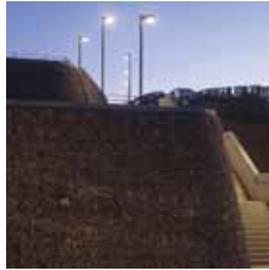


# CCAA PUBLIC DOMAIN AWARDS 2011

national awards for excellence in concrete to enhance the public domain



Winner  
**Ipswich Justice Precinct**  
 Ipswich, Qld



**Entered by** – Cox Rayner Architects  
**Client** – Queensland Government, Department of Justice and Attorney General  
**Architect** – ABM Cox Rayner Architects  
**Landscape Architect** – Tract Consultants  
**Artist** – Bruce Reynolds  
**Principal Contractor** – Abigroup  
**Principal Engineer** – Robert Bird Group  
**Main Concrete Supplier** – Boral

A second purpose was to relate the buildings to a city renowned for its masonry civic buildings and churches, without resorting to obvious copy of their materials. As an essentially raw material, concrete was also chosen for its compatibility with a palette of other raw materials, particularly timber.

In situ rather than precast was chosen because the design did not generate the repetition suited to the latter. The design team also preferred the imperfect character of in situ concrete, optimising its plasticity to envelop spaces, define certain functions and create facility.

**Judges Comments**

The impressive integration of site-specific artwork and concrete construction for the suite of external walls in this project creates a setting that adds strength and depth to the public domain in Ipswich and confidence in contemporary civic institutions. A masterful demonstration of how creative narrative power and technical expertise in construction can work together in a public project.

**Overview**

The Ipswich Justice Precinct comprises a courthouse serving both District and Magistrates courts, and a police station. The brief required the police station to be independently identifiable while also forming part of the precinct.

The design strategy was to create a courtyard on the street front to wrap the courthouse around two edges and the police station around the other, the courtyard forming the fulcrum of activity.

The choice of pre-coloured concrete as the primary building material was made because of its adaptability to meet different planning layouts at each level, including slightly different sizes plates.



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**Overview**  
 Community engagement - with or without being involved in the justice process - was the driver behind the decision to commission concrete artwork in the new Ipswich Justice Precinct.

The major artist was Brisbane-based Bruce Reynolds, who had previously worked with architects Cox Rayner on the Brisbane Magistrates Court and various domestic projects.

Indeed, Reynolds worked on site with the site architect and the

builder in what became an intensive working relationship, giving meaning to the process.

The Ipswich courthouse works are not singular but permeate the arrival, forecourt, courtyard and terrace spaces. Collectively entitled 'Tread', a reference to the main motif of tyre treads imprinted into the concrete, Reynolds' interventions enrich tactility and give identity to each of several gathering settings.

The textures within shapes that accentuate movement or pause are taken from familiar patterns of Ipswich's domestic history, such as from lead lights, and are intended to reinterpret their role into a contemporary civic context.

A second major concrete (and timber) work is Aboriginal artist Laurie Nilsen's Deebing Creek, which surrounds the Murri Court, referencing traditional justice processes. This work comprises a series of floor-to-ceiling concrete and timber blades that also act for sun control and visual screening from the street.

**Judges Comments**

The complete integration of narrative artwork with the concrete structure to reveal textured layers of material and narrative has made the concrete in this project sing. An exemplary project that demonstrates the power of successful collaboration between architect and artist, recalling earlier periods of architectural history when the two were more often combined. Beautiful.



Queensland  
**Ipswich Justice Precinct**



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