Abstract

This thesis investigates the regionalist response of the detached ‘Queensland’ house through an analysis of house and garden in architect-designed work belonging to the 20th century. It involves the detailed documentation of three architect-designed houses and their gardens and an analysis of the interactions created between house, garden and wider context and set up through design at the building edge.

Interactions between a work of architecture and its context are an indication of regionalist thinking. A wide range of interactions can arise as a consequence of the particular ordering of ideas and principles in processes of architectural design. Evidence of ideas and principles ordering a work are revealed at the building edge where issues of form and expression, and space, its enclosure and occupation are negotiated and resolved. In this study describing the configuration of material, form and space at the building edge and mapping the outcomes of relationships created by these configurations provides the means to measure and to draw conclusions about the regional response of the detached house in South-East Queensland.

The houses selected to be documented and analysed, belong to three different periods in the 20th century and have been associated with particular architectural Movements marked by an interest in context that is held in principles declared in texts and manifestos. These Movements include the Arts and Crafts Movement, Late Modernism, and Critical Regionalism.

Analysing built work against architectural principles belonging to Movements of the time provides a means of accounting for the interweaving of local practice and international themes. Analysis will reveal how architects working through these Movements have recognised and responded to opportunities for making a responsive architecture. In doing so it will provide a means to isolate and describe the characteristics of a responsive architecture in South-East Queensland. Conversely it also provides a means of locating key elements of South-East Queensland’s domestic architecture in relation to developments in theory and discourse that have occurred internationally.

This project links fields of architectural history, theory and technology. It brings together two themes in history and design in relation to the architecture of South East Queensland: the search for an appropriate form of architecture for South-East Queensland, and an investigation of the relationship between the formal and experiential aspects of the edge of Queensland houses. Finally, the mapping of the edges of three case studies located in one place, provides a means for uncovering something about the way practice, working through principles and ideas, contributes to an architectural continuum.