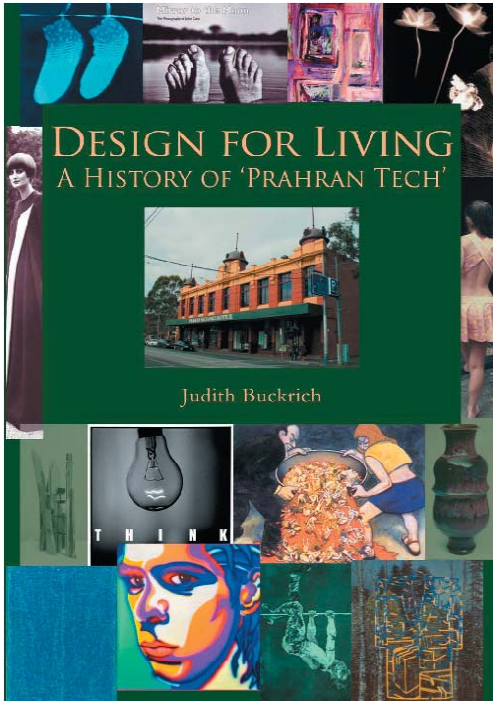


DESIGN FOR LIVING A HISTORY OF 'PRAHRAN TECH'

Judith Buckrich



Prahran Tech began in 1915 as a combined secondary and tertiary school set up, and largely paid for, by the Prahran Mechanics' Institute and Prahran Council. By the 1960s it had grown, from undistinguished but always respectable beginnings, to become Australia's most innovative art school.

Its business school had one of the state's first computer sections and it ran many innovative programs in its general studies section. Prahran Tech had Australia's first planned parenthood clinic and on-campus crèche.

Despite constant financial difficulties, threats and changes forced upon by the education establishment, it remained a great art school till its demise in 1991. Its secondary section heroically catered for the changing times, though it suffered much from underfunding.

At its demise Associate Professor Noel Hutchison summarised its fate: 'A very good but unpretentious art and design school will have been destroyed by political insensitivity and educational myopia.' (*Prahran Fine Art Graduate Show Catalogue 1991*)

Using archival material and interviews with many of the school's luminaries, Dr Judith Buckrich has brought the Tech and its times back to life.

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