

CHAPTER SIX – PRESENTATION AND EXHIBITION OF THE WORK

6.1 – The Catalogue of Works

The preceding chapter concluded the discussion and the examination of those issues pertaining to the artworks from their inception to the final outcome. The sections which follow attempt to establish a concise framework for presenting and exhibiting the artwork including those preparatory visual ideas (*precompositional works* and *studies*) which preceded the development and execution of the finished works. Before proceeding further, mention should be made of a number of issues associated with exhibitions of this kind, e.g., solo exhibitions, and the related concerns of mediation.

It is generally understood, as the art historian Michael Carter (1993) points out, that

Exhibitions are really a ‘package’ of Art objects involving a set of discussions on the part of the curator as to what is the optimum conjunction of the works to best illustrate the interpretations being mounted.

(Carter, 1993:168)

Part of this interpretation includes an attempt to locate the works within broader frames of reference engaging in the more complex narratives or discourse associated with what Carter (1993) refers to as “...being incorporated into ‘the big picture’ ...” (Carter, 1993,167).

In considering the issues associated with solo exhibitions where it is usual to bring moderately large groups of work together in the same place, it is generally understood that such presentations should not only contribute to the creation of what Carter (1993) would deem a more coherent *view* of the works but undertake to unify them in such a way as to render them more intelligible to the viewer. In the presentation of solo exhibitions of the kind under discussion, it may also be assumed, as Carter (1993), affirms, that "...the existence of an overarching developmental sequence or thematic consistency." (Carter 1993:170) would be in evidence. Without some form of thoughtful and informed directional agenda in the guise of curatorial (or architectural) mediation, any sense of the "...discursive unity.." (Carter, 1993: 170) so essential to an exhibition of this kind, would give way to a disparate collection deprived of the potentialities of demonstrating either developmental or thematic trends and with little prospect of inclusion in those broader contextual frameworks which may be identified as complex narratives.

The artist's exhibition was scheduled to be shown in two venues some 1,200 kilometres apart, the first at the *Customs House Gallery* in Brisbane and the second at the *Perc Tucker Regional Gallery* in Townsville. However, for financial reasons, a single catalogue was produced which was distributed at the *Perc Tucker Regional Gallery* Exhibition; a copy of the catalogue can be found in Appendix G.5. The *Customs House Gallery* opening was catered for by a Media Release and a List of Works, the texts of which may be viewed in Appendices F.3 and F.4 respectively .

6.2 – Curatorial Concept for the Exhibition

The curatorial concept for the exhibition at the *Customs House Gallery* was overseen and installed, in consultation with the artist, by Mr Ross Searle, Director of the *University Art Museum* and *Customs House Gallery*, University of Queensland and his assistant, Mr Peter Liddy. A primary challenge for the concept of this exhibition was the design, fabrication and installation of the display components for the seven volumes of *precompositional* and *compositional works* for *Communion to the Trees* e.g., the *Collection of Preparatory Work* (Figure 5.1.1 and Plate 6.1.1). These were designed both to display and protect the books, at the same time allowing the viewer to follow the journey of the Book's progress through key developmental stages. The display components were utilized in both exhibition venues. The curation of the exhibition at the *Perc Tucker Regional Gallery* was the responsibility of its director Ms Frances Thomson. The exhibition was co-curated and installed by Ms Robyn Walton, in consultation with the artist.

