

## Art+Architecture

By Timothy Hill

'Black Opium' utilises the full flank of the Level 4 promenade on the State Library of Queensland's 'Knowledge Walk'. In this location the suite of openings, rooms, alcoves and accompanying suspended *infinity* symbol have a visibility from afar, as might be typical of an artwork at a 'public scale'. However the rooms, their furnishings and the tightly packed pieces that comprise the *infinity* symbol, when sought closely or occupied, have an 'intimate scale' associated with a public that dines on the footpath of the quiet sidestreets, rather than a public that spectates in the townsquare. This sense of how the genuinely urban can be facilitated by the 'miniature within the massive', is in line with an emerging awareness in Brisbane and is rehearsed elsewhere in the SLQ.

In this way the artwork and the architecture also build on the character of each other to jointly suggest that an august institution like a State Library might have a casual approachability that encourages the spending of time slowly and comfortably as part of an encounter with research. Both artwork and architecture also here utilise compositional techniques that support the collective character of the place; the reliance on materials that appeal to several senses, the tight grouping together of unlike characteristics (short with tall, bright with dark, colourful with mute, ornate with dull), and decorative schemes that encourage multiple associations.