Architecture & Traditional Irish Music

Related Motifs Forming Place, Culture, & Identity

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The vivid imagery that Johnny Doherty describes of music being transposed from nature is one we associate with a rural agrarian Ireland. It infers nature’s qualities, identifiers in a setting that contribute to the essence of a place, music central to the scene. By comparison, if one were to contrast the built environment of rural Ireland today, and the placing of architecture within its scene, it appears bereft of example. Less than 5 per cent of the built environment, as attributed to the practice of architecture. One might initially draw the conclusion that this must be a consequence of the country experiencing a current period of recession. But this would be a mistake. The statistic remained the same even during the height of the economic boom that saw unprecedented levels of construction during a ten-year period from 1995 to 2005. A startling fact, when one assesses the figures of this period that at its peak reached 90,000 house completions per year. In 2013, house completions by year end totalled 8000. A striking contrast, reflecting the huge collapse of the economy and its dependant construction industry. Why was there such little evidence of architecture (applicable to both rural and urban conditions) in such a long period of construction driven growth? In 2014, there appears little to suggest attitudes may have changed somewhat. One must ask the question therefore, is there such a thing as architectural practice in rural Ireland? Or is architecture something that can only be perceived and practised to any extent in the larger urban context? The urban context must be examined regarding how we occupy or not as the case may be, our built environment therein. As a nation we tend to differ from our mainland European neighbours, in that we express a preference not to engage with our urban centres when it comes to choosing where we dwell. Perhaps this is related to an inconsistent quality and range of apartment types, or perhaps it is something more rooted in the psychology of the nation, where established cultural attitudes are hard to change or influence. This essay will examine architectures role in both the rural and urban environments.


6 Tom Parlon, Director General Construction Industry Federation. In interview with Seán O’Rourke on Today with Seán O’Rourke. RTE Radio 1, 17 Jan. 2014.

7 Tom Parlon Director General Construction Industry Federation, in interview with Seán O’Rourke on Today with Seán O’Rourke, RTE Radio 1, 17 Jan. 2014.
Starting with the rural condition, in the first chapter ‘From Clare to Where’, I will explore relationships between architecture and traditional Irish music, both in relation to concept of place and cultural identity. In chapter two ‘Spaghetti Function: The Birmingham Irish, Place, and Traditional Irish Music’ I examine in the historical context, the experiences of Irish immigrants to Birmingham in the latter part of the 1950’s, into the 1960’s, exploring the significant role of traditional Irish music as rural practise in forming community, and establishing a strong sense of place in an unfamiliar urban environment. By way of contrast, in chapter three, ‘Something’s Gotten In The State Of Denmark’, I examine a country where cultural identity is associated with a design ethos, nurtured and encouraged from a young age. Focusing on the city of Copenhagen, I examine this method and compare it with similar methods in the transmission process of Irish traditional music. In chapter four, ‘Neo Rural’, I observe present-day rural Ireland, and examine proposed new models that encourage a re population of the rural landscape, and consider how architecture may adapt and engage with this environment into the future. In The final chapter five, ‘Neon Lights, New Irish’, I address the current urban perspective. I examine the newly evolving ethnically diverse Ireland, and consider are there lessons to be learnt from how our new citizens conceive place, community and identity. I investigate immerging practices that, by active engagement with architecture, can encourage change in how we conceive place and occupy space. How such examples might encourage a cultural shift away from long established ideas regarding perceptions of space and place, and how such practises may begin to promote a new model for the future, and a greater awareness by people of architecture.
Chapter One

From Clare to Where?

Historically, the passing on of music, and by association knowledge, is but one of the many rich artistic expressions that can be attributed to Irish cultural identity. Ancient Ogham stones transmitted culture and knowledge from one generation to the next through the permanence of lines inscribed in stone, acting as societal communication. The inscriptions of these ancient artefacts did so with skills honed through repetition and practice, executed through careful rhythmic sequence to leave the signatory mark. The same practices apply to traditional Irish music, a passing of knowledge (music) from one generation to the next, master to pupil, informally by ear, employing repetition and practise to master a given tune or song. The receiving of music in this informal manner ensures a continuum of a particular form of cultural expression, by association, the receiver automatically becoming “of that culture”, “of that identity”, “of that place”. In a philosophical essay, Edward S. Case refers to the term place in that, “one of its essential properties is its connectivity”. Connectivity has always had a significant role in Irish traditional music, Martin Hayes is very much aware of such connectivity regarding music and place, but he also acknowledges a third strand that connects both music and place, that of architecture.

Hayes is a traditional fiddle player from rural east Clare who learnt the local style of playing from his father. He has been based in Seattle since the mid-1990’s. Through his own life experiences coupled with exposure to, and experimentation with, other musical forms as diverse as Jazz, Blues, Classical, and indigenous Indian music, he has successfully managed to absorb and fuse these divergent forms into something new yet very much identifiable as traditional Irish music. This he refers to the term place in that, “one of its essential properties is its connectivity”. Connectivity has always had a significant role in Irish traditional music, Martin Hayes is very much aware of such connectivity regarding music and place, but he also acknowledges a third strand that connects both music and place, that of architecture.

One can interpret the above excerpts from Martin Hayes’ observations as a musician in architectural terms, when we think of the existing built form of rural Ireland. Phrases such as “preservation of style”, “mimicking of the past”, “undermining and devaluing tradition”, or “fads and shallow trends”, are all applicable to many examples in this regard, examples that are easily found if one journeys any distance into rural Ireland. The lack of any architectural ambition soon becomes apparent. Those buildings that display evidence of an architectural input (less than 5 per cent) are the exception rather than the rule and are not readily identifiable in the landscape. Those that are recovered stand as refreshing expressions of architectural individuality in a landscape dominated by familiarity and blandness. Indeed, one could be forgiven for thinking that the practice of architecture in rural Ireland is something that doesn’t really exist, so rare are such examples. By 2010, almost two thirds of the population of the state was urbanised. (One can refer here to the figures outlined in the introduction to this essay). As Kevin Whelen describes it “Rural Ireland receded from the country’s daily consciousness”. By 2012, a staggering statistic unmatched anywhere else in the world informed us that one third of all houses in the Republic of Ireland had been built since 1997, with 81 per cent of homes owner occupied – the highest rate in the world, (Central Statistics Office 2012).

That there was such unprecedented building going on throughout the country surely would have meant greater opportunity for the role of architecture within such an economically healthy environment.