6.3 – Structure of the Exhibition

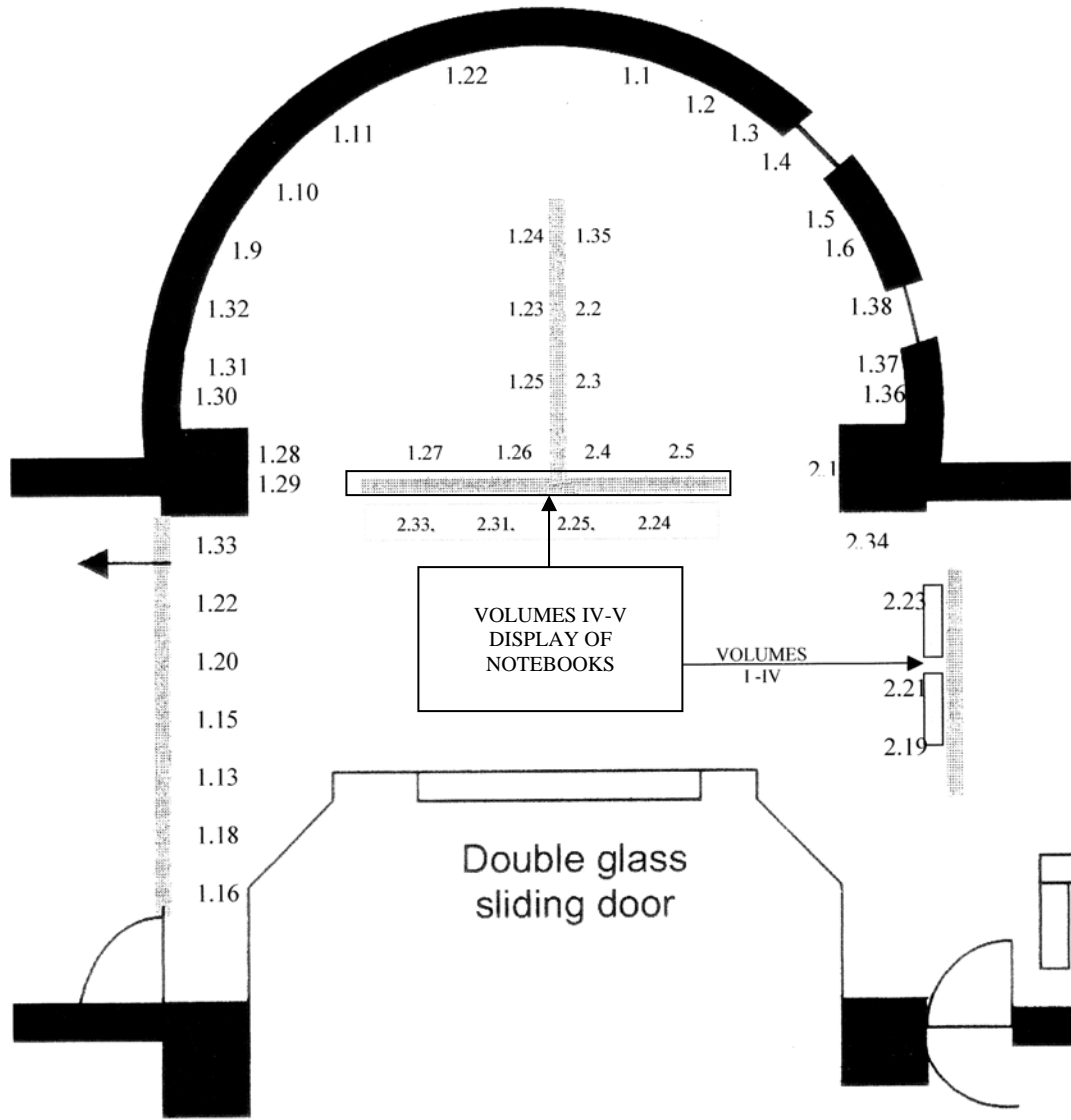
Given the very different shape of the exhibition venues, a different structure was required in each instance. The floor plans indicating these different structures are presented in the following sections.



Plate 6.3.1 Display of *Notebooks*: collection of preparatory material for Communion to the Trees, *Perc Tucker Regional Gallery*.

6.3.1 – The *Customs House Gallery*, Brisbane

Figure 6.3.1 illustrates the floor plan of the *Customs House* Exhibition space and manner in which the Exhibition was displayed in terms of the sequence of its installation. Additional material illustrating aspects of the gallery's interior can be viewed in Appendix F.1. The numbers in Figure 6.3.1 indicate the location of works and are plate references relevant to 7.1 and 7.2 in Chapter Seven.



Display Specifications	
Wall height:	3.3m
Partition height	2.8m
Running length	43.5 of which 12.5m is a gentle curve.

Figure 6.3.1
Simplified floor plan of the ground floor of the *Customs House Gallery*, Brisbane.

6.3.2–The *Perc Tucker Regional Gallery*, Townsville

The fact that the structure and floor plan of the Galleries were quite different can only really be appreciated by comparison (see Figures 6.3.1, 6.3.2 and Appendices F.1 and G.1). Figure 6.3.2 shows a simplified ground plan of the second floor of the *Perc Tucker Regional Gallery* and an alternative arrangement of the work. As a result of the larger exhibition space available at the *Perc Tucker Regional Gallery*, it was possible to contextualize the Book, *Communion to the Trees*, more fully by exhibiting supplementary material. This took the form of previous bookwork projects attempted at earlier periods during the artist’s practice. These earlier *bookworks* were displayed in a discrete exhibition space in order not to disrupt the sequential flow of the main body of works but to inform a significant aspect of it. Unfortunately this had not been possible at the *Customs House Gallery* because of space constraints. The numbers in Figure 6.3.2 are, as in Figure 6.3.1 plate references to 7.1 and 7.2 in Chapter Seven.

