

Associate Professor Daniel K. Brown

Teaching Portfolio

Faculty of Architecture and Design
Victoria University of Wellington

Category – Sustained Excellence

“No great thing is created suddenly, any more than a bunch of grapes or a fig.
If you tell me that you desire a fig, I answer that there must be time.
Let it first blossom, then bear fruit, then ripen.”

Epictetus, *Discourses*, c. 1st-2nd centuries



Re-Design of the Wellington Skyline by Students of Daniel K. Brown

1 – EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

As a full-time academic as well as a practicing architect, I am keenly aware of the necessity to establish theoretical and intellectual underpinnings to support the technical foundations of the architectural profession. It is in the academic arena that such theoretical underpinnings must be most rigorously promulgated, and the true test of theoretical architectural ideas occurs when these ideas are able to be realised in built form. My charge as an academic is to encourage students to:

- investigate, to experiment and to develop a personal position in response to theoretical design enquiries;
- engage the requirements of habitation without diminishing the strength of conceptual and theoretical intentions;
- establish meaningful language and effective dialogues between architectural elements;
- and most importantly, challenge theoretical issues that carry relevance beyond the individual to the collective, beyond the collective to the universal.

Architecture is fundamentally a three-dimensional discipline, and in teaching students to conceptualise three-dimensional design using two-dimensional tools of expression, I conscientiously analyse how each particular student envisions form and space. I also encourage students to challenge Architecture to move beyond traditional three-dimensional form, deriving the essence of architectural design from intimate sensitivity to the human condition, issues of identity, and experiences distinctive to a cultural context.

I believe that teaching should simultaneously encourage the production of highly innovative professional calibre work from students, promote students' future careers through community exposure, and promote the university and its scholarly work within the wider community. In this regard, I critically challenge students to identify themselves as representatives of "the new generation of designers" through design research.

Most importantly, I use research to introduce students to diverse means by which the boundaries of architectural design can be actively challenged to lead toward innovative design response. I teach them to actively reflect upon periods when social change was most pronounced and to consider how the arts have historically been responsive to such change. Dramatic technological advancements or shifting political and economic climates have always been paralleled by innovative responses in painting, sculpture, dance, film, and literature. Yet Architecture often lags far behind, being very late to interpret major social transformations to which other art forms rapidly respond. I encourage students to understand the importance of addressing contemporary social conditions as a means of discovering new avenues of expression, as well as a means of appropriately addressing the needs of contemporary society. And when students become cognisant that other art forms often find new means of expression in response to social change far earlier than Architecture, they learn to draw from these art forms in establishing new and meaningful directions for architectural design expression.

Equally important within my educational philosophy is a fundamental commitment to Asia-Pacific regional issues. My architectural research for the past ten years has involved in-depth analysis of symbolism and narrative in traditional and contemporary architecture across Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent. I believe that the future lies not in western design overwhelming the east, but rather in the west fully understanding, engaging and incorporating eastern sensitivities into its own design. New Zealand is poised on a critical threshold between east and west, perfectly positioned to lead such a movement and establish its young designers at the forefront of a new generation of design drawn from sensitive understanding of cultures beyond our own.

2 – The Context

Since 1998 when I first entered academia, my teaching and research outputs have led to advancement in seven years from Lecturer, to Senior Lecturer, to the highest step on the Reader / Associate Professor scale, as well as leadership positions including Deputy Head of School, Programme Director of Interior Architecture, and member of the Senior Executive Committee. While maintaining one of the highest number of teaching contact hours per term in the Faculty of Architecture and Design (16 hours contact teaching per week for both trimesters), I have made significant contributions to rebuilding the entire Interior Architecture curriculum as an integrated programme based on strong international models.

Educated at Yale University and Williams College (ranked the number one private liberal arts college in the United States), I have integrated the highest calibre international methods of teaching into my courses. In conjunction with internationally acclaimed architecture firms, my professional work has received 14 design awards, been exhibited internationally in London, Milan, Bologna, Mexico City, Monterrey, Tokyo, and New York and has appeared in eleven books, two journal monographs, and over 200 journal articles.

Since my arrival at Victoria University of Wellington, I have been the recipient of ten teaching awards, as well as consistently exceptional scores on the Teaching Performance Profile. In 1999, following my first year of teaching at VUW, I was awarded the Victoria University Vice-Chancellor's Award for Special Academic Achievement. In 2000 the Post-Graduate Students' Association (PGSA) awarded me for the 2000 Best Course and as 2000 Best Tutor in the Faculty of Science. In 2001 the PGSA presented me with the 2001 Best Lecturer Award and the graduating students jointly presented me with two further teaching awards: 2001 Best Course and 2001 Best Tutor in the Faculty of Architecture.

In 2002 I was away on Research and Study Leave, but upon my return in 2003 I was presented once again with the PGSA 2003 Award for Best Lecturer. In 2004 I was presented with the PGSA Award for Best Lecturer as well as the PGSA Award for Most Challenging and Stimulating Course. And in October 2004, Victoria University awarded me the University Award for Excellence in Teaching, resulting in a total of ten teaching excellence awards during seven years of teaching.

3 – Design for Learning

My teaching has had a unique impact on encouraging and producing professional calibre work from students, promoting students' future careers through community exposure, and promoting Victoria University academic work within the wider community of Wellington. I initiated ongoing projects in 1999 that critically challenged my students to identify themselves as representatives of "the new generation of New Zealand designers" through design research. I challenged my students to research existing landmark buildings and their interiors within New Zealand's capital city, with the objective of re-conceiving these buildings as international-calibre designs. These projects involved re-design of the entire Wellington city skyline, including the National Museum of Te Papa, the BNZ Building, Queens Wharf, and the Ferry Terminal, as well as the interiors of Wellington City Art Gallery, Wellington Public Library, Wellington City Council, and the Michael Fowler Convention Centre.