What is telling is the relevance of Hayes’ observations on music and architecture with regards to place and in particular, his comment regarding, “the concept of artistic expression needing to work in harmony with a particular locality”. It is obvious in the legacy of the period mentioned, that little consideration was given in this regard, and even less by way of any form of architectural expression or intent. Why was this? Why such little evidence of architecture in such a long period of construction driven growth? We only have to look back one generation to get an idea of previous attitudes towards architecture when a similar condition allied to political opportunism saw a nationwide boom in the construction of domestic property. The property speculation boom of the 1970’s into the early 1980’s, permitted irreversible damage to parts of historic Georgian Dublin, and Limerick to a lesser degree, and left the landscape of the countryside facing “horizon pollution, with the building of monuments to the bad taste of the nouveau riche.”

Paul Durcan’s poem of the unhappy wife on the newfound wealth of her haulier husband, gives an idea of the kind of thinking with regards to the built environment of the time and attitudes regarding architecture:

We live in a Georgian, Tudor, Classical Greek, Moorish, Spanish Hacienda, Regency Period, Ranch House, Three Storey Bungalow, On the edge of the edge of town: ‘Poor Joe’s Row’ - The townspeople call it, But our real address is ‘Ronald Reagan Hill’ – That vultureous-looking man in the states.

Such “monuments” especially ‘one off’ houses throughout the countryside, only serve to create a rural built environment of isolation, a remove from the once successful models of collective self-sufficient small communities of dwellings and landholdings (of which I will discuss further in the final chapter). Today in 2014, examples are still being constructed in the landscape. Their continued emergence would indicate the challenge faced by our planning authorities to promote and implement their own strategy for the rural built environment. A strategy which references the historic condition mentioned above, proposing to promote and re-establish a landscape of vibrant rural community.

Chapter Two

Spaghetti Function: -
The Birmingham Irish, Forming Place Through Traditional Irish Music.

The model of a vibrant rural community was one which Irish immigrants re-imagined in an urban context:

“When forced to leave the country, in the main due to economic necessity and to a lesser extent, for many young people; to escape an oppressive, conservative and claustrophobic state in which the Catholic Church had assumed a disproportionate influence on the state’s social policies”. 20

The post war period to the present day has witnessed three significant periods of emigration, the country presently experiencing the third instalment of this trilogy. Prior to the current scenario, it was the period of the 1980’s, and before that, the first great wave of mass emigration post war, were the decades of the 1950’s into 1960’s. Of these three periods, the generation that forged and established community and identity most successfully, were the emigrants of this latter period, and in particular those who emigrated to Britain.

In the synopsis of her own 2012 publication, Angela Moran outlines some of the contributory factors at play that shaped the establishment of a vibrant and culturally expressive re-located Irish community in Birmingham during this period:

“Irish music enjoyed popularity across Europe and North America in the second half of the twentieth century. Regional circumstances created a unique reception for such music in the English Midlands. Birmingham’s location at the hub of a road and communications network was key to the development of Irish music across a series of increasingly visible, public sites: Birmingham’s branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann was established in the domestic space of an amateur musician; Birmingham’s folk clubs encouraged a blend of Irish music with socialist politics, from which assertive expressions of cultural identity would emerge. In establishing their ‘place’, the majority of emigrants, being of a rural background, transported and transposed their cultural identifiers of music, literature/drama/language, Gaelic games, and religious practice, from their previously familiar, historic rural context, to an unfamiliar new urban environment. The setting up of these mutually supporting networks throughout Birmingham provided ‘places’ in which the newly arrived Irish could share in, and relate to, the common interests of the cultural lives they once lived back home in Ireland. Music, and in this context traditional Irish music and song, was very much to the fore in establishing a foothold in the city on which to build a vibrant and familiar environment of shared communal experience, as I will explain.”


that of the IRA bombings of the area) and has moved Irish music from private arenas to the centre of this large civic event”. 19

As can be seen, such positive expressions and experiences of cultural identity formed key components in the creating of a sense of place for the Irish in Birmingham, at a time when political overtones of coloniser and colonised loomed in the legacy of British imperialism in Ireland (a context that didn't exist for those who emigrated to America in the same period). Recent memory of Irish independence and ever-evolving national identity provided a background from which assertions of cultural identity would emerge. In establishing their ‘place’, the majority of emigrants, being of a rural background, transported and transposed their cultural identifiers of music, literature/drama/language, Gaelic games, and religious practice, from their previously familiar, historic rural context, to an unfamiliar new urban environment. The setting up of these mutually supporting networks throughout Birmingham provided ‘places’ in which the newly arrived Irish could share in, and relate to, the common interests of the cultural lives they once lived back home in Ireland. Music, and in this context traditional Irish music and song, was very much to the fore in establishing a foothold in the city on which to build a vibrant and familiar environment of shared communal experience, as I will explain.

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann was founded in January 1951 by members of the Thomas Street pipers club in Dublin, to foster and protect traditional Irish music, with one of its purposes; as described in its constitution, “to draw isolated rural musicians out to public spaces”. 20 Birmingham had no problem in meeting the five-member requirement to form a branch, and in 1961 established Birmingham Comhaltas, the fourth British city in which the organisation was established after Glasgow, Liverpool, and London. Birmingham Comhaltas was based at the house Dún Mhuire, on Brecon Road in the Handsworth area of the city, home to husband and wife, Lilly and Dr. Bob Lawrie. Lilly previously a nurse, played fiddle and was a native of Carton, County Roscommon, and Bob a practicing G.P. and part time pianist, the Manchester born son of Scottish parents. Dún Mhuire firmly established a sense of place for Irish traditional musicians and enthusiasts throughout the city and surrounding regions, providing a location in which music and Irish culture could be expressed, shared and promoted. It provided for the re-imagining of a rural idea in a distinctly urban environment. Angela Moran describes the significance of place in this context and its impact on the city in broader terms:

“Lilly Lawrie transformed the public space of her husband’s doctors surgery into a domestic music base from which she instigated and fostered a distinct rural Irish ethnicity in a particularly pluralistic area of urban Birmingham. From the initial boundaries of a single house in Handsworth, Birmingham could come to accommodate a city-wide music movement that would have decreased all sense of constraint on the local diaspora by the late 1990’s”. 21

One can examine a particular space in the Lawrie house in relation to architecture and the realms of formal public and informal private use, through its flexibility; an example of “elements doing more than one thing”. 22 During the day a large waiting room operated as a formal public space that could accommodate up to thirty waiting patients for the doctor’s surgery. After working hours the room reverted to a family lounge, transformed for the informalities of Irish traditional music. Angela Moran describes its many functions as a place for Irish cultural expression:

