

## VICTORIAN ARTS CENTRE



VICTORIAN ARTS CENTRE  
SOHE 2008



1 victorian arts centre st kilda  
road southbank play house



2019\_Theatres Building.jpg



2019\_Theatres Building 2.jpg



2019\_Stair to Sturt Street.jpg



2019\_Hamer Hall  
entrance.jpg



2019\_Theatres Buidling  
L7.jpg



2019\_Theatres Building  
L8.jpg



2019\_Playhouse foyer L5.jpg



2019\_Playhouse foyer L3.jpg



2019\_State Theatre foyer  
L5.jpg



2019\_Fairfax studio foyer.jpg



2019\_Hugh Williamson Room.jpg



2019\_Arts Centre cafe.jpg



2019\_Hamer Hall theatre.jpg



2019\_Hamer Hall Theatre 2.jpg



2019\_Hamer Hall foyer .jpg



2019\_Hamer Hall foyer.jpg



2019\_Hamer Hall lower level.jpg



2019\_Truscott Room.jpg



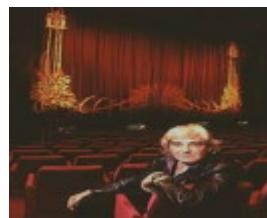
2019\_Truscott Room (2).jpg



Hamer Hall pre 2012.jpg



1984\_State Theatre Foyer.jpg



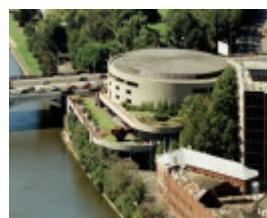
1984\_John Truscott.jpg



1983.jpg



1983 (2).jpg



1983\_3.jpg



1983\_4.jpg



1983\_5.jpg



1976.jpg



1984\_Painting the State Theatre curtain.jpg



c1980s\_in front of Theatres Building.jpg



2019\_View from L8\_Theatres Building.jpg



2019\_View between Theatres Buildng and NGV.jpg



2019\_Rear of Theatres Building.jpg



2019\_Walkway rear of Forward Surge.jpg



2019\_Covered path in front of Forward Surge.jpg



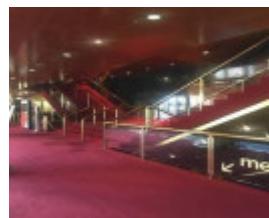
2019\_Looking towards Hamer Hall.jpg



2019\_Hamer Hall adj to Yarra River.jpg



2019\_State Theatre auditorium.jpg



2019\_Theatres Buidling main entrance.jpg



2019\_Theatres Building Paradise Gardens\_Sidney Nolan.jpg



2019\_Theatres  
Buidling\_Smorgon Family  
Plaza Foyer.jpg



2019\_Theatres  
Building\_Smorgon Family  
Plaza 2.jpg



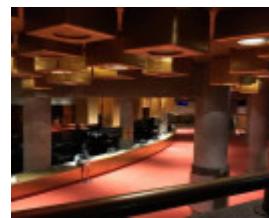
2019\_Geforge Fairfax studio  
foyer.jpg