The results of these provocative student undertakings were reviewed extensively on Channel 7 local Wellington television news, appeared in a full-page colour article in the *Wellington Evening Post*, and were exhibited for four weeks in public displays in the Michael Fowler

Convention Centre, Wellington Public Library, Wellington City Council, and Wellington City Art Gallery. These projects specifically challenged students to consider New Zealand's current status in international design, while evidencing to the students the effect their own generation can have on transforming perceptions about contemporary design culture.



Full page Colour Article on Work from Daniel Brown's 4th Year Architecture Students
Published in *Wellington Evening Post*

I fully understand that each new generation of students may require a different “point of entry” relating to their own unique learning styles. I spend a great deal of time coming to know the students in order to successfully adapt my methods of teaching, and I evolve my assignments each year in response to each new generation of students' needs. Most importantly, I assign projects that expressly require my students to acknowledge their own generation as a unique and persuasive contributor to contemporary design culture. Throughout this portfolio, I will share some of the many notes sent to me by students in affirmation of the success of my objectives.

Dear Daniel, I see you passing by on the street now and then. You know what? Just seeing you like that inspires me to be a better designer and architect. Just to keep pushing a bit more, putting a bit more effort and trying to inspire people just like you! Thank you for that. Kind Regards, Dongsei Kim.

The landmark skyline projects mentioned previously are one clear example of my ability to adapt teaching methods and point of entry for a topic or subject based on insightful analysis of the learners' current levels of understanding and learning styles. In another example, I explicitly invited my students to conceive and design “future visions” by their new generation. These

projects were selected in February 2002 to appear as sets for the Channel 3 New Zealand young people's television series "The Tribe". The prospect of having their work appear on national television provided my students with compelling motivations for particularly high levels of achievement in a project tailored expressly for their generation.



Work from Daniel Brown's Final Year Interior Architecture Students used as Sets on Channel 3 Television series: *The Tribe*

I enable a student's work to appear on television, in public exhibitions and in publications expressly in order to encourage students to produce their highest calibre work ever. But equally important, I understand that public perception can become an integral participant in the assessment process. When assessment occurs outside by the general public, as well as inside the classroom by a lecturer, students are exposed to a variety of criteria upon which well-founded assessments are being made. They thus come to more readily understand the process of assessment, and the need for developing critical judgement and accountability in their work. They acquire critical bases for self-assessment, thereby enhancing their own self-confidence inestimably as well as their own ability to engage critique.

I am writing to you that I would like to say "Thank You" from my heart. Thank you, indeed. You said that I have improved a lot during the 12 weeks. The actual reason is because of your encouragement. You have given me a lot of confidence. As a student, an international student, I felt tired and lost sometimes, but thank you for your trust and patience during the course. So finally at the end I can feel that I have gained a lot from this course, from you. It is so great to be your student! Zudi Zhang.

I particularly conceive course requirements to encourage students to understand research as a fundamental component of learning and of the design process. I begin each course with a tour of the library to introduce my students specifically to the locations of manuals and texts which form the technical and theoretical foundation for their discipline. I also arrange an annual student expedition to the City Archives, to teach them how to research building conditions through original drawings and original documents. I take my students each year to speak directly to stone masons, cabinet makers, metal forgers, etc., demonstrating how research must engage human as well as library and archival resources. I consult the internet actively in front of students during lectures, to further demonstrate how contemporary research can be accomplished expeditiously and result in new unexpected directions for discovery.

Most importantly, I challenge my students to address individual or group differences that relate to culture, gender, ethnicity and experience through my selection of assignments explicitly challenging issues of identity. I have assigned my students to design a New Zealand embassy in Korea, a Korean embassy in Wellington, a Cultural Centre for a Marae, a Youth Detention Centre, a New Zealand Centre for Foreign Exchange, etc. Student work from these assignments

has received wide-spread publicity, and as such has been instrumental in highlighting issues of culture and identity as vital concerns for the University, the professions of Architecture and Design, and most importantly my students. During the past five years, such projects by my students have featured in *Landscape New Zealand*, *Art & Design Education*, *ProDesign* and *DINZ*.

Daniel, all is well at home, and I have started work at a local private firm. This mat that I am giving you as a gift – one of those prepared for my “paega” to mark the completion of my studies – I’d like you to accept as a token of appreciation, not only from myself, but my family as well. I haven’t been the most attentive student, and I thank you for never giving up on me! Thank you for your patience and for teaching me to accept and appreciate the richness of my cultural heritage. Love, Kafoa Tevita

4 – Learning from Teaching

The levels of effort, enthusiasm, initiative and passion from my students become visibly elevated exponentially, due to an expectation of potential public exhibition or publication. I work directly with the students such that my own enthusiasm becomes shared through these group endeavours. I personally oversee the fabrication of museum-quality exhibition stands for my students’ projects as another means of fostering motivation in the students and encouraging mutual respect for their products of discovery. The success of these projects is measured for the students not just by written evaluations and marks, but by the visible results and the public acclaim.

I incorporate a particularly wide range of learning activities in my courses, including inviting lectures from New Zealand’s most eminent artists (such as John Drawbridge, Tony Lane, and John S. Parker). I take my students on annual museum visits to appraise provocative works by New Zealand and international designers, in order to encourage my students to gain insight into their own culture in international terms. I show topical domestic and foreign films to students each trimester to encourage them to interpret and critique media related to but distinct from their own design discipline. I have taken my students on the Wellington police launch to view sites for architectural design assignments from unique perspectives; I have sent the school photographer on several helicopter trips to photograph sites aerially for the students; and I have used 360° photography of students’ favourite interiors to enable them to re-conceive such spaces in a full range of visual perception. And in November 2003, I took thirty students from Architecture, Interior Architecture, and Industrial Design to India for four weeks, introducing them to a wide range of interdisciplinary design issues beyond New Zealand shores.

