worth remembering, celebrating, and emulating. *[3, 5, 6]*

Historical and contemporary art works, ranging from the 1920s to the present, demonstrated the picturesque simplicity of the beach house (also in the act of its disappearance) resulting from the humility of this cottage architecture and its subordination to nature – where nature is, ultimately, the acculturated coastal landscape, in turn indexing an even purer (past) moment of the Australian encounter with the seaside. The exhibition flyer positioned the beach shack between temporary tents and camping accommodation and the more permanent structures of motels and resorts. William Bustard's painting of a fibro beach house, dating from the 1950s *[5]*, and Anna Carey's model, *Sea Mist* (2012) *[6]*, both illustrate the character of self-sufficient construction and celebrate the vernacularity of the collective efforts of fathers and uncles building variations on the *ur*-holiday house. They show dwellings devoid of complex decorations, dominantly horizontal in composition, and boasting a limited colour palette, chamferboard-covered walls, and cement roofing. Unlike the primary family home that expressed ownership and status, the holiday house corresponded to an *image* of vacationing – the purification of body and mind in nature and a retreat from the working year. Anna Carey's work *[6]* exactly demonstrates that we no longer have access to this pure image except through reconstituted memories. A photograph of her *Fibro Coast Snowdome* (2013) was used to advertise the show with the media release inviting the audience to 'Reconnect with the Fibro Coast'.[8] The model it depicts is placed on the beach, and acts to dissociate the shack from reality and context by rendering abstract the materiality that makes this model function, not in terms of nostalgia as suggested by the media release, but as a throw-back structure of vacationing in the contemporary situation, today, at the Gold and Sunshine Coasts.[9]

While the regional vernacular of fibro architecture and its resulting landscape are made to speak in *Fibro Coast* from historical and contemporary works of art, the contrast between the past and present serves to denounce the gradual

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5. William Bustard (1894–1973), *Not Titled [Fibro beach house]*, c. 1950s. Watercolour on paper.

6. Anna Carey, *Sea Mist* (2012). 150 x 100 cm, Giclee print.



6

disappearance of the picturesque coastal townscapes in a tempo that equals the development of the contrasting image of vertical high-rise structures set against the coastal horizon for which Surfers Paradise *[4]*, in particular, has become well known, and which remains an identity anchor for the northern Sunshine Coast. Vida Lahey's *Monsoonal Storm over Tweed Heads* (1946), shows how the beach house framed the natural landscape made habitable but also how it kept nature at a safe distance in the face of subtropical storms *[7]*. In the postwar decades the beach house was, not unlike the car, or what Reyner Banham called a 'gizmo', a gadget that allowed people to escape and relax in a comfortable and controlled manner into a landscape that seemed close to nature.[10] The contrast of these earlier depictions of the house-in-landscape with Blair McNamara's 2005 drawing of the high-rise development that he witnessed taking shape from his family's home, could not be bigger *[8]*. The picturesque image of the fibro coast is stained by new unit blocks outlined in chalk that express his Gold Coast neighbourhood's 'ongoing disappointment' with urban development and its supplanting of history and authentic experience.

The nostalgia that feeds on the contrasts McNamara describes is more ambiguous in the work of Rebecca Ross *[9]*. To a 1980s map she adds a copy of a real estate advertisement of the 1920s and 1930s for the first subdivisions in Burleigh and Miami: 'The sea hath its pearls surely this is one of them' (2014). She invites reflection on the rapid change by which the

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7. Vida Lahey (1882–1968), *Monsoonal Storm over Tweed Heads* (c. 1946). 42.5 x 57.0 cm, watercolour and traces of pencil on paper.

