



Case Study 23

James Forbes Academy, Stage One, Scotch College

Hawthorn, VIC

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Client:
Scotch College

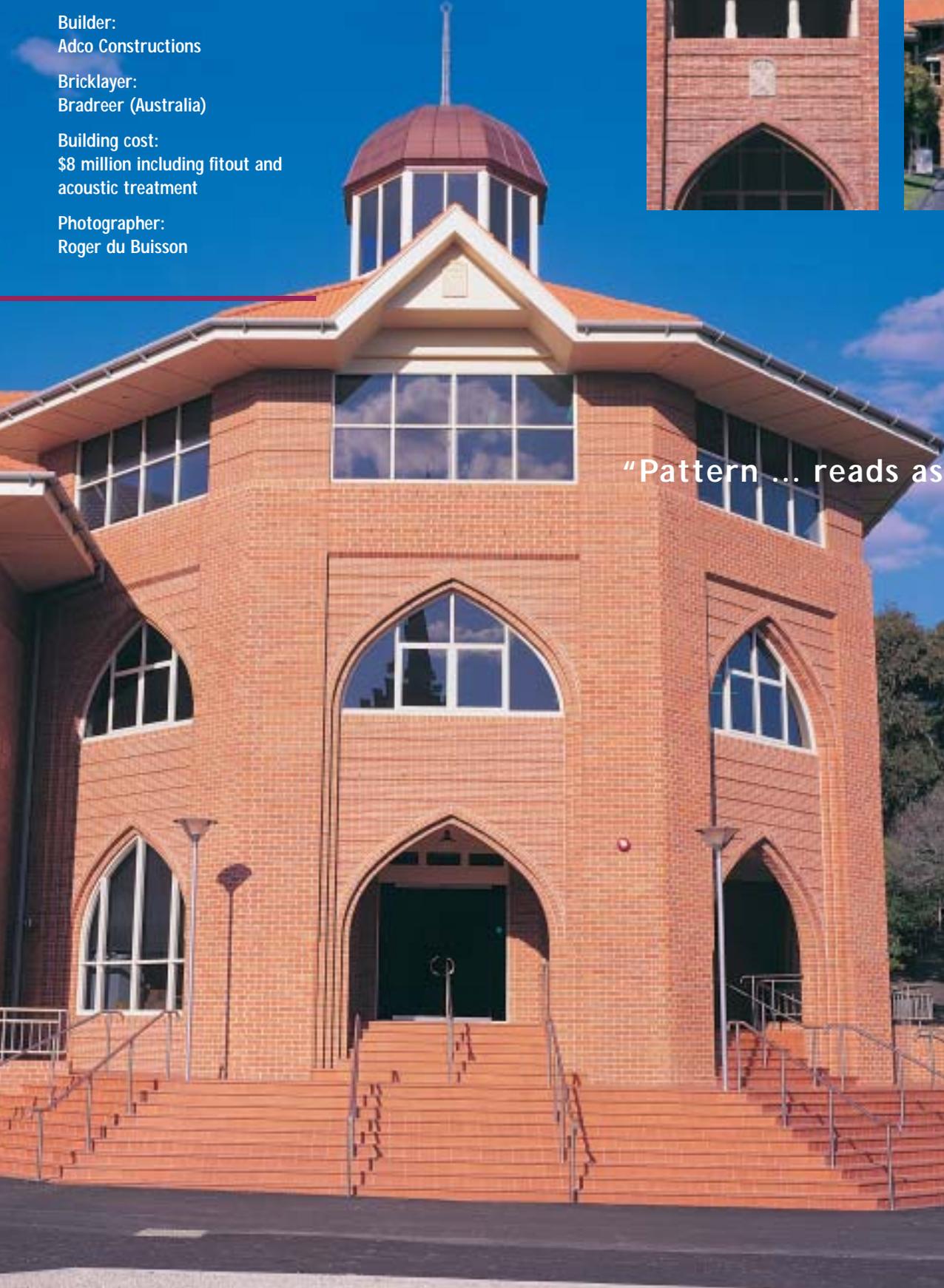
Architect:
Garry Martin Associates

Builder:
Adco Constructions

Bricklayer:
Bradreer (Australia)

Building cost:
\$8 million including fitout and
acoustic treatment

Photographer:
Roger du Buisson



“Pattern ... reads as texture which

This page, from left:

The southern octagonal tower overlooks the school oval and allows the building to “turn the corner” without overwhelming the adjacent Memorial Hall and Littlejohn Chapel.

Bands and panels of half-height bricks add texture and surface interest above the three-centred arches.

The northern octagonal tower addresses the street leading into the campus entrance.

Facing page, from top:

The spectacular foyer of the public entry leads the eye up its full height to the domed lantern.

The monumental character of the building is relieved and given a human scale by the use of arches and arcades and the reading of brickwork pattern as texture.

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[Architecture] is music in space, as it were a frozen music.

Friedrich von Schelling, *Philosophie der Kunst*.

The brief for Garry Martin's latest composition for Melbourne's Scotch College called for a new school for music, drama and communications. Stage One accommodates teaching, rehearsal and practice facilities for music. A second stage plan contemplates two 500-seat auditoriums, one for music, the other for drama.

"The first aspect of planning was to decide where the building would go," Martin explains. Its position and size could easily have dominated the campus.

The solution was to recess the building into a slope and to use an octagon tower to "turn the corner" at the northern street face, and another to reduce the impact to the south, overlooking the oval and adjacent iconic buildings.

Martin selected a single blend of specially-made clay bricks, preferring to articulate the brickwork rather than use multiple colours or applied mouldings or finishes.

"Because they face north and west, the facades are exposed to a lot of sunlight. So we articulated the brickwork into various spandrel panels, and used tapestry



is a relief for the eye. It also humanises the building scale"



brickwork and recessed coursing. Pattern then reads as texture which is a relief for the eye. It also humanises the building scale."

The Academy is notable for its arches and arcades. "The Scotch campus features families of arches," Martin observes. "We've used three-centered arches of various scales to deal with the monumental scale of the building. The monumental arches are always related to smaller arches which gives the human scale to the building."

Martin draws an analogy with the massive brick buildings of the Victorian era. "Victorian architects understood about relating the human scale to buildings of a monumental character. That's a skill most modern architects have lost somewhere along the line."

Ultimately the true measure of the success of such a building rests with its users. "There has been a lot of joy



expressed in the use of the building and that has enhanced the learning and teaching of music within the school as well," Martin concludes.

Perhaps the final word should go to TS Eliot from his *The Dry Salvages*:

... music heard so deeply
That it is not heard at all, but you are the music
While the music lasts.