Chapter 4 Adelaide's Aboriginal Cultural Markers: The Phases

Chapter Outline

This chapter identifies and outlines six phases, from colonisation to the present and into the foreseeable future, in the evolution of the ways Aboriginal people and culture have been included in public spaces in Adelaide through Aboriginal Cultural Markers. The phases serve as a structure to group and discuss the Markers within an historical and social context. The chapter includes a comparison between the phases identified by me and the themes of architectural interpretations of Aboriginal culture or identity that Mallie & Ostwald (2009) have identified, and the development of Aboriginal art, in order to provide some comparison of styles and link issues regarding public space Aboriginal representations. The discussion reveals similar challenges for artists and architects in creating symbolic meaning and forms to represent Aboriginal culture in the public space.

One hundred and forty-three Markers have been located in greater metropolitan Adelaide and they have been grouped into the relevant phases as part of an overview and chronology of the evolution of Aboriginal inclusion in the public space in Adelaide.

Public Space Aboriginal Inclusion in Adelaide – The Phases Identified

At an early stage of this research it became apparent that a structure to group the identified Aboriginal Cultural Markers was required rather than simply documenting Markers in the chronological order of their coming into existence or spatial location. Identification of an underlying structure enables an understanding of the evolution of the Markers and the narrative that surrounds them: the initial lack of representation, then the evolution of Aboriginal inclusion in the public space; and the story behind them, especially the influence of the broader social context and political determination of how Aboriginal people were to be regarded within the Australian community at the time.

I have therefore identified a series of distinct phases which are based on my own interpretation of the research data and the social context in which the Markers were undertaken. The boundaries between phases were based on the broader social and artistic contexts of the times, the types of Markers located and who was involved in their making and commissioning. There is some blurring of the edges between phases and whilst a chronological order remains, the phases reflect broader social trends in terms of the positioning of Aboriginal people within society, the roles of artists and institutions, and the increasing numbers of Markers and scope of Aboriginal inclusion over time.

The phases also provide a structure for future comparative analysis of developments in other places in Australia, in particular the capital cities. There may for instance be other characteristics or time frames dependent on the social status of Aboriginal people in those states and the various political activities occurring at state or local level. Kepert (2007) in a study of Aboriginal public space inclusion in East Perth, Western Australia, analysed her findings 'in light of the evolutionary trends identified by Malone (2007) to see whether these patterns were echoed in Perth' and

concluded that although 'The East Perth sample is rather small … some of Malone's trends are echoed'. I published an outline of the phases in 2007 (Malone, 2007).

Having established the phases, potential parallels with other Aboriginal public space and public identity activities, notably architectural representations and Aboriginal art, were later noted. These activities were not examined in detail but are noted to suggest ways in which the whole sphere of contemporary Aboriginal cultural expression; art, architecture and design can be understood and how they may, or may not intersect or have similarities. The built or architectural environment, in particular, is another evolving venue for the inclusion of Aboriginal peoples in the public space and the expression of Aboriginal identities. Aboriginal art from Central Australia has provided the lead in translating traditional stories and expression into a contemporary format and has become the signifier of an Australian Aboriginal identity, providing motifs and symbols now used extensively elsewhere in Australia. These have helped bring the expression of Aboriginality into the public imagination and moved the study of Aboriginal cultural expression from ethnology and anthropology into contemporary arts, architectural practice and other cultural expression. There are some parallels between my phases and the phases or styles of architectural representation discussed by Memmott (2007) and Mallie & Ostwald (2009) and phases in the development of Central Australian Aboriginal art (Rothwell 2011:17).

Mallie & Ostwald (2009:2) outlined that 'Aboriginal architecture' is used to describe 'buildings which are concerned with the expression, representation and symbolic meaning of cultural identity for Aboriginal peoples' and that 'Such buildings represent an important movement toward cultural liberation and diversity that is a significant step away from Western domination'. They (2009:1) stated 'Architectural interpretations of Aboriginal identities now play a significant role in informing how Aboriginality is perceived'. Their research into the evolution of an Aboriginal architecture in Australia identified five themes, or issues, in the evolution of architectural interpretations of Aboriginal identities in terms of stereotypical representation, appropriate community consultation, authorship and moves towards a culturally appropriate public space Aboriginal expression. Their themes are discussed in relationship to my findings.

Whilst two dimensional, portable and tradable contemporary Aboriginal art is somewhat different to public space representations there is some parallel in terms of the social changes occurring and the development of an Aboriginal identity post the 1967 referendum on Aboriginal issues. Rothwell (2011:17) suggests that the development of Aboriginal art in Central Australia falls into a series of well defined phases originating from Papunya[10] in the Northern Territory in the early 1970s and these are discussed. It is recognised that the evolution of contemporary Aboriginal art is of great cultural and academic interest but my study is not primarily concerned with Aboriginal art.

I shall outline the characteristics of the phases in this chapter before discussing in detail the works from each phase in Chapters 5 to 8. In Chapter 10 I take time to document in even greater depth the particular Markers relevant to the Tjilbruke

[10] Aboriginal art of the 1970s evolved initially through what is known as the Papunya movement in the western desert region of Central Australia, referred to as dot painting (Bardon, 1979), along with the broader recognition of painting from Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, some of which is referred to as cross hatching and X-ray style (Brandl, 1973).

Dreaming, the most well known and intact Kaurna dreaming narrative in the Adelaide region, as they have contributed significantly to a Kaurna urban identity and span the Phases. The six phases I have identified, and their characteristics, are as follows.

Phase 1. The Silence (until 1960)

The period of exclusion of Aboriginal culture.