An example of my particularly unique methods of encouraging students to reflect on their own commitment to learning has been my assurance that – *regardless of outcome* – their design work will be exhibited publicly. In this way, even potentially reluctant or unmotivated students demonstrate far greater effort than they might otherwise.

Overall, I have mounted more than 50 public exhibitions of work by my students, as well as curated VUW-based exhibitions of student work from the Architecture Centre 20 Under 40 Competition, Unitec (Auckland), Nelson Polytechnic, and the former Wellington Polytechnic. I mounted a public exhibition of my students’ work to celebrate Governor General Sir Michael Hardie Boys’ last formal visit to the VUW School of Architecture. I coordinated the VUW End of Year Exhibition showcasing the best student work for the entire School of Design in 2001, and I later mounted a critical exhibition of the work of my students as a showpiece for the *Interior Design Educators of Australasia* meeting.



Daniel Brown and his students showing their work to Governor General Sir Michael Hardie Boys

I have provided work from my students to the NZ Ministry of Education for use in a television commercial promoting tertiary education, filmed on site in the Schools of Architecture and Design. And I have mounted public exhibitions of my students' work to commemorate the Inauguration of the new School of Design in 1999, the VUW Centennial Celebrations in 1999 (Michael Fowler Center and the Faculty of Science), Open Day at Vic and Study Day at Vic from 1999-2004, and exhibitions of student work for the Swiss and German Embassies in 2000.

One of the most distinctive ways that I engage with learners and promote critical thinking is in my selection of projects that extend well beyond the university setting, challenging students to address particularly sensitive and topical issues through design. One such project invited students to design a new Memorial for Officers Slain in the Line of Duty for the Royal New Zealand Police College, which resulted in a public exhibition of their designs entitled "And in the Evening There Shall Be Light". In another example, I organized a competition for my students to design "Architectural Follies", the best of which were later constructed full scale for permanent public viewing near the Rankine Brown Quadrangle for the Centennial Highlights Celebrations.

The explicit motivation for my teaching has been to foster confident, competent learners, with respect to the course content and structure and in terms of feedback to learners (both inside and outside the classroom). I provide oral feedback (in public reviews with guest assessors) followed by extensive written feedback to every student at the end of every project. Such assessments always begin and end with a very positive comment, and always phrase "critique" in terms of how a project could move forward to the next level. Feedback is never phrased in negative terms.

Each of my courses ends with a final review after which students are encouraged (for an additional 10% of the final mark) to amend the completed project and bring it to its highest possible resolution in response to the critique. In this way, feedback is an active part of project development and students develop greater confidence by such invitations to bring their work to its highest possible level.

5 – Evaluating Learning and Teaching

The productive evaluations of learning and of teaching are two very different yet intimately related critical processes. I believe that careful assessment of students' needs *prior to the beginning* of a course is just as critical for achieving subject objectives as is assessment following individual assignments. I review students' work from the previous year to assess their

individual needs and strengths before a new course begins. I also begin with a short 1-2 week project each year specifically designed to assess students' capabilities and interests. Assignments and teaching methods are then carefully modified in response to these assessments.

I assess course outcomes and learning in ways that are tailored explicitly to the particular course and group of students. I re-evaluate course outcomes and learning objectives at the end of every project as well as the end of the year. I hold regular discussions with students following each project, and I make careful notes on my course outlines for adjustments to be made the following year. I also fully understand that a project may need to have flexibility to meet differing needs of strong students vs. students who may be struggling, and I often extend my office hours to several mornings a week to enable proactive discussions of students' individual needs.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for every single thing you have done for me. I would have been long gone long ago if it hadn't been for you. I don't know many teachers – or friends or people in general – who would have, well for example, spent 12 hours plus on the computer with me, step by step. You are a one of a kind sort of guy, I guess. Thanks for helping me out. Love, Liz Vezina

As Programme Director Interior Architecture, I hired BRC Marketing and Social Research in Wellington to assess the Interior Architecture programme curriculum externally and to objectively benchmark student response to the curriculum and the meeting of learning objectives. I plan to continue this survey on an annual basis to assess new initiatives and ensure that the programme improves each year and achieves the highest levels of success possible.

My teaching evaluations have been consistently at the very top of the scale every year for all categories, indicating extremely high levels of endorsement and satisfaction from my students. The Victoria University Vice-Chancellor's *Award for Special Academic Achievement* was awarded to me in direct response to appraisals from my colleagues, and my other teaching excellence awards derived directly from student ballots – providing clear indication of my students' astounding support for my teaching, as well as for their own achievements in my courses.