8. Blair McNamara, *Blueprint* (2005). 160 x 100 cm, mixed media on canvas. From Blair McNamara's 'Coodabin/ Shoodabin' collection.



early beach houses of the 1950s and 1960s were sacrificed to a first wave of high-density urbanisation in the 1970s and 1980s and the construction of the high-rise and resort hotels, effacing nature with grid plans. These towers on the beach draw the vacationer or indeed the 'schoolies' – the name given to Australia's high school leavers, with their annual weeks-long celebrations – to the Gold Coast in the present day. In Ross's collage we find the counterpart to the staging of lost innocence in *Fibro Coast*: the start of the expansion of what is commonly called 'seaburbia' over natural sites, an increasing density that reflects land value rather than a preoccupation with resilient urbanism (whatever that might be made to mean), and a coastal region, north and south of Brisbane, that continues to profit from the effects of sustained urbanisation and the spread of the southeast Queensland conurbation. The Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast ultimately exemplify an ongoing process in which domestically scaled,

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9. Rebecca Ross, '*The sea hath its pearls surely this is one of them*' (2014). 61.5 x 84.5 cm, collage on foam board.

cheaply built holiday homes are traded for permanent large-scale structures like hotels, apartment towers, resort precincts, and shopping complexes – a process that is integral to the operation of those same two cities, which have each in turn institutionalised the image of yearning for the simpler life and purer moments in the early histories of their respective coastal settlements.

Souvenirs, memory, and identity (or transcending the tangible)

Maurice Halbwachs has famously emphasised that 'collective memory' is socially constructed.[11] *Fibro Coast* is a good example of how memories are produced, how a community of citizens and artists can recall a purportedly shared past in response to a socially or publicly formulated framework of narratives and indices. Even more than a social performance of memory in the public sphere, though, *Fibro Coast* becomes a point of reference to prove the existence of 'cultural memory' (as Jan Assman called it) if culture is understood as that which allows individuals to build their own identity through shared traditions as embodied in the commonly inhabited world.[12] The beach houses in *Fibro Coast* invoke sufficient cultural memory to quench the thirst for a legitimate identity that has an existential character at the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. Especially because these cities are so young, relatively speaking – both products of the twentieth century – the implication is that if they already suffer from the loss of memory they are in danger of losing, as cities, their sense of self. Hence a collective, institutionalised embrace of nostalgia for a mode of casual building as a tangible souvenir of a more direct and legitimate encounter with nature, a more straightforward experience of leisure, now lost to forces beyond culture's control. The fibro shack, cheaply built, often with asbestos sheeting, is made available in this sense as a tool for cultural socialisation, underpinning through its relative longevity and capacity to surpass a period of intense property development, a 'proper' sense of community. This rests upon an apparently shared, if distant, often borrowed, but always straightforward image of summers at the beach. These casual buildings, once translated from material fabric into cultural memory, invites interpretation as an open sign into which are poured cultural representations of various (ideal) pasts. Where one cannot grasp these pasts, one can touch the buildings that stand for them: thus the fibro shack as a tool for shaping the identity of the two cities that measure themselves against it. It is at this point that the material fate of the fibro shack meets cultural burdens placed upon it.

Touching the fibro shack, for instance, can be hazardous. When the asbestos fibres of which the walls are made become airborne, they activate a health risk. (Common consequences of breathing asbestos dust or ingesting asbestos include lung

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cancer, mesothelioma, or asbestosis.) The innate impermanence of the fibro shack therefore places its precarious materiality on a collision course with the effects of time. The danger of asbestos exposure is an encouragement to development, with its effects upon urbanisation. These buildings occupy valuable real estate, and are easier to eliminate than adapt. If they must exist, they must do so intact, locked into the moment of their construction. The problematic nature of their materiality – of these sheets and their fibres – might be partially overcome if attachment of the collectively upheld image to the tangible form of the building itself can be loosened.

Fibro Coast highlighted the central role that these shacks, diminishing in number year by year, have played in the narratives and imagery of the Gold Coast or Sunshine Coast beach holiday, but in doing so the exhibition also demonstrated the transferral of the tangible form (the houses themselves) into other cultural modes: art, poetry, storytelling, film, and so forth. As curator Virgina Rigney noted: 'Place is something in the mind and despite the overbearing factual accuracy of Google Earth and the Instagram pin, it is artworks such as these that allow us to see more of where we live.'[13] The heterogeneous media of *Fibro Coast* thus mediated between the tangible and intangible and shaped the experience of memory and its programmatic legacy. Serving as the backdrop for countless holiday photographs and home videos, fleshed out by soundtracks of 1950s music, breaking waves, burning sausages, and children at play, for many people these structures hold greater personal value when they are remembered in their past forms, particularly as they may now sit in the much-altered and perhaps unrecognisable landscape of the present day. Continues Rigney, the historical narrative of the city and its buildings, 'is thin without the photograph'.[14] Carey's photographic studies of the fibro shack take this observation to its logical ends: the construction (as image) of the image (through recollection, reconstruction) of that which ultimately sits elsewhere.[15]