“Musicians attended Dún Mhuire for weekly instrumental sessions on Mondays; step dancers turned up for Seán Bradley’s Comhaltas Céilí classes on Tuesdays and music lessons, meetings and further performances took place every Sunday. Dún Mhuire also hosted esteemed attendees of the annual Fleadh

Creating music as community engendered confidence in this new found working class in a city which offered economic opportunity and improved standards of living for those willing to embrace and adapt to the new cultural challenges they faced; in doing so, fostering further independence. Work was easily obtained in the many industries of the region, car manufacturing in particular, or the booming construction and transport infrastructure programmes. By the time the giant road intersection ‘Spaghetti Junction’ opened in 1972, the first construction of its kind, in Britain; (On June 1st 1965, Birmingham Evening Mail reporter Roy Smith described plans for the then unbuilt junction as “a cross between a plate of spaghetti and an unsuccessful attempt at a Staffordshire knot”, 27 a sub editor captioned the article “Spaghetti Junction”) it is suggested, “an Irish workforce accounted for up to sixty per cent of the labour for these motorway links in the West Midlands”.

The juxtaposition of ‘Spaghetti Junction’ with the background of the majority of those employed in its construction, couldn’t be more stark in emphasising the rural verses urban condition. The sheer scale of the piece of transport infrastructure, reinforces this contrast, ‘Spaghetti Junction’ serves 18 routes over 30 acres, across 5 different levels, with 559 concrete columns, the highest of which rise to 24.4m (80 ft.). Engineers had to elevate 21.7km (13.5 miles) of motorway to accommodate two railway lines, three canals, and two rivers, with a construction period of four years. Such opportunities for personal betterment amplified the dynamic of a booming economy, encapsulated by vibrant social engagement.

Birmingham offered a society in marked contrast to an Ireland of the same era, where overbearing influence of religious doctrine was paid deference to by the political establishment, allowing such influences to permeate through all levels of society; in particular, suffocating and censoring certain aspects of the creative arts.

The importance of traditional Irish music in forming place, community, and identity, in urban Birmingham can be compared to its significance in the rural communities of Ireland where it was practiced:

“If traditional music is considered a form of inherited knowledge, the musician possessed the emotional and aesthetic history of his culture in his music. …The music conferred identity on a vastly decentralised culture; it was history translated into sound. This is why personalised oral transmission of the musical tradition from members of one generation to the other was a crucial process in the life of the rural community. This spontaneous transfer of the oral tradition between generations connected the community with its own history”.

As the Irish immigrant communities became established, and began to raise families, elements of this strong cultural identity became engendered in some of the English born sons and daughters of the next generation. Those first and second generation Irish who were musically inclined, expressed their Irish identity through the positive form of traditional Irish music. This, at a time when there was much negative sentiment towards the Irish community in Britain due to the escalation of the on-going political conflict in Northern Ireland, which visited Britain with direct and devastating consequences in the major urban centres of London, and Birmingham, in particular.
Chapter Three

Something’s Gotten in the Realm of Denmark.

“We look to our music in times of exaltation, in times of desperation – it is our music and our song that we turn to.”

In the above statement Phillip King, speaking on Irish national radio in October 2013, sums up the “importance of music to a country” as he further qualifies it. Here he is identifying something that he feels is ingrained in the very depths of our core, an inseparable part of our cultural make up. People may counter with the argument that not everyone is musically inclined, or have an association with a particular type of music, or that a certain type of music is not representative of themselves culturally. They are missing the point here. In the above statement, King does not identify any particular type of music, he could be talking as much about traditional Irish music, sean nós singing, blues, or folk, as much as he could be talking about rap, hip-hop, rock, or jazz, the genres are endless, and likewise our creative talent and potential is endless. The statement applies in identifying music’s importance to us creatively, physically, nationally, in both its historic context and in a contemporary context. In forming identity shaped through a particular practise, an inherent and rich characteristic of the Irish psyche is proclaimed.

We can look back to Christopher Small commenting in 1980, explaining the significance of music with psyche that King today talks about, “Of all the arts, music is perhaps the most sensitive indicator of the culture, the most closely tied to the subconscious attitudes and assumptions on which we build our lives within a city”. 20 “Sub conscious attitudes”, “culture”, “practice”, the “building of lives within a city”, again, such terminology can find equal application in the realms of music and architecture.

National psyche, practise and its shaping of identity, particularly “the building of our lives within a city”, is something I became very aware of when visiting Copenhagen on a first year architectural study trip in February 2010. It became apparent, that from a very young age 4-5 years, the school children were introduced to design in the classroom in a simple, informal manner, by way of folding, moulding, shaping, various pieces of card, paper, or clay, and drawing simple design orientated sketches. It was practised by the pupils with all the enjoyment and youthful abandonment that creativity can instil at such a young age. No doubt the pupils also saw it as an enjoyable counter to some of the more traditional forms of educational instruction that we associate with more established subject teachings. Unbeknown to them, the children were actually practising a form of architecture, all be it in very simple ways, but a form of architecture none the less. A first rung on the design ladder so to speak. It may have not been for everyone, but no more or no less than how some traditional subjects of instruction are received or not as the case may be. Like transmission of music in the oral tradition, here also was the same process manifest, imparting design instead of music, what Marie McCarthy refers to as “enculturation”. … “The generational transmission of cultural knowledge, skills, and values”. 31 She further explains:

“Two mutually dependant processes serve to enculture the young: Socialisation and formal education. In the process of socialisation, certain features are dominant, the inter personal nature of the learning context, the transmission of music (insert design for the Danish example) by significant adults in the child’s environment, and the centrality of affective culture in the learning process, i.e. the values, attitudes, and beliefs that permeate the musical practice and the surrounding community”. 32

Again here, we can revisit Carlo Ginzburg’s writings. He discusses the importance of youth and ‘clues’ from observatory ‘clue’ learning in his journal article “Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and scientific method”; Anna Davin’s introduction highlights what Ginzburg refers to as ‘low intuition’ the kind he tells us “exists everywhere in the world, without geographic, historical, ethnic, gender or class exception”. 33 It is curiously she contends:

“The property of those who within a given society are not in positions of power. It is informal knowledge, orally transmitted, based on everyday experience (often including the accumulated experience of forebears and elders) and careful observation, which allows the observer to understand much more than can be directly seen”. 34

This is what Ginzburg refers to as ‘conjunctural’ or ‘divinatory knowledge’. 35 Initially “dismissed as trivial or unscientific” by the elite classes of the eighteenth century, but then expropriated in a number of fields of scientific research. Examples he highlights are the recording and documenting of folk traditions, the practice of use of herbs, and animal husbandry. By the late nineteenth century this conjectural approach, had acquired new academic respectability.

