

TASMANIAN MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY PAVILION

A TINY PAVILION IN THE TMAG COURTYARD BY JOHNSON PILTON WALKER AND TERROIR, PROTECTS A SIGNIFICANT SUBTERRANEAN STORY AND IS PART OF A MASTERPLAN TO MAKE PUBLIC SPACE, A PUBLIC PLACE.

× **Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Archaeology Exhibition**
 Designed by Johnson Pilton Walker in association with Terroir
 40 Macquarie Street
 Hobart Tasmania 7000
 Until mid 2009
www.tmag.tas.gov.au

words
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Any good leader knows that if you take the time to establish an intelligent and considered long-term vision, then you need to quickly put a physical or metaphorical peg in the ground to signal that something is actually happening. For Johnson Pilton Walker, in association with local practice Terroir, the peg of the recently completed Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) masterplan is a tiny pavilion in the institution's courtyard. The pavilion is the tip of the iceberg of change that is likely to occur in the institution, and its site, in the years to come.

The masterplan establishes a series of major and minor interventions on the site to celebrate the history of the waterfront and respond to the demands of a contemporary institution. One concept turns an adjacent car park into a public park and pedestrian entry with displays and interpretive material relating to the site's rich archaeology.

Geotechnical investigations and archaeological digs conducted during the masterplan process revealed significant subterranean information. Unearthed in this process were the stone floor and walls of the East and

West Vaults, used to store liquor in the early years of the colony. Were the archaeologists to follow best practice, then the area would have been uncovered, documented and then reburied to maximise preservation. In the spirit of learning and understanding, TMAG retained a small area for temporary public viewing. For the architects, this brief offered the opportunity to establish that peg or marker in the form of a small, plywood pavilion placed to weather-protect the excavation.

The marker story begins outside the wall of the museum courtyard. Stone lintels are still visible just above the ground line above each of the vault doors. A long stripe of orange-stained ply, framed to temporarily hook over the wall, runs to this ground level, holding interpretive information and acting as a bold indicator for the curious. It is quite a beautiful moment when you discover the lintels and realize that you are standing two metres above the original ground level, where the river (now reclaimed as car park) once lapped only metres behind.

The main pavilion, similarly clad in orange ply, sits within the courtyard.

The designers have taken aesthetic cues for the structure from packing crates and witches hats, referencing both the history of the site and the desire to brand or signpost future change. The little timber structure stretches around the pit, its skin lifting to provide a viewing portal and an aperture for natural light and ventilation. Galvanized steel signage by local designers Futago wraps the outer and inner face of the building like the metal strapping and tags of a crate, intending to define the pavilion's purpose from all sides. The structure's colouring links it to the surrounding historic brickwork, while the form and graphic keep it contemporary.

In a loose ode to contemporary art photographer Gregory Crewdson, the architects and their photographer have constructed an image of the pavilion casting a strong beam of light from within the structure towards the proposed main entry to the museum. The gesture could be said to represent the overarching strategic masterplan, which recognizes the existence of significant fabric embedded in the site while projecting firmly into the future.

¹/ THE PAVILION IN A LOOSE ODE TO AMERICAN CONTEMPORARY ART PHOTOGRAPHER GREGORY CREWDSON.

²/ THE MAIN PAVILION, CLAD IN ORANGE, SITS WITHIN THE TMAG COURTYARD.

PHOTOGRAPHY:
 JONATHAN WHERRETT



CLAD IN ORANGE,
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