2019\_Hugh Williamson ante  
room.jpg



2019\_Arts Centre cafe  
ceiling.jpg



2019\_Hamer Hall lower level  
2.jpg



2008\_Original organ in  
Hamer Hall.jpg

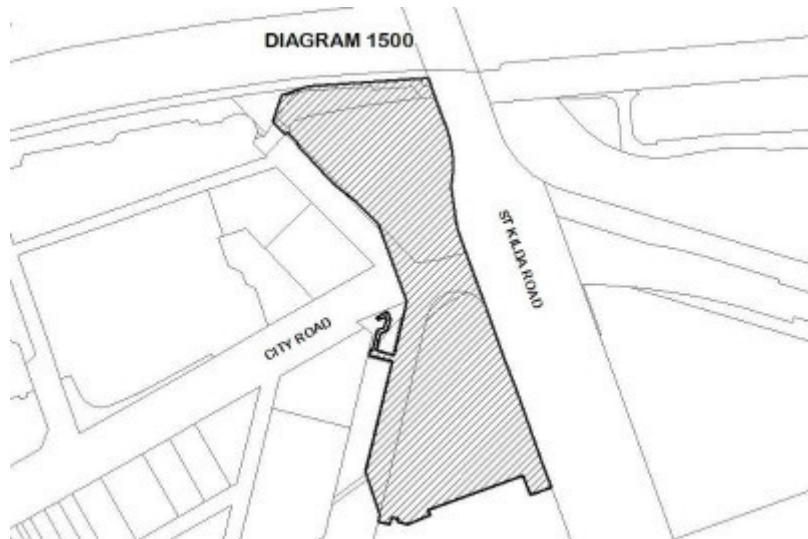


DIAGRAM 1500.jpg

## Location

100 ST KILDA ROAD SOUTHBANK, MELBOURNE CITY

## **Municipality**

MELBOURNE CITY

## **Level of significance**

Registered

## **Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number**

H1500

## **Heritage Overlay Numbers**

HO760

## **VHR Registration**

August 20, 1982

## **Amendment to Registration**

November 14, 2019

## **Heritage Listing**

Victorian Heritage Register

## **Statement of Significance**

Last updated on - October 8, 2025

# **What is significant?**

The Victorian Arts Centre including the land, all buildings (including the exteriors and interiors), trees, hard landscape elements, gardens, all fixtures attached to the building at the time of registration including light fittings, built-in furniture, decorative elements and wall, ceiling and floor finishes. The registration also includes objects integral to the place including paintings, sculptures, furniture and archival objects.

# **How is it significant?**

The Victorian Arts Centre is of aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific and social significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion B

Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion D

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.

Criterion E

Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

Criterion F

Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Criterion G

Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Criterion H

Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

## Why is it significant?

The Victorian Arts Centre is significant at the State level for the following reasons:

The Victorian Arts Centre is of historical significance as a major cultural institution which was envisaged as Victoria's pre-eminent performing arts venue. It was an expression of the international arts centre movement of the post-war period and remains one of the largest public works projects in Victoria's history. The Victorian Arts Centre attracted an unusual level of public interest and support, indicating the extent to which Victorians supported the concept of a cultural centre envisaged for the entire community. The complex, with its distinctive spire, provided Melbourne with an important visual identity.

The Victorian Arts Centre is also of historical significance for its Foundation Art Collection which was established in the early 1970s, particularly the works by some of Australia's most renowned twentieth century artists which were selected or commissioned specifically for the place. It reflects the holistic approach to creative arts encouraged by the mid twentieth century international arts centre movement and the desire to include visual art collections alongside performing art spaces.

(Criterion A)

The Victorian Arts Centre is a rare example of an accomplished 1980s interior design scheme and a rare example of the work of Academy Award winning set and costume designer John Truscott. The interiors are an outstanding example of Truscott's theatrical stage and set design applied to permanent interiors and were his largest and most important interior design commission. Due to the temporary nature of set design, the Victorian Arts Centre interiors are a rare surviving example of Truscott's work

(Criterion B)

The Victorian Arts Centre is of architectural and aesthetic significance for its overall design by pre-eminent Victorian architect Roy Grounds as a notable example of his work. The Victorian Arts Centre is also of architectural and aesthetic significance for the distinctive decorative interiors designed by John Truscott and applied to Grounds' architectural design

(Criterion D)

The Victorian Arts Centre is of architectural and aesthetic significance for its overall design by pre-eminent Victorian architect Roy Grounds as a notable example of his work. The Victorian Arts Centre is also of architectural and aesthetic significance for the distinctive decorative interiors designed by John Truscott and

applied to Grounds' architectural design  
(Criterion E)

The Victorian Arts Centre is scientifically significant for the level of technical accomplishment in addressing the difficulties of the site, including the innovative engineering solutions in relation to the substructure of the buildings.  
(Criterion F)

The Victorian Arts Centre is socially significant as the pre-eminent performing arts centre in Victoria and is valued by many Victorians who have a shared experience of the place since its opening in 1984. There is a particularly strong attachment for those who regularly frequent the place. For some community members, the attachment began with the public donations to support the development of the place and continues to the present day. In some cases, the attachment is multi-generational.