Teaching Performance Profiles

Based on End-of-Term Student Questionnaires Prepared by VUW Teaching Development Centre

		Rating: 1=Strongly Agree 2=Agree 3=Neutral 4=Disagree 5=Strongly Disagree							
Year	Course	Activity	Number of Respondents	Teacher's Knowledge of Material	Clarity of Communication	Organisation of Teaching	Stimulation of Interest	Attitude to Students	Overall Effectiveness
2004	ITDN311	Coordinator	30	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.2
	DESN384	Coordinator	18	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.1
2003	DESN391	Coordinator	27	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4
	ITDN311	Coordinator	16	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.1
	DESN384	Coordinator	19	1.0	1.3	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.1
2002	DESN383	Coordinator	13	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
	DESN234	Coordinator	27	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1
2001	ITDN385	Coordinator	11	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.0	1.0
	ITDN313	Coordinator	10	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.7	1.1	1.1
2000	ARCH381	Coordinator	12	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
	ARCH311	Coordinator	45	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.0
1999	ARCH412	Coordinator	16	1.1	1.5	1.1	1.6	1.5	1.4
	ARCH311	Coordinator	46	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.2
	ARCH381	Coordinator	14	-	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.6
1998	ARCH311	Coordinator	35	1.1	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.5
	ARCH412	Tutor	10	-	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1
	ARCH363	Tutor	25	-	1.1	1.1	1.8	1.7	1.2

End-of-Course Evaluations

Based on End-of-Term Student Questionnaires Prepared by VUW Teaching Development Centre

Year	Course	Activity	Number of Respondents	Clarity of Communication	Organization of Course	Stimulation of Interest	Value of Material Presented	Standard of Teaching
2004	ITDN311	Coordinator	30	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.2
	DESN384	Coordinator	18	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1
2003	DESN391	Coordinator	27	1.4	1.1	1.5	1.3	1.5
	ITDN311	Coordinator	16	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.2
	DESN384	Coordinator	19	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.2
2002	DESN383	Coordinator	13	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.0
	DESN234	Coordinator	27	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1
2001	ITDN385	Coordinator	11	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.0	1.1
	ITDN313	Coordinator	10	1.7	1.0	1.7	1.1	1.1
1999	ARCH311	Coordinator	42	1.6	1.4	1.5	1.7	1.5
1998	ARCH311	Coordinator	47	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.9

In addition to UTDC evaluations every year, I meet directly with students following each project to discuss how well the assignments have captured their interests and challenged them to successfully move forward. I also assess the work of my students through group discussions with fellow academics to obtain objective appraisals of the merits and success of a project and the methods of teaching.

Most importantly, I believe that joy and passion are critical (for both learners and teachers) to the achievement of learning objectives. I continually modify my course content and teaching approaches in direct response to my desire for students to love what they are learning. I talk directly to my students about their passions, and I then fill my PowerPoint lectures with examples drawn directly from the lifestyles of my students – using movie clips from recent-release films, new sound tracks, photos of interior architecture where young people socialize, etc. Each year I re-assess the effectiveness of these lecture images and sound/movie tracks, updating them regularly to keep them fresh, lively and intimately relevant to the course objectives and the students' lives.

6 – Professional Development and Leadership

In my capacity as Programme Director Interior Architecture, I have been restructuring the Interior Architecture curriculum with a strategic view to it becoming the first accredited Interior Architecture programme in New Zealand. Kaiserslautern University was recently ranked the 2004 best Interior Architecture programme in Germany, and I arranged to visit the university, interview the programme directors and assimilate their finest teaching methods.

I have also interviewed a wide range of design professionals throughout New Zealand, and I am revising the BDes (Interior Architecture) curriculum to acknowledge the latest developments in the profession. As a result of these investigations, I am exploring possibilities for transforming traditional studio classroom environments into state-of-the-art “design research laboratories”, and I have re-scheduled teaching timetables to enable cross-disciplinary teaching and to strategically encourage students from multiple years to participate in joint studio projects.

From 1998-2000, I was the recipient of the US Congressional Fulbright Fellowship in Architectural Research and spent three summer terms in Thailand engaging full-time design research. During this period, I maintained a strong association with the three principal design universities in Bangkok (Silpakorn University, Rangsit University, and King Mongkut Institute of Technology), participating in their student design reviews, meeting with academics, and presenting guest lectures at each institution.

I have presented over 40 guest lectures for fellow academics at VUW in a wide range of courses including Architecture, Interior Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Industrial Design, Digital Animation, and Design Theory. I have presented guest lectures to the New Zealand Institute of Architects, and in my role as a design educator I was invited to appear in a 2004 International Film Festival documentary critiquing New Zealand photographer Marti Friedlander.

As Programme Director Interior Architecture, I have initiated a teaching/mentoring programme for Interior Architecture academic staff to help enhance their teaching in ways that provide students with consistently high international calibre levels of education. New colleagues in particular are encouraged to learn new methods and initiatives by co-teaching with me in my courses during their first or second year. I have acted as Principal Supervisor for the thesis work of seventeen Research, Honours, and Postgraduate students. As chairman of the School of Design's Product-Based Research Fund Review Panel, I also mentored fifteen staff members in applications for the Tertiary Education Commission's PBRF submissions last year.

I initiated the Curriculum Development Group in 2001, where together with Jeni Mihova I engineered the first phase of re-structuring the curriculum for the Interior Architecture program. I conceived and re-wrote the studio course outlines (eight in total) for all four years, based on a new academic framework for teaching design, which I initiated. As evidence of my influence on colleagues in their thinking and teaching, the new structure I initiated for Interior Architecture was also adopted as the framework for new curricula in Industrial Design and Landscape Architecture the same year.

Having recently established the framework for the Interior Architecture programme, Daniel was able to provide me with valuable advice on structuring the equivalent Industrial Design courses [in November 2000]. I found the structure and build-up of courses within his framework to have immediate relevance to IDDN, to the point that I was able to apply it directly to the new IDDN programme. At a time when we were under some pressure to set up the new programme in preparation for the approaching academic year, it came as a welcome relief to know that we could concentrate on the content with full confidence that we could rely on a well considered and sound framework. Professor Simon Fraser, Programme Director Industrial Design

I authored a paper in 2000 for the Victoria University Teaching Working Group which conceived and proposed new teaching strategies to have a positive impact on revenue for the university. I was a key contributor of many of the proposals and was the primary author of the final report to the university. The report proposed strategies for *New Academic Initiatives to Increase Funding* such as High-Profile "Banner Courses", "Extended Qualifications", Joint BSc / MBA Initiatives, Joint BSc / BA Initiatives, "Career Discovery", International Academic Experience, Industry and Research-Based Teaching, and Summer Programmes. The report also proposed strategies for *New Academic Initiatives to Decrease Costs* such as "Integrated Faculties" Initiatives, Facilities and Staffing Cost Reduction Initiatives, and a section on Staffing and Funding for these new initiatives.