In Copenhagen it is clear that the Danish State observes an academic respectability in attributing a value to the enculturation of its youth, or the “low intuition” as Ginzburg phrases it, in the sphere of practice and design, for the betterment of future society. It is worth noting, that there is no such policy for the education of comparable youth in Ireland regarding design awareness from a young age. Perhaps therefore by progression, this becomes a contributory factor impacting architectural engagement by the adult population here, as figures mentioned earlier would appear to lend credence to. For Denmark however, appreciation of design is embedded in the national psyche by seeds sown from a young age. The worldwide recognition of the work of Arne Jacobsen in architecture, the design of furniture and other objects, along with the other great figures of Nordic architecture Asplund, Lewerentz, and Aalto, has left a rich repository of example and reinforces a national design ethos in Denmark and throughout Scandinavia. This design culture, was not alone evident in the architecture visited for the purpose of the study trip, but was also discernable in the infrastructure, furniture, fashion; the design of audio systems, and modest street furniture. In Copenhagen it seemed, things were considered, everything had a value regarding design, and had a value to society, “Alas, poor Ireland?”.

36 Authors own, paraphrase in part of “Alas poor Yorick, I knew him Horatio.” Hamlet, William Shakespere, 1602.
Chapter Four

Neo Rural

Dominic Stevens is an architect who lives and practises between the two realms of urban and rural life, working and living between Dublin and Leitrim, probably the two most extreme examples of the urban versus rural condition in the country. In an article he contributed to Building Magazine in Spring 2005 (the same time as Martin Hayes’ observations), Stevens acknowledges the elements of modernity that the economic growth of the period brought to the city. Rural Ireland he points out therefore should now “carefully set about defining what the modern countryside could be.” It is a statement that still holds relevance today in 2014.

In many ways, the concept of a rural Ireland in 2014 could be seen to barely exist in its totality as the once detached agrarian society devoid of any urban influence. The reality for the majority of people who choose to live in the country involves some form of commute be it by car or public transport (if available) to their place of work. Only those engaged in full time farming can be viewed as truly occupying rural Ireland with their work/life on a full time basis. Even these numbers are diminishing however, as more and more choose to leave the oft times harsh demands of farming life and the financial insecurity that goes with it, instead seeking an alternative reliable source of income and a more flexible lifestyle. The reality is that the current generation, who own farmland, in greater numbers, are farming in a part time capacity. The younger generation, especially college graduates or trade professionals, see farming as a supplement to their ‘day job’ either in evenings or on weekends. Also, the modern digital age we now live in allows flexibility in work practice that wasn’t available a generation ago. The requirement to be in a certain location to carry out certain aspects of one’s profession has now changed. A variety of working options are now possible. Stevens identified in his article of 2005, that 15 per cent of the urban population worked with knowledge that could be transmitted to and from anywhere in the world via the internet. With technological advancements subsequently, it is not unrealistic to imagine a rise in this figure. Potentially this will allow more people to avail of rural living. Flexible working arrangements will accommodate the demands of family life, the rearing of children etc. Desired personalised lifestyle choices are now more attainable.

In discussing previous successful rural models of community, Stevens highlights the once primitive yet highly sustainable system of the dachán, the loose clustering of dwellings, (typical four or five but can be more or less), on lands not occupied by farming (briefly mentioned at the end of the first chapter). These settlements responded to water supply, wind protection, dry ground, and locally available building materials to establish independent communities that availed of a land use system of joint farms worked co-operatively by the inhabitants. It was a system that worked successfully until it was altered by the colonial occupiers who saw it as an obstacle to progress, and thus set about dividing up the land to establish a value on it, allowing landlords to extract financial gain from the tenant occupier, with the result of scattering these once established clustered communities intermittently throughout the countryside. A similar model had already been tried and tested throughout rural Britain, referred to as enclosures:

“During the industrial revolution of the late nineteenth century, enclosure was seen by British capitalism as necessary in order to provide an efficient agricultural sector capable of feeding the states’ rapidly growing working class population.”

The strategy had been in operation for a number of centuries by the time of great industrial change, as Raymond Williams points out, “The process had been going on since at least the thirteenth century, and had reached a first peak in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.”

Williams notes the effect this government enacted appropriation had in the melancholy poems of eighteenth century rural life in Britain: “It is worth emphasising these predominant feelings of loss and pain as we move to that common outline of the history of rural England, in which the campaign of parliamentary enclosures is seen as the destroyer of a traditional and settled rural community.”

The policy was to have similar consequences in Ireland with the resulting removal of structured vibrant rural communities. The loss of these established communities, and twentieth century emigration cycles (as discussed in chapter two of this essay) have left many rural locations here devoid of the critical mass of people required to maintain what might be termed a viable community.

As a possible response to this condition, Stevens argues for a “Neo Rural Lifestyle” as a way of re-establishing these once vibrant rural territories, by taking advantage of and exploiting the advancements in the technological age, “The rural landscape becomes an even field of multiple connection points, superimposed upon historic layers within the landscape, facilitated by technological advancements allowing home based internet work practices, no longer requiring locating to centralised areas of commerce.”

Diagramme extract from Stevens article 2005.

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As a possible response to this condition, Stevens argues for a “Neo Rural Lifestyle” as a way of re-establishing these once vibrant rural territories, by taking advantage of and exploiting the advancements in the technological age, “The rural landscape becomes an even field of multiple connection points, superimposed upon other layers historically situated in the landscape.” This he believes will re-establish the critical mass of people required for entertainment, company, culture, allowing the entire territory to become re-inhabited. Opportunities he maintains, will arise to present new architecture through re-defined technical, social, political, and economic situations, “Just as the street, the urban fabric and city life are places of analysis for the city project, the landscape, the natural elements, patterns of farming and previous and projected forms of settlement are where we must begin in rural Ireland.”