This is the period, from South Australian settlement in 1836 until 1960, when Aboriginal people were generally excluded from public space commemorations or cultural representations. It is the time when Aboriginal people and culture were considered extraneous to the main colonising imperative and settlement process (Stanner, 1979) and, as the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (1994:19) outlined, the period when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's history was neglected within the Australian history domain. They were not in the eye of vision, they were 'out of sight' and 'out of mind.' Stanner (1979: 214) described the omission of Aboriginal people from our received history as follows:

> *It is a structural matter, a view from a window which has been carefully placed to exclude a whole quadrant of the landscape. What may have begun as a simple forgetting of other possible views turned under habit and over time into something like a cult of forgetfulness practiced on a national scale. We have been able for so long to disremember the Aborigines that we are now hard put to keep them in mind even when we want most to do so.*

Stanner (1979:207, 216) called this omission 'the great Australian silence'. It was a silence that was all pervasive; political, cultural and social. It is often referenced or referred to as a descriptor of this period as both a period of history and as a metaphor for an Aboriginal absence and a lack of action by non-Aboriginal Australians. Curthoys (2008:233), in referencing Stanner (above), said 'I begin with a famous quotation, one that you may well have heard or read already, possibly many times. It is, in fact, quoted with ever increasing frequency and ever greater claims for its significance'. The silence included Aboriginal people being absent from representation in the public space. Although this research relates to a visual absence, it is within the ambit of Stanner's metaphor and I continue its use because of its significance. It is also a way of paying respect to Stanner and reinforcing the extent of the silence.

The public commemorations of the time, represented in Adelaide's public statuary, reflected the city fathers' desire to mimic the old cities of Europe and their statues of classical gods and goddesses, monarchs, explorers and founding fathers (Cameron, 1997: vii). The other major form of commemoration in that period was of Australia's involvement in wars. Although government was involved in the commemorations of wars, it did not have the lead role in the commissioning of public statuary; it was mainly initiated by the peer groups of those individuals recognised or by wealthy patrons. Aboriginal people were not part of this social grouping and were neither participating in, nor being recognised in this process of public commemorations and ornamental statuary.

Phase 2. Breaking the Silence (1960 to early 1980s)

The first inclusions of Aboriginal culture in public space artworks; the artworks are predominantly by non-Aboriginal artists.

The 1960s saw the 'breaking of the silence', the start of rendering visible in the public space what had previously been invisible. Spanning just over twenty years this early phase of Aboriginal representation coincided with, reflected or perhaps even contributed to the changing social and political attitudes towards Aboriginal people. This changing attitude was demonstrated by the 1962 Australian government enfranchisement of Aboriginal people, a range of high profile political campaigns and legal appeals by Aboriginal people to establish land rights (Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 2002; Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1994). 1965 saw the Freedom Rides in New South Wales and in 1966, the high profile Aboriginal stockmen's strike occurred at Wave Hill cattle station in Northern Australia. On 27 May 1967 a Commonwealth referendum was held with a 'yes' vote of over 90% across the country in support of the proposed changes to the constitution. The changes were to give the Commonwealth powers to create laws for the benefit of Aboriginals, an area which had previously been the jurisdiction of the States, and the counting of Aboriginal people in the national census.

In this phase there was a general perception that the Kaurna were an extinct people; that they and their culture had disappeared in the 19th century colonisation process. Kaurna descendants existed, largely living in missions or as fringe dwellers, but there was no general knowledge of their existence and many Aboriginal people did not know their specific cultural group identity. Some artists working in this phase did state that some of their works were intended to recognise the Aboriginal people of the Adelaide area but the name Kaurna was not part of the general public lexicon.

Ten Markers have been identified in this phase which spans over two decades. The phase is characterised by the initiative of non-Aboriginal artists to include Aboriginal people or culture in their public space artworks. Only one Marker, a mural, included Aboriginal people in its making. Government did not initiate any public artworks specifically to recognise Aboriginal people in this phase but private citizens did. There was recognition of the lack of Aboriginal public space inclusion by these few people, and action to bring about change.

As Rothwell (2011:17) explained for Central Australian Aboriginal art, the 1970s was a decade-long process of initial growth and slow exploration of styles and subjects by Aboriginal artists. The Aboriginal artists were exploring ways to translate traditional expression into contemporary forms. There was no corresponding activity by Aboriginal artists in the public space but rather there were the early exploratory works by non-Aboriginal artists as to how to represent Aboriginal culture through painting and sculpture.

Of the ten Markers of this phase, six are sculptures (in the tradition of public statuary) and four are murals (continuing the tradition of the indoor decorative mural). Two sculptures were the result of commissions by local government, the Adelaide City Council, where the artist chose to refer to Aboriginal culture at his own initiative rather than the council specifying to do so. They are the *Piccaninny Drinking Fountain*, 1960, a functional artwork in the city parklands (Figure 5-4), and the *Three Rivers Fountain*, 1968, a major commemorative fountain in Victoria Square (Figure 5-9). The other four sculptures were initiated by private individuals: *The Rainmakers*, 1965, O'Sullivan's Beach (Figure 5-5); *Howie Memorial (Aboriginal) Statue*, 1967, Walkerville (Figure 5-8); *Pmara Nuka My Country*, 1970, Walkerville (Figure 5-11); and the *Tjilbruke Monument*, 1972, Kingston Park (Figure 5-12).

The first mural of this phase (untitled) continued the tradition of indoor decorative murals, although the subject matter, Aboriginal motifs, was novel. It was located in an indoor public space, the Shedley Theatre, Elizabeth, in 1965. In 1973 the second mural, in the Adelaide Festival Centre, continued the decorative theme, where in this instance the artist sought to represent an Aboriginal dreaming mythological being in a western based abstract form. For the third mural the subject matter was landscape, and was located in the Suzanne Ward of the Adelaide Children's Hospital in 1978. This mural included Aboriginal people in its painting and is the first work located in Adelaide to do so. The Aboriginal themes of the murals and Aboriginal participation came about at the initiative of the artists/individuals working in the area.

The final mural, *History of Australia,* 1982, a large scale outdoor mural was part of a new form of public space expression and democratisation. It was the initiative of a community arts group at a time when community based art began using the public space to reflect on social history and encourage community development and inclusion. This emerging movement was reflected in South Australia by the formation of the Community Arts Network in 1980 and nationally in 1978 with the formation of the Community Arts Board of the Australia Council, the federal government's arts and cultural funding and advocacy body. It was the start of the period of art for communities where communities, rather than individuals, could receive funding for both artistic and cultural development purposes through the arts, embracing cultural pluralism, equity and inclusion (Pitt & Watt, 2001:7-9).