By means of its translation into an image, and activated as an actor in collectively recalled scenes of yesteryear, the fibro shack has become an adopted tradition forged from a supposedly (but impossibly) shared experience. It has become a reference point for the postwar generation and its children and a source of inspiration for artists and writers keen to invoke the fibro shack in a manner reminiscent of the eighteenth-century Grand Tourists seeking out the ruins of antiquity in order to invoke their magnificence. The ephemerality of the fibro shack thus heightens its value, its disappearance from the landscape triggering a wave of nostalgia – and actions induced by nostalgia – that would make little sense if these structures remained en masse in their 'naturally' banal, weather-beaten state. The sense forced upon the situation takes shape out of the 'haze between both the initial optimism of their initial creation in the 50s and early 60s and the unease of their current demise'.[16]

The loss of the real environment (*milieu de mémoire*) in which remembering can take place is an essential condition for the definition of memory sites (*lieux de mémoire*, after Pierre Nora).[17] In these sites memory is made to materialise, 'no longer quite life, not yet death, like shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded'.[18] But while these sites bring the process of forgetting to a halt, they resist conversion into historical objects with a fixed meaning. These sites stay essentially meaningless so as to function as inexhaustible sources of recollection – of experience at the scale of the personal, or as collective memories assumed by way of cultural assimilation. The everyday memory of what life at the beach was like is rather fluid, and the fibro shack has been activated in the histories of these sprawling, suburban, beachside cities to fix a past that is otherwise vague, undefined, and rife with contradictions that resist narrative. And for the hundreds of thousands of people who have come to live in these two city-scale communities since their infant 1950s, this location of the fibro shack as an index of a disappearing past, defining a value-laden present, is a moment shared by populations (as touchstones of a genuine lifestyle), institutions (as images against which each city may measure itself) and artists (as figures whose celebrations hover between celebration and critique). It is no coincidence that the call to preserve those remaining examples of the fibro shack relies on the capacity of city-bound institutions to curate and corral the memories of those people who inhabited them or continue to do so. In their transitory state, fibro shacks as memory sites contain an excess of meaning in a state of muteness, and remain open for all that they are asked to signify.

Living with asbestos

A reflection on the problematic nature of the material of this heritage might help us to think through the problems of considering these structures as patrimony at all. Charles Pickett's cultural history of fibro-cement sheeting, *Fibro Frontier*, acknowledges the well-known health dangers of working with asbestos in a work that tends, in general, to romanticise its effects as a material.[19] The conclusion of his book, however, offers a remarkable document that in a very direct way advises how one can live with these historical buildings. Asbestos, he observes, is safe if properly handled. The risk lies *within* the material rather than *on its surface*, so one should not pull it down or cut into it – not ever, really, but if needs must then while wearing the proper safety equipment. Washing one's fibro shack with a high-pressure hose can release the fibres. So can testing it physically. The best way to remain safe from the potential harm of inhaling asbestos fibres is to keep the surfaces of what may or may not be asbestos sheeting well painted: clean and bright to mask the dangers within. In its Heritage Information Series brochure on 'The Fibro Beach House' the City of Gold Coast takes this advice further:

> *It is often difficult to identify the presence of asbestos by sight. The only way to be certain of the existence of the material is to have a sample analysed by a laboratory. Sampling is in itself hazardous and should only be done*

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by a competent person and the material analysed only in accredited laboratories. Where materials are not tested it is safer to treat it as if it does contain asbestos, *particularly if it is a product of* a type and age *that typically contains asbestos.*[20]

Whether a fibro shack is made of materials containing asbestos or not, caution should prevail, and the owner should do all he or she can to maintain the building to avoid cracking or undue wear on the surface of the sheeting.