Instead of holding the mind set of “man-set-against-nature” definition of architecture, Stephens claims we need to understand the rural landscape as one of “ever evolving change and occupation that reflects the shifts in rural life, laid out in the changing patterns of agriculture, work influence and poverty. Peoples houses and work places become just another layer of occupation”. His contention therefore, that architects must define what this new rural architecture is, to seriously take on the challenge of understanding shifts in rural life - to realise that this is the important architectural

38 Kieran McNulty (M.A. History, Maynooth), Correspondence with author, 4 Feb. 2014
40 Raymond Williams, ‘Enclosures, Commons, and Communities, The Country & the City, (Spokesman 2011) p. 96.
project for the coming years”.

To look for architectural opportunities in present-day rural Ireland, one must think outside of any existing preconceived notions. The architect cannot expect to make a living in designing one off houses, demand doesn't appear to be there, and there exists a degree of ignorance or lack of awareness on behalf of the general public with regard to engaging architecture (similar preconceptions exist in urban area's). The statistics highlighted in the introduction to this essay bear this out. So one must look to other models, consider innovative ideas, such as those proposed by Stevens perhaps. We should also caution against predictable approaches that are evidenced already in our rural built environment. When Martin Hayes' talks of the pitfalls of traditional musicians, whose approach to the music is the “mimicking of the past” resulting in “fads and shallow trends”, such terms should be equally cautioned against in how we present our architecture.

In many of the towns and villages of rural Ireland there still exists a strong sense of community and social engagement that harks back to the times of the meitheall system of long ago, where the community pooled their labour for the benefit of the greater good, where those who had skills and talents exchanged these attributes with others who offered differing skills to ensure that through a combination of communal endeavour the tasks of the day would be accomplished. For example a carpenter might fix the out house of a stone mason, and in return the stone mason would build a wall for the carpenter, or a thatcher would repair the thatch to a farmers roof, and in return receive fresh produce from the farmer for his labours. This community spirit and sharing of the workload is still evident today, all be it in reduced terms, but one still gets a sense of it especially around the traditional seasonal farming activities of gathering turf, saving the hay, and the bringing home of the harvest. Allied to these communal activities are agents of strong community organisations, that vary from village to village, and town to town that may include but are not exclusive to any combination or manifestation of the following – GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association), Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, Local Community Radio & Newsletter, Tidy towns Committee, Shooting & Fishing groups, Drama groups, Mother/Father toddler Groups, Health awareness/fitness groups, Golfing societies, Soccer clubs, Pensioner Groups, Neighbourhood Watch, Religious/choir groups, and more besides. In highlighting the GAA, Patrick Duffy explains the ‘importance of the local’ of such groups in the rural community in maintaining place:

"Indeed the GAA from its beginnings attached its organisational structures to the architecture of parishes, townlands, and counties, and probably helped to preserve and promote a local sense of place over the decades”.

The above statement could be re-interpreted somewhat, in terms of architecture, to read as a proposition for the local, thus:

‘Architecture must attach itself to the structures of these organisations in townlands parishes and counties, to preserve and promote a sense of place now and in the coming decades’.

Duffy also acknowledges the place traditional Irish music has in the community:

"Although music is a universal global language, changing by the year, the vibrancy of traditional music is a reflection of a resurgence of the local. Nurtured by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, Feiseanna, etc. over the years, it is now thriving in a commercial and community sense”.

Such groups with their established structures already in place may also proffer opportunity for a rural form of architecture. There is also another consideration architecture must address, one which I will examine in the next chapter.

45 Patrick Duffy, 'Change and Renewal in Issues of Place, Identity, and the Local', Engaging Spaces: People Place and Space from an Irish Perspective, Edited by Jim Hourihane, (The Lilliput Press Ltd, 2003), p.27.
46 Patrick Duffy, 'Change and Renewal in Issues of Place, Identity, and the Local', Engaging Spaces: People Place and Space from an Irish Perspective, Edited by Jim Hourihane, (The Lilliput Press Ltd, 2003), p.27.
Chapter Five

Neon Lights, New Irish.

Along with the organisations and community groups discussed previously, there exists now a new narrative, applicable not just to rural Ireland, but to urban Ireland also. It is one that adds a new dimension, a new diversity to these communities and organisations that wasn’t there before. A positive legacy of our brief, and one that is far from our established held beliefs in how we operate within their realms. To inspire attitudes that embrace and encourage a culture change from our established held beliefs in how we have come to be. One can examine the current urban condition and the overriding fact that as a nation we choose not to live in our major urban centres. Perhaps this was an oversight on his part, assuming a newly arrived workforce would initially populate our major urban centres, where opportunity would be at its most prevalent. People arrived from rural backgrounds also, and in turn would seek out environments they were accustomed to, being adept in associated trades and work practices not familiar to urban locations. Alternatively, the way in which we all make choices, there are those who prefer the faster pace of a city, and those who prefer the slower pace of the country, this may also have been what decided location. What is evident, just as the Irish emigrants spread out from Birmingham and other British cities fifty and sixty years ago, so too have spread our new citizens throughout this country. Today you are as likely to find a diverse mix of nationalities in the most rural of locations as you are in the most urban.

One can examine the current urban condition and the overriding fact that as a nation we choose not to live in our major urban centres. In contrast, our new citizens do. For many it is an obvious choice, when outlining alternative models of architecture to facilitate an increasing rural population. Perhaps this was an oversight on his part, assuming a newly arrived workforce would initially populate our major urban centres, where opportunity would be at its most prevalent. People arrived from rural backgrounds also, and in turn would seek out environments they were accustomed to, being adept in associated trades and work practices not familiar to urban locations. Alternatively, the way in which we all make choices, there are those who prefer the faster pace of a city, and those who prefer the slower pace of the country, this may also have been what decided location. What is evident, just as the Irish emigrants spread out from Birmingham and other British cities fifty and sixty years ago, so too have spread our new citizens throughout this country. Today you are as likely to find a diverse mix of nationalities in the most rural of locations as you are in the most urban.

For our newest citizens, the concept of living in suburban housing estates on the outskirts of major urban centres is a totally alien concept. One only has to take a walk in a city park at the weekend to become aware of the accents, other than native Irish being spoken including Eastern European, African, Arabic or Asian. Likewise, you will easily find small shops catering specifically for ethnic diversity, in food, tradition, culture etc. The shops aren’t there as opportunistic endeavours, like all sensible economic pursuits, there must be a viable market in the first instance, there must be a clientele to purchase the goods on offer. If people of varying ethnic diversity are inhabiting a certain territory, then it is only natural that within that territory one would expect to find shops that provide for its inhabitants.