Of the Markers of this phase four are located in the city and six in the metropolitan areas. Their outdoor locations, mainly public parks, were dictated by the opportunities that arose. One Marker, the *Three Rivers Fountain* is in a major civic space, Victoria Square and another, the *Tjilbruke Monument,* is exceptional in that it was specifically sited overlooking a Kaurna Dreaming site and was commissioned to specifically acknowledge an Aboriginal Dreaming (and I believe it to be the first public artwork to do so in Australia). There was no architectural interpretation of Aboriginal culture or identity in this phase.

Phase 3. Aboriginal Voice Emerges (early 1980s to early 1990s)

The inclusion of Aboriginal people as design contributors or collaborators within a period of generic or pan-Aboriginal representation.

This ten year phase is characterised by Aboriginal people starting to represent their own cultures in the urban public space. Of the eleven Markers identified, Aboriginal people were involved in seven. Aboriginal people were mainly design contributors or collaborators rather than undertaking works in their own right.

The Indigenous (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) population of Australia experienced rapid urbanisation from the middle of the twentieth century due to the combined effects of migration from rural areas and natural increase. There was also increased census identification (Taylor, 2009). Between 1971 and 2006 there was a 750% increase in the proportion of the Indigenous population recorded as living in major urban areas, and a 458% increase in other urban areas, compared to a 68% increase in rural areas. By 2009 more than three quarters of Australian Aboriginal population lived in urban or regional Australia (Biddle, 2009).

Before the 1960s and the granting of full citizenship there were few Aboriginals living in Adelaide and the Kaurna were amongst the first Aboriginal people to return to Adelaide (Amery, 2000:70-71). This, combined with other Aboriginal urban migration, provided a higher number of Aboriginal people than previously to be involved in urban based political and cultural activities. It was also a period when Aboriginal identification with a specific language or cultural group was emerging from a prevailing generic identity as being Aboriginal. The dispossession and 'missionisation' of Aboriginal people since colonisation had led to a loss of specific cultural identity through physical relocation and the mixing of diverse blood lines through marriages that would not have occurred in traditional Aboriginal society. Aboriginal people were seeking to reclaim their identity to their specific cultural groups and traditional lands and in the case of Adelaide, this led to the first Kaurna public space inclusion by Kaurna descendants.

The phase included the celebration of South Australia's sesquicentenary, or Jubilee 150 (1986), and the bicentennial of European settlement in Australia (1988). These celebrations provided for six of the Markers. One Jubilee 150 project, the *Tjilbruke Track Plaques* (which involved two Markers[11]), was initiated by Aboriginal people themselves and undertaken by the mainly Aboriginal Tjilbruke Tracks Committee. The Bicentennial included the first commissioning by local government of a commemorative Marker to specifically include Aboriginal people, the *Trees of Peace* Marker commissioned by the then Hindmarsh Council (now part of the City of Charles Sturt). The other levels of government were still not active in the direct commissioning of Markers. Although some Markers with Aboriginal content were the result of commissions by government agencies as part of the celebrations, the inclusion of Aboriginal people in the narrative was at the initiative of individual artists.

The style of the Markers changed, as with other public space commemorations, from being predominantly statuary to taking a variety of forms. This phase is the period when public art, as distinct from civic art, became more popularly utilised and provided opportunities for broader social inclusion of both artists and themes, as well as the use of a variety of media. Six of the Markers are outdoor murals with four of them by or including Aboriginal artists in their painting. These murals were part of an emerging Aboriginal urban art expression which built on the evolution of tradition based Central Australian Aboriginal art in the 1970s and its subsequent community acceptance and popularity. As Rothwell (2011:17) outlined, the 1980s was a decade of qualified success for Aboriginal art as a niche art form admired by key collectors. Aboriginal urban expression was still very much also a niche art form. Four of the Markers are commemorative markers arising from the Jubilee 150 and the Bicentennial, and the final Marker is an Aboriginal designed pavement pattern (or ground mural). Six of the Markers are in the city and five are in the metropolitan area, two of which are specifically located at Kaurna Dreaming sites.

The phase reflects the Aboriginal activism of the time and the involvement of Aboriginal people in urban community activities. They were no longer predominantly fringe or mission dwellers, but becoming part of the urban social

[11] Although one project it has been counted as two Markers in my data. Data has been recorded by council areas and Markers were located in two metropolitan council areas. The project included Markers outside the survey area and these are discussed in Chapter 10.

makeup, albeit an under-recognised part. There were no architectural interpretations of Aboriginal culture or identity in this phase.

Phase 4. Community, Culture, Collaborations (early 1990s to present)

Greater involvement of local communities, community recognition of Aboriginal cultures, cross-cultural collaborations and individual expression by Aboriginal artists.

The beginning of this phase reflected the mood and activity of the decade of Reconciliation (1991-2001), an initiative of the Keating Federal government (1991-1996) which attracted bipartisan support, coupled with legislative and judicial change in terms of Aboriginal rights and recognition. The decade of Reconciliation was a 'nation building project' that sought to 'reorganise settler relationships with Indigenous Australians by restructuring their understanding of the history of the nation' (Gooder & Jacobs, 2000:233). The phase is characterised by non-Aboriginal Australians seeking reconciliation with Aboriginal Australians, part of a nation coming to terms with its past and its treatment of Aboriginal people. It is a generic, or pan-Aboriginal, recognition reflecting the broad public response to the process of reconciliation Australia wide. Unlike earlier phases, this phase includes state and local government agencies actively commissioning public artworks to acknowledge Aboriginal people. Kepert (2007:28) outlined that the momentum of the Reconciliation movement perhaps also motivated state and local government to include Aboriginal recognition in urban planning, noting that 'an increasing number of planning documents have sought to include acknowledgement of Indigenous culture in the urban environment, and to promote Indigenous involvement in planning processes'.

