
Toorak/Sth Yarra Branch library



B7079 Library, Toorak

Location

340 Toorak Road,, SOUTH YARRA VIC 3141 - Property No B7079

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

State

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 6, 2006

The Toorak South Yarra Library, designed by Yuncken Freeman Architects and completed in 1973 is of architectural, aesthetic and technical importance at the State level.

The Toorak South Yarra Library is one of the most notable Australian examples of the conceptual ideas expounded in the international movement of modern architecture. Specifically, it is an excellent example of the formal minimalism developed by the internationally acclaimed architect Mies Van der Rohe in the United States in the post-war years. The hallmarks of his approach are expressed in the two opposing systems apparent in the Library - a traditional classicism, expressed in the formality and monumentalism of the simple 'black box' contrasted with the expressed lightness of new technologies, expressed by the largely transparent main volume suspended above the ground.

Aesthetically, the Library is a refined black box, floating above its immediate context. The clarity of the form is not diminished by any sort of complication, and setbacks on all sides lend the building a monumentality. Located next to a busy commercial strip, the Library is a minimalist monument, symbolising the apparent victory of

knowledge over commerce. Window frames, flashings, cappings and structural columns are all detailed together to form a balanced monochrome array of shadow lines and stepped sequential layers creating a homogenous skin. The skin encloses a voluminous free span internal space.

Technically the minimalist approach resulted in highly simplified detailing. The outside skin is light and transparent, and consists only of the steel column supports and large sheets of tinted glass, connected by the thinnest of frames.

Classified: 04/09/2000

Hermes Number 66842

Property Number

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>