
Bell/Bremer House



B5639 Bell Bremer House



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Location

90 Caroline Street,, SOUTH YARRA VIC 3141 - Property No B5639

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

State

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant? Described as a long linear 'garden pavilion', the Bell/Bremer house was designed by Guilford Bell. It was designed to his personal brief and was built in 1976 by Bell's own company as a project to be sold. The house and surrounding courtyard gardens sit harmoniously within the east/west rectangular site, and are hidden from the street behind a garage and garden wall. The building is single storey, constructed, unusually for Bell, from second hand face bricks (now painted white), and with a flat roof. Bell's extensive use of floor to ceiling glazing, particularly along the northern facade, and the south side of the living area facilitates the uninterrupted visual interaction of internal and external space and extends the limits of the house. The glazing, along with a shading pergola on the north side and the use of plants and deciduous trees, helps to regulate solar gain throughout the year.

The plan of the house follows the shape of the site and is simple, narrow and linear with enclosed private spaces at both ends and an open living/dining area in the middle. On the northern side a four metre wide garden

stretches the length of the house and there is a small courtyard garden at the front enclosed behind the garden wall. Natural materials are a feature of the house with cedar boarded walls and living room ceiling, and floors of square, pink toned quarry tiles. The house is in good condition with only minor changes to facilities. The garage was a later addition replacing what was presumably an open car port.

How is it significant? The Bell/Bremer House is of architectural significance at the State level.

Why is it significant? The Bell/Bremer house is unique in Bell's architectural career. It is the only house conceived and completed by Bell without the constraint of a commissioning client. Although modest in size, it encapsulates many of the signature themes and modernist design principles that he had evolved and refined over the many years of his architectural practice.

Architecturally the Bell/Bremer House is an extraordinary work. It incorporates a series of restrained but powerful minimal gestures to create an environment of streamlined simplicity. The house and grounds flow together in a manner which incorporates the whole site as an integral part of the architectural concept. Within the plan Bell uses a technique of compression and release to regulate the design of public and private space. The sophisticated control of light and shade and the subtle use of earth tones together with the contrast of solidity and transparency all add to the visual success of the house.

Situated in South Yarra where Bell spent thirty years living and working, the Bell/Bremer house is important as a clear expression of his personal design concepts on a small scale.

Classified: 27/09/2010

Hermes Number 112347

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/>