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Founded in 1984 at a meeting in Adelaide, South Australia, the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand (SAHANZ) was conceived from the start as a forum for the open discussion of the architectural history and historiography of the region, and as a setting from which to reflect on the status of the architecture, landscape, and cities of Australia and New Zealand in the wider world. While SAHANZ has grown in size and presence, and despite changes taking place in the discipline both locally and internationally, these principles remained constant. In 2008, SAHANZ holds its 25th annual meeting in the regional city of Geelong, Victoria, Australia, marking a milestone both in the history of the Society and in the organised development of the region’s historiography.

To take stock of this history, the 25th SAHANZ conference explores the web of the connections between architectural history and architectural practice. The conference’s plenary speakers have considered the relationship between critique and intervention and the connections between analysis and creation that lie at the complex intersections of architecture and writing about architecture. They are each critiquing the practices of architectural history and theory, analysing the gaps, connections and contentions between them and the ongoing history of architectural practice.

These relationships are further framed in terms of exchanges; between old and new; between local and global; between history and technology; between the conceptual and the visual; between the centre and the periphery; and between memory and evidence. Authors of the session papers have responded to each of these themes to illustrate particular aspects of architectural history and the positioning of SAHANZ within this multitudinous field in the early part of the twenty-first century.