A positive effect of this entrepreneurship if it can be referred to as such, is that the goods become available to all. For a street or a neighbourhood, choice gets expanded and new cultures experienced. This might be through the sale of traditional foods, choosing to have a meal in an ethnic restaurant. It could be the purchase of traditional clothing, arts, and crafts. This enhances community interaction, engagement, and diversity. “City diversity itself permits and stimulates more diversity.” 48 Such enterprises will initially be found in low rental units or vacant stores. Vacant corner locations are highly prized. Not only do they present two facades, doubling their presence on the street, and potential trade, but by occupying such locations, “small stores on street corners establish a rhythm.” 49 The gradual re-activation of such spaces encourages the establishment of other enterprises, “shops attract shops” 50 which become the catalyst for retail and commercial growth of an area, “if one brand attracts people, then many brands will attract large numbers of people.” 51 Over time, new life is breathed into a once previously ignored, under utilised, run-down section of city street or neighbourhood, vibrancy attained.

The economic recession the country is experiencing currently, offers unexpected opportunity for such enterprises to be realised. We have in every urban centre in Ireland, vacant units, be they existing buildings previously occupied, or new buildings yet to be occupied. In a multicultural Ireland of today, we can take lessons from our new Irish in how to embrace the opportunities these vacant spaces present, and show that it is possible to re-invent social environment. 48 Jane Jacobs ‘The Generators of Diversity’, The Death and Life of Great American Cities, (Modern Library Edition, New York 1993), p.190. 49 Kevin Lynch, ‘Districts’, The Image Of The City, (The M.I.T. Press, 1960), P.69. 50 Anne Mikoleit, Moritz Parchhausen, Urban Code: 100 Lessons for Understanding the City, (Massachusetts Institute of Technology and gta Verlag, ETH Zurich, 2011), p.23. 51 Anne Mikoleit, Moritz Parchhausen, Urban Code: 100 Lessons for Understanding the City, (Massachusetts Institute of Technology and gta Verlag, ETH Zurich, 2011), p.23.

Architecture has a role to play here, with clever measured re-working of such spaces, innovative ideas expressed with an economy of means, recycling, reusing, reinventing. Space and place re-imagined.
Conclusion

In bringing this essay to a conclusion it is important that I revisit an observation that I discussed earlier in the first chapter. A correlation was made between art and traditional Irish music, when I discussed applicable topics from Ginzburg’s writings on Giovanni Morelli the 19th century physician, to present day traditional Irish fiddle player Martin Hayes. Both cited the attribution of particular characteristics as a way of identifying. For Morelli, it was the uncovering of forged paintings, for Hayes, a regional style of traditional Irish music. It is here that one finds a common theme linking traditional Irish music and art, with architecture. One of authenticity, ‘that which is genuine’, ‘known to be true’. So, in that this essay began by identifying authenticities associated with traditional Irish music, its significance to place and those links with architecture; it is appropriate therefore to return to these links, these associations that I identify, which remain best summarized in conclusion by Martin Hayes, when he succinctly observes:

“As with all art forms, the secret is finding a way forward that is sustainable, balanced and authentic. I imagine that words like sustainability, balance, and authenticity might similarly apply to the world of architecture. So too would place, and the concept of artistic expression needing to work in harmony with a particular locality. The problem of matching the past to the future is something that architecture and traditional music share in common”.

Thesis Project, outline description.

The architectural design project is a continuum of the writing, addressing the role of architecture in present day Ireland in the rural and urban context. The project evolved firstly by making an architectural proposition in a rural location during the first semester. For the second semester the project is re-imagined in an urban setting. Both propositions submit an affordable architecture and construction that seeks the establishment and maintaining of community within each location, with the premise of performance at its core. In so doing, creating places of cultural diversity and exchange, enriching environment and society, forming a model applicable for a new diverse Ireland. Both projects have programmatic elements common to both, with additional programme for the urban project to take account of the greater scale, diversity, and economic pressures.
Architectural Proposition, First Semester:

Rural.
Rural:

Site & Proposition.
The site for the first semester proposal was located in the village of Athea, approximately 50km (35 miles) west of Limerick city, 2 km's from the border with county Kerry. Due to its geographical peripheral nature, the village like so many at a remove from major urban centres has suffered with depopulation due to current economic trends and circumstances. The village still retains a proportion of migrant workers who have remained in the area despite the downturn in the economy of recent years. The proposal looked to maintain the strong sense of community and integration that exists in the area and build upon this in an effort to potentially be a catalyst for the repopulation of the area by people who value the lifestyle a rural location offers in contrast to built up urban centres.

The project utilizes the typology of the petrol station, part of the built environment that occurs throughout all scales of inhabitation from village, town to city, re-imagined as a new communal hub for the locality into the future, where instead of offering petrol, they become a place to charge your vehicle, a place of social interaction and exchange, through music, theatrical performance, food, well being, after school activities for children, a coffee shop, ethnic food hall, multi-faith religious practice; all flexible and specific to the requirements of the locality.

Locator Map.

Existing Rural Petrol Station Typologies:
Utilizing existing houses and mechanic garage/workshop.

Above Left: single story cottage at Ballybunion, (in operation)
Above Middle: Mechanics workshop, Ballybunion, (in operation)
Above Right: Dormer House, Athea, (not in operation)
Athea village & surroundings present day settlement pattern to approximate 3km radius (original scale of drawing 1:2500 @ A1)
Athea village detailed map present day

Occupied buildings hatched dark grey
Un-occupied buildings hatched light grey
Public accessible buildings outlined in black

(original scale of drawing 1:750 @ A1)
Abstract Spatial Model Studies:

Model 1 Plan, View A

Model 1 Elevation, View A

Model 1 Elevation, View B

Abstract Spatial Model Studies:
Model 1
Abstract Spatial Model Studies:
Model 2

Model 2, Close up view A.

Model 2, Close up view B.

Model 2, Overall view A.

Model 2, Overall View B.
‘Commission’ / First proposal:

Map indicating new proposed circular pedestrian amenity walk around village (approx. 2km in length)

Blue hatch indicates location of model study (images next page) - the infill site between two buildings fronting the main street.
Model Studies ‘Commission’: Utilizing infil site between two existing buildings.

Model 3, Overhead view:
Route through village passing through/between two existing buildings, creating a place for exchange/social interaction.