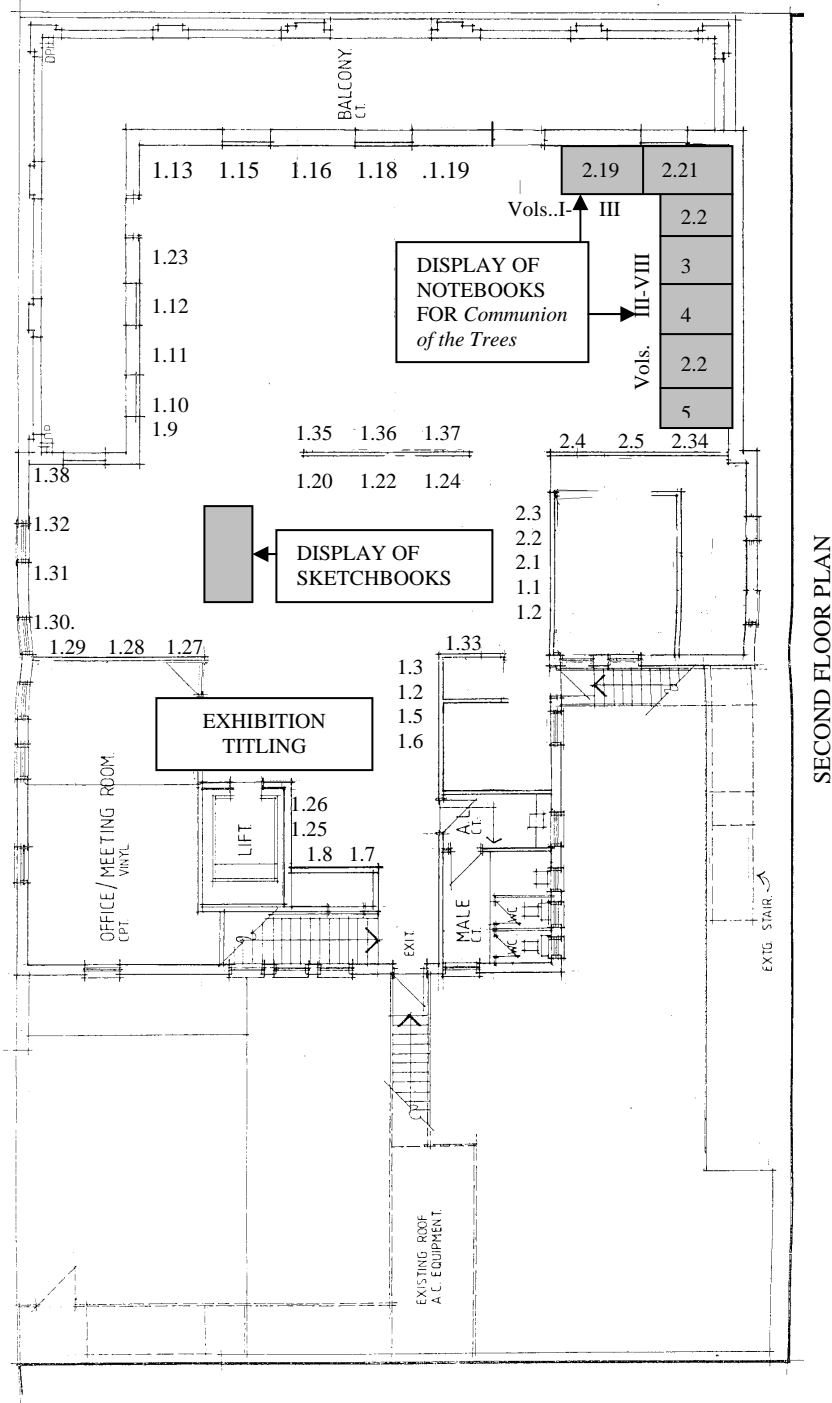


Figure 6.3.2
Simplified plan of the second floor of
the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville

6.4 – The Exhibition

The exhibition at the *Customs House Gallery* was opened by Dr Rex Butler on Saturday, 4th November 2000 and remained open until Sunday, 3rd December 2000. Dr Butler's opening address drew substantially upon his catalogue essay *Trouble in Paradise* (Butler, 2000:2). This, together with a Foreword by the *Perc Tucker Regional Gallery's* director Ms Frances Thompson, is contained in Appendix G.5.

The exhibition at the *Perc Tucker Regional Gallery* was opened by Professor Jenny Zimmer on 16th March 2001. The text of the opening address given by Professor Zimmer is contained in Appendix G.3.