
Napier Waller Prometheus Mural - Foyer, Monash House



B6440 Prometheus Mural

Location

15-33 William Street,, MELBOURNE VIC 3000 - Property No B6440

Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

Level of significance

Regional

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 5, 2005

Waller's "Prometheus" is significant at the Regional level. Until his death in 1972, Waller was a highly-esteemed creator of large-scale decorative schemes (stained glass, mural and Mosaic) for major public and ecclesiastical buildings. However, the peak of his celebrity occurred during the thirties, forties and fifties. It was then that his Deco-inspired style of mythologising and streamlined figuration crystallised as a popular idiom for works of public art. With its sense of Utopian aspiration, "Prometheus" symbolises - appropriately enough for the State Electricity Commission - fire, earth, water and the release of energy. Waller's towering male figure fairly exudes raw, unassailable energy in a confident display that clearly augers well for the success and prosperity of the commissioning instrumentality.

"Prometheus" is amongst Waller's most schematic and stylised mosaics. It effectively commands the foyer area of Monash House and is very convincing in a formal sense, although by 1967, Waller's idiom might well appear to

be held over from another, earlier era of artistic experiment.

Waller believed that mosaics incorporated within an architectural setting reflect and are linked to the everyday life of the people who come into contact with the work. "Prometheus" typifies Waller's concept of uniting the individual viewer with a sense of this "Higher self" - a goal that is consistent with the artist's personal commitment to the ideals of Utopian Socialism.

Classified: 19/05/1993

Hermes Number 65882

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/>