Model 3, View from ground/street level:
Transparent and opaque low cost sheet material, simply suspended between the two opposing gables provides shelter and a place for social interaction and exchange. An opportunity for pop up temporary stalls, farmers market, at the point of intersection between newly proposed pedestrian route and the main street of the village.
Abstract Petrol Station Massing Studies.
Sketch design ideas /concepts sheet

- Plan showing large wall/screens that can open up or close off spaces as required
- Large sliding doors allow open or closed spaces
- Central space with different levels overlooking
- Sectional concept
- Overlooking/differing levels concepts
- Central flexible open space affording views to river
- Private prayer / meditation room

Central space with different levels overlooking
Existing Petrol Stations Re-imagined.
Site location map Athea village.

Location of existing petrol station and site of proposal indicated in red. Site for previous ‘commission’ proposal indicated blue.
Second Proposal:

Site map with proposal plan indicated black.

Study model viewed from north looking south

Study model viewed from west looking east
Design approach:

The building ‘grows’ out of the original petrol station site adjacent to the river. In time as demands and economics allow for, the building can continue to ‘grow’, traversing over and above the existing east west road as shown, creating a bridge to the main performance ‘tower house’ element to the north.
Materiality:

For this final proposal, the materiality approach is one of permanence. Utilizing local stone from existing derelict agricultural buildings or dwellings which are beyond repair or restoration to construct a new contemporary building of lasting quality and workmanship. Thus exemplifying the permanence of stone and its ability to provide a building that will serve and support the local community long into the future.

Inset images:

Inset images show four story high main performance space, referencing the once numerous tower houses that were common in the rural landscape locally.

Third/Final proposal, materiality and spatial study models.
Architectural Proposition, Second Semester:

Urban.
Thesis Project Second Semester

Urban:

Site & Proposition.
For the second semester, the project proposal locates to the urban context of Limerick city. The site is Honans Quay (indicated red on the location map) on the southern bank of the river Shannon, adjacent to Sarsfield bridge/Sarsfield street to the south west, Liddy street to the south east and Arthurs Quay park to the north east.

Honans Quay is located at the end of one of the main thoroughfares through the city, Henry Street, where it becomes Liddy Street. Extensive river views are afforded to the north to King Johns Castle and Thomand Bridge, and to the south west to Shannon bridge, and Riverpoint. The site also bounds an existing lock, across from which is located the historic Limerick boat house.

The proposal seeks to provide through architecture a building in which all aspects of a new and diverse Limerick (already evident in the city) can take place, be that through music performance, theatrical production, political debate, or cultural expression through food, crafts, and religious practice. The provision of ‘low cost’ ‘low tech’ sustainable construction allows the building to ‘grow’ as economics dictate, providing affordable space to be occupied by all sections of society, reflecting the rich and diverse make up of the city, in so doing revitalising and re-instating a once vibrant part of the city core.
Site model: Honans Quay site indicated dark grey.
Model Studies 1-4 of 7, in order of design progress/development
Model Studies 5-7 of 7, in order of design progress/development
Early development/progress section.

_Dual level in the round, flexible performance space with curved acoustic ceiling. Sliding vertical walls suspended over centre space allow for multiple configurations depending on the requirements._

_Triple height glazed entrance lobby presenting to the city, triple height glazed lobby presenting to the river with external raised podium._
Initial development/progress model study, performance space.

Part sectional model through in the round performance space, with bi-curving suspended acoustic ceiling detail.
Early sight line considerations study.

Footprint of foam model study (above left), with significant buildings indicated dark grey on site plan - King Johns Castle & Thomond Bridge far north, St Mary’s Cathedral north east, Court house north of site on river bank.

The concept being one of views afforded through the building at ground level from Henry Street towards the river framing King Johns Castle and Thomond bridge to the north.
Early Building Massing/Design Development Studies in sketchup (floor plates/programme indicated on left, top = ground floor, bottom= level 7)
Bottom three perspectives start to consider the idea of lifting the programme of the building off the ground to afford views out to the river and back to the city.
Schedule of retail occupancy
Ground Floor, Level 0
Units 1 - 27 Number

19 Polish bakery
1 Polish folk art, clothing, jewelry
2 Italian ice cream & gelato bar
3 Italian food shop & deli
4 Indian waglewski roundabout
5 Ethnic art: Aboriginal art & crafts
6 Aboriginal Music & instruments
7 Premiership Dragons
8 Habitant walkway, courtyards and fountains
9 National assembly
10 Multi ethnic newspaper shop
11 African wood carving, decorative art/made
12 Polish folk art, clothing, jewelry
13 Street lighting, window mullion
14 Ethnic art: South American arts & crafts
15 African tea/coffee shop
16 Hostel reception
17 Halal butcher
18 Afro/caribbean hair salon
19 Natural tea/coffee shop
20 Multi ethnic newspaper shop
21 Slow food, coffee & wine shop
22 North African sculpture, nets, designs
23 Slow food, reception
24 Slow food, toilets
25 Slow food, facilities block
26 Slow food, decoration tunnels

Total: 2039 sqm

Ground Floor, Level 0
Area's Breakdown

Total Retail accommodation: 2039 sqm
Public Performance Space: 468 sqm
Lift & Toilet cores: 388 sqm
'Streets' Circulation: 1205 sqm

Total Gross Floor Area: 4108 sqm

Way: Ground Floor, Level 0
f.f.i. +5.200

 Typical Ground Floor Development/Progress Plan based on previous sketchup massing studies.
Plan allows for multiple access with routes and views through the building, with an informal performance space centrally located below a full height top lit atrium.
Typical Second Floor (level 3) Development/Progress Plan based on previous sketchup massing studies.

Plan shows 4 No. Black Box theatre/performance spaces of differing size, with open plan circulation enclosing a central void/atrium overlooking the informal performance space below at ground level. Level 3 circulation incorporates bars and restaurant programme post and pre performance, affording wrap around views to the river and city.
Top: Design Development Studies in sketchup
Birds eye Perspective views

Below right: Initial Design Development Section sketch,
Building raised off of ground, creating public space undercroft for informal performance space/public plaza.

Immediately below: Design Development sketch model
Building lifted off of ground one full storey, full storey height glazed facade to exterior at ground level, simplified square footprint/plan.
Near Right:
Internal perspective views in central atrium/void space.

a. View to 3rd and 4th floor bridges from ground level
b. View to 3rd floor bridge from first floor level
c. View from 3rd floor bridge with view back to city (4th floor bridge visible above)

Right:
Perspective views.

d. Ground floor entrance overhang street level
e. Sixth floor level, view to river
f. Fifth floor level, view to city and across atrium/void
Ground floor development/progress plan based on previous sketch-up massing studies.