This may sound a little like the problem faced by Keanu Reeves's character Jack Traven in the film *Speed*: one's life depends on staying ahead of decay and of the natural trajectory to which these casual, poorly built, temporary structures will inevitably be subject.[21] If you happen to own one of these buildings you can choose whether or not to have a moral or political position on the health crisis prompted among factory workers in Australia and elsewhere who were involved in the production of this miracle material,[22] but you should in any case look out for yourself and your family by keeping a tidy and well-maintained home – by preserving, that is, the image of the fibro shack at its purest.

The precincts of fibro-cement beach houses on the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast may well be seen as a culturally significant patrimony against the various assessment criteria that would determine them to be so at local, if not state level. Viewed against several criteria of the *Queensland Heritage Act* (1992), these beach houses might well individually and collectively demonstrate patterns of historical development (criterion A); serve as increasingly examples of their type as they face the pressures of new development (criterion D); represent specific community groups, cultural strata, or 'place' (criterion G); and embody potentially significant aesthetic, creative, and/or technical achievements (criterion E and F).[23] Evidence of their performance against any of these criteria would help make a case to protect those extant examples, and justify the institutional attention paid to them. While detailed assessment is needed for individual buildings and groupings, as a whole they capture something of a moment: the moment of their construction, for those that remain; and the moment of their assessment, the present moment, in which a high degree of anxiety around the loss of tangible architectural and urban patrimony has institutions taking recourse to a highly rhetoricised plea to take these buildings seriously. Yet here we face a dilemma: in all aspects, these buildings were temporally specific, structurally ephemeral – in their use, construction and their moment in the urbanisation of southern Queensland's Pacific coast – and yet loaded up with meaning that is made to endure as a set of operative values for their respective cities.

Caught between the imperative to document these things in their situation and endurance and the wish, formalised in *Fibro Coast*, to preserve them (or something of them) intact, causes a conundrum in the realms of both cultural or urban identity and public health. The *Fibro Coast* exhibition and the broader cultural agenda it illustrates constructed a shared cultural memory predicated upon a nostalgic remembering of a simpler time of mid-century beach holidays. But the preservation of both the memory and the artefact necessarily renders the fibro house a picturesque version of its various realities. Nostalgia holds all of the complexities with which historical analysis might treat the complexities of their social and technical history and as an index of a city in the experience of historical change. As Mark Jarzombek observes of the world heritage project, '[h]eritage evacuates temporality from the architectural to produce an imaginary cultural calm in the swirling stew of reality.'[24] For all the insularity of this case, *Fibro Coast* can be asked to stand in for something much larger: the problem of valuing fabric that would once have disappeared with the passage of time, and hence of being measured against 'correct' moments in the everyday past of a city. The 'swirling stew' Jarzombek identifies is, in this sense, a stew comprising too of competing pasts and values. The fibro shacks of the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast speak to an idealised past of this region, assumed to be common even if it is rarely so, but against which corporate identity and institutional rhetoric is made to stand. This 'cultural calm' is not simply fostered in the subtle lighting and controlled soundscapes of the regional art gallery, but persists, too, in the absorption of historical complexity in favour of that which is easily grasped – even if what which is grasped might be dangerous.

Notes

1 Douglas Booth, *Australian Beach Cultures: The History of Sun, Sand and Surf* (Oxford: Routledge, 2001), pp. 3–4.

2 *Fibro Coast* project archive, formerly online at <www.fibrocoast.net> [last accessed 3 August 2015] but now disabled, as is the University of the Sunshine Coast exhibition archive at <http://www.usc.edu.au/art-gallery/exhibitions/2014/june/fibro-coast> [last accessed 21 October 2016]. Much of the content has been mirrored in <https://www.facebook.com/fibrocoast/> [accessed 21 October 2016].

3 On this theme, see William Hatherell, *The Third Metropolis* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2007).

4 The factors fostering this city's development are explored in *Off the Plan: The Urbanisation of the Gold Coast*, ed. by Caryl Bosman, Aysin Dedekorkut-Howes, Andrew Leach (Melbourne, Vic.: CSIRO Publishing, 2016); and in Andrew Leach, *Gold Coast: City and Architecture* (London: Lund Humphries, 2018).