I was Creative Concept Designer for an annual CD-Rom publication (supported by a grant from Prop Foundation, Inc. & private contributions) which promotes talented young designers and enables their work to receive recognition internationally:

- ARTPIX. 1, 1999 "Enter the Forest / Enter Schematic Forest"
- ARTPIX. 2, 2000 "Ultralounge + Color Fields"
- ARTPIX. 3, 2001 "Aoteoroa / New Zealand"
- ARTPIX. 4, 2002 "Billy Sullivan Photographs"



My teaching methods were the subject of a feature article in 2003 in the international journal *Interior Design + Construction* (“Narrative Design: Design Principles for Telling Stories”, 2003:08, pp89-92). Published articles on my teaching have also appeared in *The Wellington Evening Post* (20 Oct 1999, p23), the *New Zealand Institute of Architects Journal*, *Magneta* (Personal Profile, 15 June 1998, Vol IV, p18), *New Zealand Institute of Architects Cross Section*, *VIC News* ((5 Oct 98, Vol 7 No 12 p24), *Research at Vic* (1999, pp68-69, and *New Zealand Education Review* (Vol. 8 No. 34, Sept. 3-9, 2003, p5).

7 – Sustained Excellence

Because of the breadth of my design and teaching experience, I have been asked to create or extensively re-build eleven new courses over the past seven years, and I have also made significant new contributions to three existing courses. These courses include 3rd-5th year Architectural Design, 3rd-4th year Interior Architecture, Colour & Lighting Design, Narrative Design, Portfolio Design, Architectural Research, Architecture Management Principles and Practice, and Overseas Field Study. Each of these courses has its own unique subject objectives and requires its own unique methods of teaching and assessment. Teaching fourteen very different courses well requires great flexibility, as well as highly effective insight into necessary links between subject objectives and uniquely different teaching methods. The ten teaching awards and consistently high evaluation ratings from my students in these fourteen courses are testament to the fact that I make such choices wisely and effectively.

I have also had extensive and extremely positive influence on my fellow colleagues. As Deputy Head of School in charge of overall curriculum, as well as Programme Director for Interior Architecture, I have been highly instrumental in assisting colleagues to create strong new courses as well as significantly refine those previously being taught. I have mentored several staff members new to academia, including Sam Kebell, Lee Gibson, Bernd Benninghoff, Warwick McLeod, and Erika Kruger. My course curricula and projects have been used as models by Professor Simon Fraser, Associate Professor John Daish, Senior Lecturers Tim Miller, Lee Gibson and Robin Simpson, and Lecturers Sam Kebell, Bernd Benninghoff, Jeni Mihova and James Shaw. I have also participated in final reviews for dozens of colleagues.

Throughout my teaching career I have received innumerable verbal and written appreciations from students in regard to how I have facilitated their learning and enriched their university experience. I am always deeply touched by such sentiments and feel they are an important source of assessment as well as affirmation.

8 – Conclusion: In Support of Innocence

I would like to conclude my portfolio by speaking briefly on the importance of maintaining innocence, even while opening our students’ eyes to greater levels of awareness.

I tell my students we must never base ideas on presumption, but rather we must challenge ourselves to uncover always an essential “Rationale” while encouraging our “Imagination” to translate that rationale in extraordinary and unexpected ways. My favourite quote (by the architect and design educator Tod Williams) refers to this seeming ambiguity as the need for all projects (and all creative ideas) to hold both the “Day” and the “Dream”:

“Except in the mind, or perhaps in science, it is not possible to so compress
the essence of a Chair to the density of the Diamond,
nor to expand so fully on the Chair that there is no possibility of the Room.

All projects hold some of the Day and the Dream.
Those which vibrate with the Life of both make us tremble.
We know an intense pursuit of Reality to be the catalyst for the creative process.
What shape Reality?"

Tod Williams & Ricardo Scofidio, *Window Room Furniture* 1981

As a teacher, I can only accomplish this challenge by embracing rather than erasing the innocence of my students. Their innocence is their greatest gift, for it provides them with the essential ability to Dream. And it reminds me utterly that as I teach my students, so too I learn from them in return. I would like now to share one final quote from a former student – a quote I particularly cherish because it serves to always remind me that maintaining my own innocence is as essential to my students as theirs is for me:

Daniel, thank you for your passion, your knowledge and your warmth. I can think of no better guide. When you say our innocence touches you, remember that we are fed by yours which seems to have survived unscathed. You have given us confidence which will endure. Cheers mate. Tim Gittos, Year 3 Architecture.

Re: Letter of Reference for Daniel K. Brown

To whom it may concern,

Daniel is without question one of the most inspirational teachers I have been taught by or worked with. His reputation for highly organised, enthusiastic and informative programmes precedes him. Students from all disciplines within the school line up to take courses that he offers. Daniel Brown has been very influential through several years of my attendance at the Victoria University School of Design, from undergraduate to postgraduate to research assistant and ultimately teacher.

I was fortunate to have Daniel for core papers in my final year of undergraduate study. The class was immediately introduced to a higher level of professional teaching, evidenced through the structure of the programme and Daniel's encouraging attitude toward all students. His committed attitude allowed us to believe that we could produce a higher standard than previously achieved. He remained flexible throughout, and encouraged students to pursue their own direction and interests. Daniel's door was always open to students needing advice about course work, life after study, or life in general.