Circulation cores positioned at the perimeter corners, opening up the central space overlooking informal performance space two levels below (refer to section). Full height storey glazing provides transparency to the river and city, allowing views through the building.

**Ground 0 Area's Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lift &amp; Toilet Cores</th>
<th>520 msq</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circulation</td>
<td>2074 msq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Void Opening)</td>
<td>1119 msq</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Useable Area**: 2594 msq
Fourth Floor Development/ Progress Plan based on previous sketchup massing studies

Additional programme at this level includes, Turkish baths, pastoral centre, hostel accommodation, museum space. The open plan circulation around the void with bridges over allows for additional exhibition space to be utilized with the circulation zone.
Design development/progress sketch model.

Building lifted off of ground one full storey, full storey hieght glazed facade to exterior at ground level, affording views through the building (model shows view looking south west back up Henry street).

Development/progress section.

Section shows building raised above ground level with an additional two storeys below ground incorporating central informal performance space/public plaza, with ethnic retail units to the perimeter (see development model next page). Full hieght void/atrium top lit, with bridges across void at first and third floors above ground. Double hieght black box performance venues located at first storey above ground. Existing lock can be seen on the far right with the south east facade of Limerick boathouse visible.
Development/progress model.

Model shows two full floors below ground level incorporating public plaza/informal performance space, with retail units equally distributed at the perimeter. Circulation balconies overlook the performance space from minus one level as shown. Natural daylight is provided by the continuous void/atrium all the way up through building (as indicated in section drawing previous page).
Development/progress model.

*Previous page two story model inlaid into site model, showing relationship with ground level. Informal performance space visible at minus two level, surrounded by retail units, and viewing/circulation balconies.*
Examples of sustainable, environment aware, affordable timber construction.

The project is developed and investigated with regards to employing a sustainable environmentally conscious, low cost form of construction. This approach takes into account current economic pressures within the state, and also looks to the future in proposing how we might choose to construct our buildings, in doing so generate a self sufficient home grown sustainable construction industry, environmentally aware and cost beneficial to both the state and citizen.
Development/progress section.

Section showing basement floor levels now removed, replaced with sunken public performance space with terraced seating, fully publicly accessible. Building programme raised up above ground level as shown, with edges cantilevered to allow natural light to penetrate underramps and performance space, performance space at ground level also avails of natural light through open atrium.

Flexible programme to levels above, section also shows a more formal performance space at upper level, which avails of natural light that can be blacked out depending on specific requirement.

Bridges and balconies to upper level provide circulation and opportunities to view performance space below. Ground level becomes a public space that people can traverse through, providing a transparent route through and below the building, affording views of river and city.
Development/progress model.

Site model with inserted performance/public plaza space. The ground condition becomes the first aspect of the proposal. Economics dictate how much of the building will be built, if any at all, until such time that conditions permit. The new ground condition is constructed ahead of any future building, forming an immediate public space for performance, social interaction and exchange for the populus, bringing life back to this riverside setting.
Ground condition/plan with inserted performance/public plaza space. The plaza is set level with the intersection of Liddy street, Sarsfield Street and Henry Street (southern corner of the site), this affords a raised podium of a metre where it addresses the river, allowing gentle graded terracing which people can occupy, taking advantage of the expansive views of the river and beyond. Two lift and stair cores provide access to the building above from the public plaza.
Constructing a building, final realization.

Over time and as economics dictate a building can begin to emerge. Government sponsored support allows for the construction of the main laminated timber structure, this is then supplemented and added to as required by the populus, those who will occupy the space using low technology, yet time trusted timber construction techniques. The process is overseen by a team of professionals - architects, engineers, quantity surveyors, etc as would be the case in projects of similar scale. The approach is one based on economics, the environment, and sustainable forms of construction.

As the building begins to ‘grow’, and technologies advance, new systems of construction can update and replace original lower specified technologies, over time a highly detailed building emerges serving all sections of society, from cheap occupation stall holders, to state sponsored multinationals, engaging in highly specified research, each operating side by side in the one building.

The public space plaza and performance space at ground level remain the constant throughout.
Sectional Elevation looking south west towards Henry Street (left hand side). Final Realization Drawing.

*Ground condition indicates sectional cut through sunken performance space in public plaza.*
*Early stages of construction of building, simple post and beam structure begins to emerge as economics dictate.*
*Plaza becomes immediately occupiable public space on completion of ground works, future building emerges over time.*
Sectional Elevation taken through Liddy Street, looking north west towards Sarsfield Street and Sarsfield Bridge beyond, Final Realization Drawing.

Scaffold timber post and beam structure has been added to, undercroft areas (left and right of central atrium) begin to emerge, circulation and viewing balconies (1st, 2nd, and 3rd floors) start to be constructed.
Public open space at ground level fully occupiable.
Section through public performance space/ Sarsfield Street (left), looking north west towards Sarsfield Bridge beyond, Final Realization Drawing.

Fully occupiable building has emerged that can continue to be added to vertically or horizontally with the scaffold type system of timber construction as economics and demands dictate, thus permitting the building to continually 'grow'.

Fully accessible public open space/performance space at ground level. Building allows for over-looking of performance space from above, observed from perimeter balconies around central atrium /void.

Natural light penetrates the performance space directly from above and via the undercrofts on all four sides.

Central atrium/void is open to the elements with a fully retractible canvas roof that permits performances to take place below, independant of prevailing weather conditions.
Model Images City Block Scale

Timber structure visible, also facade treatment visible. Facade treatment here being one of transparent mesh, allowing for views and privacy as building programme dictates.

Model scale 1:200
Model Images

Ground level views of performance space/public space

Model scale 1:200
Model Image

Perspective view of building proposal in context of surrounding city blocks, and Arthurs Quay park visible to the north of building.
Model clearly showing main programme of building raised above public plaza space including performance space.
Full height central atrium visible at centre.

Model scale 1:500
Model Image

*Perspective view of part sectional model showing building under construction, employing timber post and beam scaffold system. Undercroft public space visible to rear, with central performance space visible in the foreground.*

*Model scale 1:20*
Model Image

Perspective view of part sectional model showing section through central performance space, and public space undercroft to part constructed building. Perimeter balconies over-looking performance space visible on part model of building.

Note: Part model of building shown, in time 'grows' to encircle the performance space, refer to previous drawings-section and elevations.

Model scale 1:20
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