Prime Minister Paul Keating's speech on 10th December 1992 about Aboriginal disadvantage delivered at Redfern, an inner city Sydney suburb with a high Aboriginal population, set the tone for the reconciliation process. He spoke about the need to close the gap in health, living standards and life opportunities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians and, in a first for a serving prime minister, he publicly acknowledged the violence committed against Indigenous Australians through the process of colonisation (Museum of Australian Democracy. n.d.). The Prime Minister said:

> *It was we who did the dispossessing. We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life. We brought the diseases. The alcohol. We committed the murders. We took the children from their mothers. We practised discrimination and exclusion. It was our ignorance and our prejudice. And our failure to imagine these things being done to us. With some noble exceptions, we failed to make the most basic human response and enter into their hearts and minds. We failed to ask - how would I feel if this were done to me?*[12]

In 1987 a Commonwealth Royal Commission (a major government public inquiry into an issue) into Aboriginal deaths in custody was announced after a spate of

[12] In 2007, ABC Radio National listeners voted the speech as their third most 'unforgettable speech' behind Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' speech and Jesus' 'Sermon on the Mount' (Museum of Australian Democracy, n.d.).

Aboriginal deaths in prison and police custody and in response to a growing public concern that such deaths were too common and poorly explained. Hearings began in 1988 and the final report was submitted in April 1991 (National Archives of Australia, n.d.). In its report the Commission made 339 far reaching recommendations and significantly contributed to the debate on Aboriginal issues in Australia at the time. Its final recommendation was:

> *That all political leaders and their parties recognise that reconciliation between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in Australia must be achieved if community division, discord and injustice to Aboriginal people are to be avoided. To this end the Commission recommends that political leaders use their best endeavours to ensure bi-partisan public support for the process of reconciliation and that the urgency and necessity of the process be acknowledged* (Australasian Legal Information Institute, n.d.).

The recommendations were far reaching and the last recommendation led to the establishment of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation later in 1991 under the Commonwealth Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act 1991.

In 1992, the High Court of Australia Mabo decision on native title was another significant event of this phase. The decision:

> *… for the first time gave 'common law' recognition to Indigenous people's continuing rights to possess and enjoy their traditional lands – 'native title' was found to exist where people could prove a continuing traditional connection to the land or waters and where governments had not extinguished that connection* (Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 2002).

Recognising native title changed the political and cultural landscape resulting in much public and political debate on Aboriginal land rights and other Aboriginal issues. In 1995 the Commonwealth Attorney-General established a National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families. The inquiry was conducted by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission and their report, *Bringing them home*, often known as the Stolen Generations report, was tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament 26 May, 1997. The 'Stolen Generations' are the generations of Aboriginal children taken away from their families by governments, churches and welfare bodies to be fostered out to white families or brought up in institutions. The release of this report had a profound effect on the Australian public and led to the establishment of the National Sorry Day Committee and Sorry Days, for non-Aboriginal Australians to say sorry to Aboriginal Australians. The first was held on 26 May 1998 and is an ongoing event.

In March 1996 the conservative Howard federal government (1996-2007) was elected. Despite the lack of leadership on national reconciliation shown by the incoming government, as will be demonstrated, much activity continued at local community and institutional levels, particularly where there was strong and continuing interaction with Aboriginal people. Coincidently, in May 1996, the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation launched the first National Reconciliation Week to celebrate the rich culture and history of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, reflect on shared histories and promote dialogue on Aboriginal issues. Reconciliation Week is held from 27th May to 3rd June each year, 27th May being the anniversary of the 1967 referendum and 3rd June the anniversary of the Mabo land rights decision. In January 2000 the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation was

replaced with a new private body, Reconciliation Australia which continues reconciliation activities.

These political events and social change are reflected in this phase which provided broader inclusion of Aboriginal culture in the public space, diverse opportunities for Aboriginal cultural expression and for Aboriginal artists to become more involved in public space practice, and the conditions for communities to recognise and include Aboriginal people and culture. No longer did artists have to provide the lead. The 1990s also saw the accelerating spread of Aboriginal imagery (Central Australian Aboriginal art) into the mainstream (Rothwell, 2011:17) which aligns with the greater inclusion and acceptance of Aboriginal public artworks and commemorations. The Aboriginal imagery also provided Aboriginal motifs that were incorporated into public space works.

A key difference between this phase and the next, Phase 5, is that in Phase 4 Aboriginal people are making claim to visibility in the public space whereas in Phase 5 Kaurna are making claim to the space itself. The specific recognition of Kaurna and their claim is discussed in Phase 5, a largely concurrent phase.

Seventy Markers have been identified in Phase 4 over the (nearly) twenty year period. As outlined in the table below (Table 1) there is a broad range of bodies, government and non-government, involved in the commissioning of public Markers to acknowledge Aboriginal people. In addition to the seventy Markers of Phase 4 there is additional activity during this time period in Phase 5.

The Government Sector

Within the broader context outlined above, of particular note in this phase is the activity of the three levels of government by the commissioning of Markers to acknowledge Aboriginal culture. Through all agencies combined, fifty-five Markers were recorded in the phase. This marks a distinct shift from the previous phases where there was little official government activity. The 1990s also saw the involvement of the state in funding Aboriginal art centres in Central Australia (Rothwell, 2011:17) which parallels the state involvement in the commissioning of public works, of government accepting a level of responsibility in redressing both the social and symbolic disparities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia. The majority of Markers are public artworks rather than civic artworks which reflects government utilising the medium of public art as part of broader social inclusion initiatives and the reconciliation process. It is also a flow on from the public art programs established in the 1970s and 1980s where public art became a tool in social mediation processes as well as displaying art in public places.

State Government, through all its agencies, was most active and commissioned the majority of the Markers with a total of forty-three. Local government was also active with the commissioning of eleven Markers. The Federal Government undertook little direct activity with one Marker, a photographic mural in the Commonwealth Law Courts foyer in Adelaide. However, the Federal Government is a partner in the recently commissioned and designed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander War Memorial, to be located in the Torrens Parade Ground, Adelaide, when funds enable construction. This low level of activity is perhaps because the Federal Government, outside of social welfare, does not have a large service delivery function located in Adelaide. Federal Government funding programs have, however, assisted the commissioning of several Markers.