As a recent graduate, Daniel encouraged me to work with him as research assistant on his astounding design research project "The Decameron", a large scale narrative project revolving around the text by Boccaccio. During this time we worked closely on spatial and architectural design. He enthusiastically used current technology employed by the School such as the computer programme "Solidworks", which not only complemented his work process, but ensured he was up to date and able to help and inform students in these technologies.

During this time we also entered "The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior" competition, to design a tomb of remembrance to New Zealand's service men and women. Daniel's drive to perfect the design was inspirational. I was able to witness his enthusiasm towards a project, as well as problem-solving techniques, where nothing in the design process was a problem, but rather a challenge that provided a key to the design's solution. He employed other students with interests in specific areas such as CAD modelling to come onboard during the process and presentation of the entry, trusting their skills and expertise. He did this knowing that an undergraduate's portfolio would benefit from including competition work. Our entry was one of the national finalists.

Daniel also encouraged me into the postgraduate programme, and was involved in early discussion and debate on the topic of my thesis, helping to give it clarity, direction, focus and depth. Daniel was as passionate as I was about the topic I had chosen, and would send pages of quotes by email, or guide me to passages from books he had sourced on the topic. He was always encouraging, but never intrusive.

When I started tutoring at the School of Design, Daniel would mentor me on teaching principles, discuss problems I sometimes had with students and offer advice on ways to overcome them. He would also willingly offer his resources for me to use, as well as discuss ideas about teaching methods, which I also experienced first hand as a tutor in his courses.

Most important of all Daniel is proud of the work his students produce, and actively seeks to learn from his students. His high regard for the potential of all students is reflected in the outstanding quality of work they produce, and the high regard in which they hold him. I certainly believe that Daniel has been an outstanding and positive key influence on my academic training and the development of my potential in the field of design. I believe moreover he has had an outstanding influence on every student he has touched.

Yours Sincerely,

Erika Kruger

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

Te Whare Wānanga o te Ūpoko o te Ika a Māui



Daniel Brown: nomination for teaching award

This letter is written in support of the nomination for a national teaching award to Associate Professor Daniel K. Brown.

Its purpose is to provide evidence of the influence that Daniel's work has had on my own thinking and teaching. I will outline two examples, one formal (Daniel led a team research proposal to FoRST where I was one team member) and one informal (lengthy discussions regarding the value of "menus" in design studio curricula).

Under Daniel's leadership, the FoRST application (for which we were short-listed) was to become fundamentally multidisciplinary. Daniel put together a team from across the university and while making sure the discipline of Design (as an enabler) was a central focus, he managed the team in a way whereby everyone understood their value as part of the bigger picture. Daniel's belief in the importance of working across discipline-specific boundaries reflects strongly in my own research and teaching, where students working in a cross-disciplinary way helps shape each individual's understanding of the work others do, where their own work may fit with it and, importantly, how their discipline differs. Working on this proposal with Daniel demonstrated the fallacy that cross-disciplinary means *everything to everybody* and instead showed that what is really important is bringing together disciplines in a mutually beneficial *fit*.

During lengthy discussions regarding the design studio curriculum Daniel impressed upon me the value of an approach where complex design briefs can be broken down into smaller more manageable units. The key to this approach is to empower students to make decisions and to show them how attention to a central design issue and sensitive revision can enable a fully formed design outcome to grow in stages. These ideas can be clearly seen in each of the four courses I now teach in a regular year.

It is widely understood in the Faculty of Architecture and Design that Daniel's Teaching Performance Profile is absolutely first rate. Initially this is what led me to seek out his advice. I have always found his advice inspiring and would not hesitate to say that my own high TPP reflects real outcomes from our discussions and that I will no doubt call on him in the future.

Russell Lowe
Senior Lecturer in Digital Design

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

Te Whare Wānanga o te Ūpoko o te Ika a Māui



Re: National Teaching Award Nomination Associate Professor Daniel K. Brown

Daniel Brown has been an important teaching mentor for me since I began to lecture at the Victoria University School of Design in February 2001. Since his appointment as Deputy Head of School and Program Director for the Interior Architecture program, his influence over the courses I teach has been even more pointed and more important for my growth as an educator.

Daniel's mentoring has taken several forms. When I first arrived on the staff of the school, Daniel took the time to explain simple teaching techniques to me where others had not. For example, he showed me specific functions of the image editing software Adobe Photoshop that enabled me to study design alternatives in front of a large group of students. He went well beyond his duty to carefully explain the school's facilities and how they could contribute to my teaching.

In studio Daniel fully engages student work, not only in mind, but also as an animated human being and students respond extremely well to this. His applause and critique of student work has also been exemplary. He begins all student discussions by clearly demonstrating his understanding of student intentions, and then using accessible but evocative language, he begins to explain strengths and weaknesses in the work by comparing the student work to alternatives. This is a very clear technique that I have adopted as much as possible in my own courses, and it has significantly improved my studio teaching.

Daniel's experience as a student of John Hejduk at the Cooper Union in New York, arguably one of the twentieth century's great design educators, has also been invaluable to me. Daniel is always forthcoming with insights that stem from Hejduk's thinking. Most importantly for me, it is Daniel's clear understanding of how Hejduk removed student presumptions from studio projects that enabled them to focus on very particular design skills, without inhibition.