5 The Fibro Coast exhibition was held from 15 February to 23 March 2014 at the Gold Coast City Gallery in Surfers Paradise, Queensland; and from 17 July to 16 August at the University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery, Sippy Downs, Queensland, Australia.

6 Meredith Walker and Roger Todd, 'Post World War 2 Development Sunshine Coast', <http://www.sunshinecoastplaces.com.au/> [accessed 3 August 2015]. A disclaimer: coauthor Andrew

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Leach proposed to name the project *Fibro Coast* in an early planning meeting, but otherwise had a minor role in its early development before withdrawing his involvement entirely.

7 Virginia Rigney, 'Greetings from Fibro Coast', formerly online at <www.fibrocoast.net/blog> [last accessed 3 August 2015].

8 Gold Coast City Gallery, 'Media Release: Reconnect with the Fibro Coast', <https://hota.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ArtsCentreGC_2014-01-29_Fibro-Coast.pdf> [accessed 4 October 2018].

9 Alexandra Brown and Andrew Leach, 'Neither Here nor Elsewhere', in *Anna Carey* (West End: Queensland Centre for Photography, 2012), np.

10 A 'gizmo', like a surfboard, is 'the proper way to make sense of an unorganized situation like a wave', or nature writ large. See Reyner Banham, 'The Great Gizmo' (1965), in *Design by Choice*, ed. by Penny Sparke (London: Academy Editions, 1981), pp. 108–14 (p. 108).

11 Maurice Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1952).

12 Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1992).

13 Virginia Rigney, 'A City Made through the Photograph: Gold Coast City Gallery', *Lucida*, 1:Special Issue, 'Habitat', ed. by Camilla Birkeland and Lynette Letic (2015), p. 58.

14 Ibid., p. 54.

15 A theme explored in Brown and Leach, 'Neither Here Nor Elsewhere' (see note 9, above).

16 Rigney, 'A City Made through the Photograph', p. 58.

17 Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Memoire*', *Representations*, 26 (Spring 1989), 7–24. This theme sustains a longer discussion around the Gold Coast's architectural heritage in the hands of Alexandra Teague, 'Materialising the Immaterial: Social Value and the Conservation of Everyday Places' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Melbourne, 2004).

18 Nora, 'Between Memory and History', 12.

19 Charles Pickett, *The Fibro Frontier: A Different History of Australian Architecture* (Sydney: Powerhouse, 1997).

20 Office of the City Architect and Heritage, 'The Fibro Beach House', Heritage Information Series 10 (City of Gold Coast, nd), available online at <www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/documents/bf/heritage-guidelines-10.pdf> [20 August 2015], emphasis added.

21 Graham Yost, *Speed*, dir. by Jan de Bont (Los Angeles: Twentieth Century Fox, 1994).

22 This health crisis is explored in numerous articles and studies, for which Giedion Haigh offers an entry point in his *Asbestos House: The Secret History of James Hardie Industries* (Melbourne: Scribe, 2007). See also Daniel Ryan's contribution to Daniel Barber, Lee Stickells, and others, 'Environmental Histories of Architecture: Questions and Consequences', *Architectural Theory Review*, 22:2 (2018), pp. 256–9.

23 State of Queensland, *Queensland Heritage Act 1992* [current as at 3 July 2017] (Brisbane: Queensland Government, 2017), p. 29.

24 Mark Jarzombek, 'The Metaphysics of Permanence: Curating Critical Impossibilities', *Log*, 21 (2015), p. 131.

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Estate of William Bustard, Collection of Gallery at HOTA. Gifted by the citizens of the Gold Coast to future generations, 2004, 5
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Vida Lahey, photograph by Carl Warner, Queensland Art Gallery Board of Trustees, Collection of The University of Queensland, purchased 1947, 7
Andrew Leach, 4
Blair McNamara, 8
Photographer unknown, Local Studies Collection, City of Gold Coast Libraries, 2
Rebecca Ross, Collection of HOTA Gold Coast, 9

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Authors' biographies

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