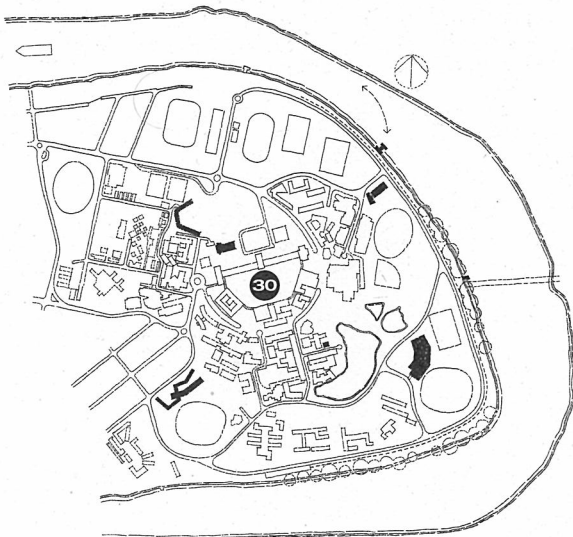


A SYMBOLIC PLACE

When artists were invited to participate in the Turrbal-Jagera project, they were also generally provided with a copy of the official Campus Map. This simple A3 document was intended to assist them in becoming familiar with the layout of the campus and, hopefully, better placed to propose a work for the exhibition. Rebecca Ross decided to make this map the subject of her work. What Ross noticed was that the trees in The Great Court — the physical centre of the University and its symbolic heart — were not as they were represented on the Campus Map. So what, you may well ask? That Ross should then paint in the absent trees on the ground precisely where and as they appeared on the map — 1:1 and in abstract two dimensional form — might be considered even more perplexing. But the fact is that Ross was not concerned here to embarrass the cartographer responsible for this otherwise harmless misrepresentation. Rather, her intervention was speculative in the best sense, and as symbolic as the highly-charged space in which it was located. By painting in the non-existent trees of the Great Court (Ross also insisted that the Campus Map be made available to visitors to the exhibition), the artist seemed to be asking us to consider and to question all official forms of representation. In such an august place of learning, it was a question that came with a somewhat abrasive edge.



The University of Queensland St Lucia Campus Map