Since his appointment as Program Director, Daniel has set clear goals for the program and quickly gone about coaching a number of the younger staff, including myself, towards more effective teaching in the context of a new curriculum. This process has taken the form of weekly meeting during which we discuss our experiences in current courses and, with Daniel, we develop new criteria and refine goals of particular courses in relation to the curriculum. He often shares new teaching techniques in these meetings too, and introduces us to techniques for group teaching in studio that might effectively replace the one-to-one teaching that currently predominates in studio.

Daniel has also shown that he is as responsible about his listening as he is about his coaching. He is patient, diligent and thoughtful. He has been, and remains an inspiration to my teaching.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Kebbell, Lecturer

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

Te Whare Wānanga o te Ūpoko o te Ika a Māui



Re: Letter of Support for Daniel K. Brown

As colleagues of Assoc. Prof. Daniel Brown, it is with great pleasure that we write this joint letter in support of his nomination for a national teaching award. Daniel Brown has had an outstanding career as a designer, where he distinguished himself as an extremely competent and gifted professional. Before coming to academia, he was internationally respected, being associated with some of the world's most innovative architectural and design firms. Daniel's career in university teaching is no less remarkable. Where we have taught together, we have observed with admiration Daniel's outstanding qualities and gifts in communicating complex and professionally specific material to a diverse range of students. His teaching approach is based not only on highly specific knowledge of the subject matter, but offers his students an excellent ground for creativity and interpretation. In Daniel's teaching process complex issues are made transparent. We have witnessed on numerous occasions passive students transformed into enthusiastic and dedicated performers. In this respect Daniel's personal and social gifts are tremendously beneficial within the context of teaching. His way of engaging with the students individually and as a group is a reflection of his deep respect for every individual. He recognises and draws out each one's talent and potential as a designer.

Daniel's courses continue to evolve from year to year, updated and adapted to the particular needs of each group of students. Daniel uses sensory based aspects, such as light and shadows, scale, texture, movement, and narrative, challenging the architectural contexts by engaging human perceptions of time, and poetic qualities of space. The class exhibitions for each of the courses he teaches set the standard for excellence and are events of great value for all, students and teachers alike.

Daniel is very generous in sharing course material he has developed. In teaching one of his courses independently, I (Jeni Mihova) was impressed by the rigour of his preparation. I inherited a body of richly, methodically developed material, to which the students responded extremely well. Moreover this is not an exceptional occasion, as his attitude to all his fellow colleagues is one of giving and sharing information and beneficial knowledge. In this way Daniel's contribution is felt throughout the wider academic community.

We have always appreciated Daniel's presence in the school. He is a professional of very high calibre. He obviously has vast knowledge and experience; but he also has the vision and dedication to bring this with him to teaching, with high standards, and rigorous critical acumen as well. He has a great ability to see and consider synthetically. Most importantly, one feels that for him these virtues are wholly grounded in a real experience of being a human being; and therefore he can see Design as not something contained within academy or industry but an expression of humanness. We therefore feel he is a colleague not just in being a teacher in the same institution but in being a designer and art-maker in the same world - one's conversations with him have that sense of wholeness, scope, and magnanimity. He also has such an understanding of what works in teaching and course design - and he can look at things from your perspective and understand the position you are in; so the advice is spot on.

In conclusion, we are pleased, to know Daniel K. Brown, the designer, the teacher and the colleague, three sides of his personality, for which we will be always indebted.

Sincerely,
Jeni Mihova, Lecturer in Visual Communications
Warwick McLeod, Senior Lecturer in Visual Communications

Re: National Teaching Excellence Award

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are writing this joint letter on behalf of Daniel K Brown, an academic at the Victoria University School of Design who greatly influenced our time and the calibre of our learning at Victoria University. Having graduated with Honours degrees in 2000, we were both personally tutored by Daniel for ARCH311 but came to know him and appreciate his input through our entire time as students at Victoria University. Daniel is a deeply passionate academic and teacher. His passion is such that he impacts greatly on all those who come into contact with him. Daniel's breadth of practical experience coupled with his expansive visual and literary knowledge ensured that his lessons were invaluable.

As students of Daniel's we witnessed his amazing attention to detail in the preparation of course material. The enthusiasm and encouragement that he offered to all students – no matter what their individual requirements or skill levels – was unparalleled. It was not simply during the contact time of teaching that Daniel had an amazing influence over his students, as the depth and level of detail that he went to during feedback and comments was simply outstanding in both detail and quality. He is a highly dedicated professional who knows how to motivate his students to strive for excellence. Both in the lecture theatre and in person, Daniel is a dynamic and powerful communicator who possesses the gift of being able to make complex subjects understandable. In spite of these formidable gifts, he is a humble and approachable person who loves to share his extensive knowledge with others, his students in particular.

Inherent in the passion that Daniel brings to the study of architecture and design is time and availability for students. Daniel has an 'open door policy' which means that regularly students visit him to ask advice or to discuss ideas. Daniel's open approach to teaching and his embracing attitudes have allowed many students to engage with architecture and to grapple with design and aesthetic ideas from which they would otherwise be alienated. Daniel K Brown is an inspirational teacher with a hands-on approach to learning. His thirst for knowledge and his desire to experience it both actually and academically have opened a doorway to the world of architecture and design for many students.

On a personal note for me (Lee Gibson), I would like to add that Daniel has also played a major role in helping me choose a career in Academia. Since my appointment to the Victoria University Faculty of Architecture and Design in early 2004, Daniel has been a mentor with both my teaching practices and my professional development. His guidance has been invaluable during a very intensive learning period, where I have had to '*learn how to teach*'. During the six years that I have known Daniel, I have been motivated to strive for and achieve exceptionally high standards while being a student, while working part-time as a tutor at the School of Design, and most recently while initiating a research and lecturing career in academia as Programme Director for First Year Design.