Aboriginal Cultural Markers - Greater Adelaide Metropolitan Area By Commissioning Bodies in Phase 4: 1993 to December 2009		
Federal Government		1
State Government		43
Departments	7	
Health Care (hospitals, health centres)	10	
Education Primary	18	
Education Secondary	7	
Statutory Authorities	1	
Local Government		11
Education Tertiary		3
Community Group/Centre		6
Business & Industry		3
Individual People		3
Non-Government Organisation		3
Total		**70**

Table 1 ACMs by Commissioning Bodies in Phase 4

The Education Sector

Within the category of state government agencies, schools are responsible for the largest number (25) of Markers in this phase, the majority (18) of these Markers being in Primary Schools. Of all Markers located in all phases, schools have been responsible for thirty-two and their collective contribution is therefore discussed here. It is likely that there are further Markers in schools that have not been located as part of this research - schools as a sector were not individually visited or surveyed. It was beyond the resources of this project to do so and is an area for clear subsequent study. In Chapter 3, I outlined a methodology developed during this research which could be used to locate Markers in other cities: here I would also recommend a formal survey of schools. Private schools have not been included in this research as they do not fall within the definition of public space used for this research, they are not public spaces or on public land. I am, however, aware of several Markers in private schools, particularly within the Catholic education system. A survey of all schools, public and private, may provide further interesting data on the extent of Aboriginal recognition and the role of the education system but was beyond the scope of this research.

The large number of Markers in state schools provides a 'normalisation' of Aboriginal representation in the socialisation of children during their formal education and reflects a broader Aboriginal inclusion in curricula (Woods, 2000). The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, under Recommendation 290, *School curricula to incorporate Aboriginal issues and perspectives*, stated (Johnson, 1991):

> *That curricula of schools at all levels should reflect the fact that Australia has an Aboriginal history and Aboriginal viewpoints on social, cultural and historical matters. It is essential that Aboriginal viewpoints, interests, perceptions and expectations are reflected in curricula, teaching and administration of schools.*

The Commission's recommendation, in tandem with the Decade of Reconciliation (when the majority of Markers in schools were undertaken), is likely to have influenced the number of Markers achieved in schools. In 1995 the Federal Government's Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Education had also established eight priorities for ATSI education, one of which was 'to promote, maintain and support the teaching of ATSI studies, cultures and languages to all indigenous and non-indigenous students' (Woods, 2000:2). The Australian Council for Adult Literacy (Woods, 2000:3) reinforced this priority:

> *Research undertaken by Howard Groome[13] and Arthur Hamilton in the 1990s strongly supports the concept that an Indigenous student whose sense of being Indigenous is strong is better able to achieve in school than an Indigenous student whose pride in their own culture is weak. For non-Indigenous students the right to know the Indigenous cultures of Australia has been denied to their parents and it is a right that all Australians should have. It is imperative to a strong foundation for reconciliation.*

Amery (2000:10, 11) has documented how Kaurna community leaders have also been active in promoting Kaurna culture and history through the development of the Aboriginal Studies curriculum. Woods (2000:3) further explained that:

> *Culture is understanding and acknowledgment by teachers and the learning institutions that there are indigenous cultures and that Aboriginal people express themselves using cultural markers ranging from language to icons that distinguish them from other groups within Australian society.*

The prevalence of Aboriginal Cultural Markers in schools reinforces the inclusion of Aboriginal people and history as part of curricula and the sense of place of schools, particularly by using 'icons' as represented in Aboriginal art and culture. I suggest that for Aboriginal students the Markers provide a better sense of belonging to the school community, and contribute to the broader school community gaining an understanding and acceptance of Aboriginality within the everyday. No longer is Aboriginal culture relegated to the margins. The Markers are mainly murals, several implemented as school community art projects. The murals and other artworks present another means of teaching beyond the text book.

At the tertiary education level, Adelaide's three universities have included limited public space Aboriginal recognition. Adelaide University has the sculpture *Reconciliation Touchstone*, 2007, but Flinders University and the University of South Australia have minor public space works only. The University of South Australia, as part of the redevelopment of the City West Campus, has named one of its buildings the Kaurna Building as another form of recognition. No Markers came to my attention in the public spaces of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges but as with schools, there are numerous campuses and they were not specifically visited or surveyed. Again, this is an area for subsequent study.

The Health Care Sector

Within state government, another significant contributor is the health care sector, the hospitals and health centres, with ten Markers in this phase and thirteen in all phases.

---

[13] Howard Groome is the South Australian educator and writer who authored teaching resources on Kaurna culture in the 1980s.

Many public hospitals now have Art in Health programs and several Markers have been commissioned through them. Health centres that have a primary role in providing health services to Aboriginal people, particularly in urban regions with a high Aboriginal population and clientele, have also responded to a social inclusion ethos and recognised Aboriginal culture through public artworks in their institutions.

Community Groups and Community Artworks

Community groups and centres have also been significant instigators of Markers, six in this phase and fifteen in all phases. This reflects the strong community-based movement towards reconciliation in this phase. One group in particular, the Blackwood Reconciliation Group, has achieved the commissioning of two major Markers, the *Pool of Tears*, 1998, and *Grieving Mother*, 1999, both of which are located at Colebrook Reconciliation Park, Eden Hills.

Phase 5. Kaurna Country (mid 1990s to present)

The specific recognition of Kaurna people, the Aboriginal people of the Adelaide region; an evolution from recognition of generic Aboriginality.

Adelaide is the capital city of South Australia and thus it is appropriate that all Aboriginal cultural groups of the state (and elsewhere) be included and represented in the public space, but there is a parallel significance of Adelaide as the home lands or Country of the Kaurna, and it is this particular Aboriginal significance of this place that warrants the classification and examination of Kaurna-specific recognition as a separate phase. This phase sees the acknowledgment of Kaurna people and culture as a continuous and continuing culture and the understanding that Adelaide is on Kaurna Country. Although largely concurrent with Phase 4, it differs from that phase in that it encompasses a distinct move from a pan-Aboriginal inclusion, part of the generic Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal reconciliation, to language group specific reconciliation and recognition. It recognises that Kaurna is an extant culture and that Kaurna are to be involved in their public space cultural production, presentation and identity. In this phase not only are the Kaurna seeking visibility in the public space, they are making claim to the space itself. Whilst not a legal land claim, the Kaurna claim to the psychological and symbolic space, will over time, support that claim. It is part of Kaurna reinscribing traditional cultural meaning over their Country, it is about revivifying and re-enlivening their culture in their place.

Although there are the same broad political and social activities underlying Phases 4 & 5, further developing the community understanding of a diverse Aboriginal Australia warrants specific cultural group recognition when evolving contemporary public space inclusion and a symbolic landscape. Aboriginal Australia is comprised of nearly 400 specific language, tribal or nation groups (Horton, 1994), each with its own cultural practices, history and story of colonisation. Whilst there are some shared cultural beliefs and practices, the same as can be said for the nations of Europe, there are specificities, particularly when recognising sovereignty over land. Whilst Aboriginal cultural groups do not have a formal sovereignty or nationhood, it is now common practice by government agencies and other organisations to recognise the particular cultural group on whose land they are located or gather at formal and informal functions and other activities. (I still however come across people who have no knowledge of the cultural group on whose lands they live or whose places they visit. I cannot imagine that to be so if they were to visit Europe.)

It is only in the last four decades or so that Kaurna descendants have been moving back to Adelaide. Here they have been rebuilding their traditional cultural ties to Country within the constraints and challenges of an urbanised region and the social, economic and political challenges faced by all Aboriginal people. As Georgina Williams (2001) has said:

> *For my own people … they have been dispossessed several times over and they didn't know where they were living, whose tribal country it was ... They might have known some of it but anyway we were at that point in time where for me, myself, if I hadn't come home then I would of went mad I think, because I was entering into an identity crisis which most of our Nungas[14] are actually experiencing right now … as the urban people.*

A contribution to rebuilding a Kaurna identity is a broad public recognition of Kaurna Country and culture. As demonstrated by the works in this phase there has been a shift from recognising Aboriginality in a general sense to specifically acknowledging the distinct cultural language groups. This contributes to a better public understanding of the Aboriginal cultural relationships to specific areas of South Australia (there are thirty eight distinct Aboriginal language groups in South Australia), specific Aboriginal cultural practices and protocols, and renewing the traditional protocols between language groups disrupted by colonisation. Part of this phase, and the proposed Phase 6, is the development of inter-Aboriginal protocols in addition to generic Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal considerations, it becomes a three way process.

In this phase Kaurna descendants became more involved in the conceptual development and making of the Markers in the capacity of cultural advisers or participating in cross-cultural collaborations. There are not many Kaurna descendants with formal art training but this does not preclude other Kaurna from contributing to both design and cultural ideas. An initial development of public art practice capacity within Kaurna is an outcome of this phase but requires further encouragement and development so that Kaurna have control over their cultural production and how they are represented. As will be discussed, the development of urban symbolic forms where none had existed before is an on-going challenge for Aboriginal people and others.

The phase is characterised by the emergence of forms of acknowledgement that are better suited to a specific cultural group and their Country rather than a generic Aboriginal acknowledgement. With the specific recognition of Kaurna culture the range of Markers utilised differs from other phases. For instance, commemorative and interpretive Markers became more numerous to speak of specific Kaurna people, places and events which is less applicable for a generic acknowledgement (21 Markers in Phase 5, 3 in Phase 4). The Kaurna language, a key component of identity and cultural renewal, has been included as part of other public artworks which are not specifically about Kaurna or Aboriginal culture (5 Markers in Phase 5, 0 in Phase 4). An emerging trend in this phase is public space design, the articulation of public spaces, as in parks and reserves or civic spaces, where a Kaurna acknowledgement or cultural presentation is a principal design consideration (7 Markers in Phase 5, 1 in Phase 4). The thirty-three Markers from these three distinct types expand on the style of Aboriginal recognition provided in other public artworks.

[14] Nunga is a generic term for Aboriginal people in South Australia.

In Aboriginal architecture Mallie & Ostwald (2009:7) identified a theme 'Planning to Reflect Aboriginal Peoples' Patterns of Movement' which involves the use of indirect twisting and turning approaches to a building through the landscape to intensify the visitor's experience and engage them with the local climate and the surrounding environment. It is also intended to reflect Aboriginal people's informal patterns of movement. They (2009:6) further identified the creation of connections between buildings and the natural environment, that is the integration of buildings into the natural landscape and the use of local materials and forms that reflect the landscape. Mallie & Ostwald (2009:6) have cautioned:

> *… this approach, and especially its mythologising tendencies, works to associate Aboriginal peoples and cultures with nature and the landscape and, consequently, reinforces stereotypes of the 'primitive' and the 'authentic'.*

Whilst this critique has validity as part of a developing critical discourse on Aboriginal representation, the close connection of Aboriginal peoples and culture to Country is a pervading theme in identity formation and cultural renewal, and is to be recognised. For Markers, the use of natural materials, for instance stone and timber, has relevance when culturally appropriate or sensitive materials are sourced. These issues and themes apply to Aboriginal public space design that integrates landscape design, buildings and sculptural or interpretive objects.

Mallie & Ostwald (2009:8) also identify community consultation and participation as a key issue**,** that is, the effective inclusion of Aboriginal people in the design and building process. This has parallels in this phase, as well as Phase 4, in the need to facilitate greater, if not full, Aboriginal self-determination in the cultural content and design of public space representations. The authors cite Aboriginal interior designer and artist Alison Page (2000:423,424) who stated that:

> *… Indigenous architecture is not a style but a culturally appropriate process based on communication, trust and community development … From the moment a building idea is conceived to the moment it is realised, communication in whatever form, and community involvement will determine the Aboriginality of the architecture. Within the process, there are many considerations which may not necessarily exist in a non-Aboriginal project. Designers are asked to consider culture, place and identity as well as employment and training opportunities, social justice, and health issues. The failures in the past were not only due to misconceptions about culture, but to the coupling of this omission with a lack of community consultation.*

The same principles apply to Aboriginal Cultural Markers.

The Government Sector

As with Phase 4, the State Government was again active in the commissioning of Markers with eighteen providing specific recognition of Kaurna in this phase. Local government was however the main contributor in this phase with the commissioning of twenty-four Markers (Table 2).