As Honours graduates who have known Daniel since 1998, we have no hesitation in recommending Daniel K Brown for an award of excellence in teaching. We are certain that there is a legacy of students from the Victoria University Schools of Architecture and Design who would not fail to agree with us.

Yours sincerely,

Senior Lecturer Lee Gibson, BArch (hons), Programme Director First Year
Vicki Leibowitz, BA (hons) BArch (hons)

H W Hay Whiteley Architecture

PO Box 90433 AMSC
Auckland 1030
20 July 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: DANIEL BROWN

It is a great pleasure we write this joint letter of reference for Daniel Brown, but at the same time, the prospect of doing justice to the influence of one person on your life can be daunting – especially when that influence is so very great.

As two students in the first class ever taught by Daniel, we first met him in our second year studying architecture at Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) in 1998. Over the six years that we have since known him, we have discovered in Daniel many unique and brilliant qualities that have influenced those of us who were lucky enough to be taught by him. Throughout our studies, Daniel saturated us in a generous and magical world of art, design and architecture drawn from his own travels and career throughout various continents and cultures. Daniel also made us realise that our education consisted of much more than sitting at a desk, or in a lecture. He showed us that education is about exploring and engaging with the world, allowing ourselves to experience the treasures that would ultimately help us understand and discover more about our own values and work.

In order to give you some idea of these qualities and the nature of his influence, we have briefly penned some precious memories and experiences which we hope will share with you a little of the world of Daniel Brown.

Daniel led the Year Three core design paper and we both still remember his concluding remarks as he vividly and movingly described the experience of walking through Eric Asplund's Woodland Cemetery in Stockholm. It was our first real experience of teaching by inspiration rather than simply information. Since that first lecture, Daniel has greatly influenced the direction of our careers as designers in three key ways, which continue to form the basis of our work as architects in private practice.

Firstly, by carefully and logically structuring his projects, Daniel showed us that design is a process which can be developed and honed, not just an act of pure creativity. This he based on his experiences at some of the world's finest architecture offices. Even today, when beginning a new project, we often plan how to proceed based on methods and principles that we learnt from Daniel.

Secondly, Daniel always steered us away from fashionable glossy architecture magazines towards a deeper understanding of architecture as an experience of moving through space. He constantly drew from examples outside the sphere of contemporary architecture, bringing to our attention precedents from history, art, film, literature: in fact anywhere a principle of architecture could be gleaned. One example of this was a Native American shelter consisting of an underground hollow, circular in plan with a central fire around which people gathered. Heat from the fire rose through a central chimney, drawing cool air down openings behind the inhabitants. As this cool air heated, it created a draft which swirled around the space, rustling blankets and objects and suggesting the presence of ancestral spirits. We remember Daniel challenging us to reinterpret this beautiful idea in a contemporary way. He had a keen nose for such instances, where the emotive qualities of architecture – not just its visual appearance – could suggest spaces which were poetic to experience and not just fashionable to look at.

Finally, Daniel instilled in all of us a strong sense of self-belief, constantly cajoling and encouraging us to take risks and pursue directions we believed in, even when the outcome was unknown. This process was often uncomfortable (probably for Daniel as well), but Daniel's extraordinary commitment to us as

students and to helping us develop and understand our own sense of identity as architects was a key ingredient in our decision last year to enter private practice and continue to develop our own work.

If I (Jason) look carefully enough at many of my current projects, I can detect the genesis of an idea from those early days of architecture school – late at night, or early in the morning – in Daniel's office where he would often generously carve out chunks of time from his busy schedule to meet and discuss my latest drawings and models. Daniel provided untiring support and advice at critical times while I was at architecture school, and he set a pattern of challenging me to think beyond the everyday. I expect the lessons he taught to remain relevant throughout my career.

One artist that really intrigued me (Penny) personally was the renowned American sculptor and installation artist Kristin Jones, whom Daniel knew personally. At school, Daniel showed me examples of her work, pointing out her daring and beautifully poetic ideas and how they had been resolved compellingly in built form. Upon completing my degree, I was lucky enough to be in Rome at a time when Kristin Jones was working on a multi-media installation along the Tiber River. Daniel arranged an introduction to Kristin and for a short period of time I lived and worked with her completely immersed in the project. It was an amazing, eye-opening experience to work at such a scale in a place so rich in history and culture.

During the winter break of my final thesis year, I (Penny) was presented with the opportunity of a week in Paris. Typically architecture students dedicate every waking moment to their final year project, and I felt the pressure to spend my break focusing on work ... but Paris was waiting. After listening to me explain my problem, Daniel asked me which I would remember in fifty years: another week at my desk, or the enlightenment that Paris has to offer? Without another word, he proceeded to write my entire Paris itinerary, listing all the architectural wonders and secret places that I had to visit. In fact, it turned out that many of the things I saw in that great city were also extremely relevant to my final year project. That final year thesis was the most challenging and rewarding project of my time at architecture school. Daniel provided support and guidance at critical times, helping me to unravel and shape my ideas. He taught me to trust my eye and to believe in the process and myself. It was a crucial lesson that I am still grateful for today. The amazing thing is that Daniel gave this support and energy as a friend and out of his own time, as he was not actually teaching the final year thesis paper. And I was not the only final year student who benefited from Daniel's patience, commitment and energy that year. I believe this is a real testament to Daniel's commitment to his students above all else.

We both hope that we have been able to convey some of Daniel's enthusiasm and passion for teaching. Daniel is very deserving of this award, and of wider recognition for the unique impact he has had on so many of his students, and VUW's School of Architecture and Design.

Kind regards,

Penny Hay BArch (hons) and Jason Whiteley BArch (hons)
Hay Whiteley Architecture