Aboriginal Cultural Markers - Greater Adelaide Metropolitan Area By Commissioning Bodies in Phase 5: 1995 to December 2009		
Federal Government		0
State Government		18
Departments	4	
Health Care (hospitals, health centres)	2	
Education Primary	4	
Education Secondary	1	
Statutory Authorities	7	
Local Government		24
Education Tertiary		2
Community Group/Centre		5
Business & Industry		1
Individual People		2
Non-Government Organisation		0
Total		**52**

Table 2 ACMs by Commissioning Bodies in Phase 5

The Local Government Sector

Combined with the fourteen Markers from other phases, Councils, as a single group, have been the main instigator of Markers (38)[15] as outlined below (Table 3). Councils have assisted or partnered in several further projects as the Markers have been located on land managed by councils and council's agreement and support has been required. The City of Port Adelaide Enfield has been the most active (11), followed by the City of Adelaide (8). Seven councils have not directly initiated any Markers located through this research but some of those councils have assisted projects which resulted in Markers. For example, the City of Mitcham assisted the establishment of Colebrook Reconciliation Park, Eden Hills.

Aboriginal Cultural Markers - Greater Adelaide Metropolitan Area By Council Projects; All phases to December 2009 (Projects where Council is the prime instigator or facilitator)		
Council Area	**Number of Markers**	**Council Projects**
City of Adelaide	34	8
City of Burnside	1	0
City of Campbelltown	3	0
City of Charles Sturt	11	3
City of Holdfast Bay	3	1
City of Marion	6	4
City of Mitcham	7	0
City of Norwood, Payneham & St Peters	3	2
City of Onkaparinga	10	3
City of Playford	7	0
City of Port Adelaide Enfield	26	11
City of Prospect	2	0

[15] Figures are indicative, as data on the commissioning of all projects over time has not been readily available.

City of Salisbury	5	3
City of Tea Tree Gully	5	2
City of Unley	5	1
City of Walkerville	4	0
City of West Torrens	11	0
Total	**143**	**38**

Table 3 ACMs by Council Projects

The number of Markers initiated by local government reflects the role of councils in cross-cultural reconciliation, outlined in the booklet *Examples of Working Together in South Australia* published by the Office of Local Government (OLG) and the Local Government Association (LGA) in 2000. The booklet (2000:1) stated:

> *The role of Local Government Councils in fostering an environment of community tolerance and promoting harmonious relationships should not be underestimated.*
> *For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Local Government Council initiatives aimed at improving relationships send a powerful message to the broader community. By incorporating policies in Council strategic plans, these initiatives demonstrate the commitment to a planned approach to improving services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.*

The booklet was prepared as:

> *… an important adjunct to the 2000 review of Local Government's Aboriginal Strategy document developed in 1994. Both the 1994 and the 2000 strategies acknowledge that Local Government has important service responsibilities in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.* (OLG & LGA, 2000:i)

In the booklet, which outlines the broad range of local government reconciliation activities, four Aboriginal Cultural Markers included in this research are referred to, as is the establishment of the Tjilbruke Dreaming Forum, a consultative forum. The City of Holdfast Bay was instrumental in the formation and support of the Forum providing another form of recognition and inclusion of Kaurna.

In 1994 the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (1994:32) stated that:

> *Many local histories are commissioned by local government, and local government associations have a responsibility to encourage their member councils to embrace indigenous Australians' history in their community histories. … The development of localised histories that document the relationships of people and places has the ability to highlight the shared indigenous and non-indigenous histories in given places.*

Public space commemorations are part of 'local history' and there has been a demonstrable move by local government towards achieving the objective outlined above. This is further enhanced by and reflects councils' role in community cultural development, social inclusion and the establishment of reconciliation groups at a local level.

Phase 6. Kaurna Management and Determination (yet to occur)

Full Kaurna responsibility for the implementation and management of projects; location, design brief, cultural content, conceptual development and fabrication of works which represent their culture (within normal public space governance constraints).

As Adelaide is located on Kaurna Country, this proposed and predicted phase, would see full Kaurna responsibility for the implementation and management of major public space projects, their location, design brief, conceptual development and fabrication of works (within normal public space governance constraints). This is proposed as a further step towards self-determination and self-representation for Kaurna within their Country in which they would have control over their cultural production and the manner in which their culture is presented in the public space. The rationale, potentials and issues pertinent to this phase are discussed in detail in Chapter 9. Again, there are parallels with Aboriginal architecture which will be further discussed. Anthropologist and architect Paul Memmott (2007:310) has outlined that:

> *In the process of designing public Aboriginal architecture, Indigenous people themselves must be allowed to define who they are (ie their collective identity) and how they wish to be portrayed through architecture to the wider society and the outside world. This is an important and fundamental principle. However, it is the role of the architect to take the given expressions and representations of identity and offer ways in which they can be distilled, expressed and realised in architectural form.*

Achieving the same principles for Kaurna cultural production as well as in sculptural forms and the design of the public space will help redefine the expressions of Kaurna culture in the built environment.

The Phases – Statistical Summary

Having outlined the characteristics of the phases I now provide the following summaries to statistically review what has been achieved.

Aboriginal Cultural Markers - Numbers by Phases

As summarised in Table 4, there has been a consistent momentum of increasing Aboriginal inclusion through the phases.

Aboriginal Cultural Markers - Greater Adelaide Metropolitan Area By Phase to December 2009	
Phase 1: The Silence (to 1960)	0
Phase 2: Breaking the Silence (1960 to early 1980s)	10
Phase 3: Aboriginal Voice Emerges (early 1980s to early 1990s)	11
Phase 4: Community, Culture, Collaborations (early 1990s onwards)	70
Phase 5: Kaurna Country (mid 1990s onwards)	52
Phase 6: Kaurna Management and Control (yet to occur)	0
Total	**143**

Table 4 ACMs by all Phases

Phase 4, Community, Culture, Collaborations has seen the greatest number with seventy Markers of which twenty-two were undertaken during the Decade of Reconciliation 1991-2000, establishing the trend and understanding of the value of greater public space recognition of Aboriginal people and culture into the following decade. Of particular note is the recognition of Kaurna culture and Country with fifty-two Markers over a fifteen-year period. Twelve of those Markers were achieved in the first five years of this phase, 1995 to 1999, with the balance of forty undertaken in the last ten years, indicating a dramatic increase in awareness of Kaurna in a relatively short period of time. From the first tentative understanding of Kaurna as an extant people and culture in the 1980s, the existence and continuing nature of the people and culture has now been broadly embraced.

It will be of interest in future research to observe whether the momentum in these two phases is maintained or has peaked. It is my opinion, based on the field research to December 2009 and observations since then, that the numeric level of activity will not likely increase but the quality, range and cultural depth portrayed in the Markers will. This will most likely be the specific recognition of Kaurna rather than a generic Aboriginal recognition. The level of activity in Phase 4 reflected a broad community desire to recognise Aboriginal people as a group as part of the Reconciliation movement, an initial and heartfelt response through public space expression. But with the evolving understanding of Adelaide being on Kaurna Country and the distinction between cultural groups, I believe activity in Phase 4 has most likely peaked.

Aboriginal Cultural Markers - Numbers by Decades

As summarised in Table 5, from the first work in 1960 there has been a clear momentum towards increasing Aboriginal inclusion in the public space. The 1990s reflect the evolving process of reconciliation in the Decade of Reconciliation and the last decade (2000-2009) built upon this and has been particularly productive with eighty-five Markers achieved. This latter decade also reflects the activity in the specific recognition of Kaurna culture and the range of Markers as discussed in Phase 5.

Aboriginal Cultural Markers - Greater Adelaide Metropolitan Area By Decade to December 2009	
1960-69	5
1970-79	4
1980-89	11
1990-99	38
2000-09	85
Total	**143**

Table 5 ACMs by Decade

Aboriginal Cultural Markers - By Commissioning Bodies

Having discussed the role of government and others in the phases, Table 6 summarises all activity over the phases. The South Australian Government, through all of its agencies, including departments, schools, health care and statutory authorities, has been responsible for the majority of the Markers, with a total of seventy-one. It is not suggested that this is the outcome of a central government policy or directive but rather because of actions at the local level responding to the broader social and political changes occurring, particularly during the Decade of

Reconciliation. Government departments (12), health care facilities (13) and statutory authorities (14) have similar numbers of Markers with schools providing the largest number (32).

Aboriginal Cultural Markers - Greater Adelaide Metropolitan Area
By Commissioning Bodies to December 2009

Federal Government		1
State Government		71
Departments	12	
Health Care (hospitals, health centres)	13	
Education Primary	24	
Education Secondary	8	
Statutory Authorities	14	
Local Government		38
Education Tertiary		5
Community Group/Centre		15
Business & Industry		6
Individual People		3
Non-Government Organisation		4
Total		**143**

Table 6 ACMs by Commissioning Bodies in all Phases

Summary

The 143 Markers identified in this research have been initiated by a range of government agencies, organisation and individuals with much increased activity during the last two decades resulting in 123 Markers.

Phase 1, from colonisation until 1960, and the lack of Aboriginal representation in the public space during that time, reflects the lack of Aboriginal inclusion in the broader society at the time. It was not until well into the second half of the 20th Century that a change occurred. For the first century and more after colonisation, public space commemorations and statuary in Adelaide mimicked the style and content of those of Britain and Europe. Colonial places had been inscribed as 'naturally' white places (Taylor, 2000) which naturally excluded Aboriginal people and culture. The minor Aboriginal representation that did occur in this phase was incidental.

Phase 2, from 1960 to the early 1980s, marks the change in attitude amongst segments of the community, predominantly artists, towards better recognition and inclusion of Aboriginal culture in public space artworks and the symbolic construct of the public space. Ten Markers were achieved over a twenty-two year period, a cautious start which was dependent on the initiative of a small number of people. Government agencies did not play any significant part in this phase.

Phase 3, from the early 1980s to the early 1990s, saw the initial activity by Aboriginal people in representing their culture in the public space through commemorative markers and artworks. The opportunity for inclusion was facilitated by two major commemorative celebrations, the South Australian Jubilee 150 and the Australian Bicentennial. Artists, and an arts organisation, continued to play a leading role in Aboriginal inclusion with government agencies, through the education and

cultural sector, becoming active in commissioning works. Eleven markers were achieved in this ten year phase.

Phase 4, from the early 1990s to the present, sees a burgeoning level of activity, initially facilitated by the Decade of Reconciliation leading up to the centenary of the federation of Australia in 2001. Government agencies became active with local government, education and health services sectors being the main initiators. This reflects their closer working relationship with Aboriginal people: several councils have significant Aboriginal populations and provide community cultural development programs; contemporary education policy provides for the provision of a more balanced outline of Australian history and the inclusion of Aboriginal culture; and the health sector deals with the systemic health problems in the Aboriginal community. Local communities and reconciliation groups became active in commissioning or including Aboriginal representation through a range of both small and large scale works. Cross-cultural collaborations are a feature as is Aboriginal artists undertaking works in their own right. Seventy Markers have been achieved to December 2009 in this ongoing phase of pan-Aboriginal recognition.

Phase 5, from the mid 1990s to the present, whilst largely contemporaneous with Phase 4, sees the greater appreciation and specific recognition of Kaurna people and Country. It reflects the development of a specific Kaurna cultural identity, rather than just a generic Aboriginal identity. Numerous Kaurna artists and Kaurna people contribute to the development of the Markers with interpretive and commemorative works being a feature. It is part of a claim not only for visibility in the public space but for the space itself. Fifty-two Markers have been achieved to December 2009 with state and local government authorities and agencies responsible for the commissioning of the vast majority of the Markers.

Phase 6, calls for greater self-determination and self-representation for Kaurna within their Country. As with Phase 5, there is to be the development of new ways of urban public space expression for a culture which traditionally had no need for a constructed symbolic landscape. As with artists and other designers, architects, in collaboration with Aboriginal communities, are evolving ways to represent Aboriginal culture in the public space and built form. In other words, the visual art and design sector as a whole is learning how to appropriately present a culture that traditionally had no need to erect monuments or buildings.