(Criterion G)

The Victorian Arts Centre is significant as a major work of noted Australian modernist architect Roy Grounds, who, together with his former partners Robin Boyd and Frederick Romberg, was one of the most influential architects of his generation, pioneering modernist design and changing Victoria's built environment. Together with the gallery, the Arts Centre occupied much of his time from the 1960s to his death in 1981. Grounds' importance as an architect was recognised when he was awarded the RAIA Gold Medal in 1968 and was knighted the same year.

The Victorian Arts Centre is also significant for its association with Sir Rupert Hamer, Premier of Victoria from 1972 – 1981. He played a central role in the development of the precinct and the development of Victoria's arts sector. He was knighted in 1982 and the Melbourne Concert Hall was renamed Hamer Hall following his death in 2004

(Criterion H)

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must notify the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### Specific Exemptions:

It should be noted that Permit Exemptions can be granted at the time of registration (under s.38 of the Heritage Act). Permit Exemptions can also be applied for and granted after registration (under s.92 of the Heritage Act).

Under s.38 of the *Heritage Act 2017* the Executive Director may include in his recommendation categories of works or activities which may be carried out in relation to the place or object without the need for a permit under Part 5 of the Act. The Executive Director must not make a recommendation for any categories of works or activities if he considers that the works or activities may harm the cultural heritage significance of the place or object. The following permit exemptions are not considered to cause harm to the cultural heritage significance of the place.

#### **General Condition 1**

All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.

#### **General Condition 2**

Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible.

#### **General Condition 3**

All works should ideally be informed by Conservation Management Plans prepared for the place. The Executive Director is not bound by any Conservation Management Plan, and permits still must be obtained for works suggested in any Conservation Management Plan.

#### **General Condition 4**

Nothing in this determination prevents the Heritage Council from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

#### **General Condition 5**

Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the relevant responsible authority, where applicable.

#### **Specific Permit Exemptions**

The following works do not require a permit provided they do not harm the cultural heritage significance of the place.

#### **Outdoor areas**

- Non-structural alterations, repairs and maintenance to the carparks.
- Repair and maintenance work to City Road below the Arts Centre Lawn.
- Subsurface works involving the installation, removal or replacement of watering systems or services.
- Routine repair and maintenance of existing hard landscaping including paving and paths where fabric, design, size, form and method of fixing is repaired or replaced like for like.
- Replacement or removal of light fittings, including pole fittings. (Note this does not apply to any specially made fittings or suites of replicated fittings installed as part of the original design of the Arts Centre).
- Removal or replacement of external directional signage provided the size, location and material remains the same.
- Maintenance, repairs and cleaning to external seating.
- All maintenance and repair works to service vents located in the gardens.
- All maintenance and repair works to emergency fire exit stairs located in the gardens.
- The process of gardening including mulching, removal of dead plants and replacement with matching species, pruning, disease and weed control, and lawn mowing.
- The removal or pruning of dead or dangerous trees to maintain safety and for the management of the trees. The Executive Director must be notified within seven days of commencement works
- Vegetation protection and management of possums and vermin.

#### **Building exteriors**

- Minor patching, repair and maintenance which replaces like with like without large-scale removal of or damage to the existing fabric or the large-scale introduction of new materials. Repairs must maximise protection and retention of fabric and include the conservation of existing details or elements. Any new materials used for repair must not exacerbate the decay of existing fabric due to chemical incompatibility,

obscure existing fabric or limit access to existing fabric for future maintenance.

- Maintenance, repair and replacement of existing services such as plumbing, electrical cabling, surveillance systems, pipes or fire services which does not involve changes in location or scale.
- Removal of extraneous exposed items such as pipe work, ducting, wiring, antennae and aerials, and making good.
- Repainting of painted surfaces in the same colour, type and quality of finish.
- All lighting or works to the existing lighting scheme of the Arts Centre spire and Hamer Hall.
- Erection and removal of temporary structures and infrastructure, including lighting, public address systems and the like in support of events and performances.

### ***Interiors***

*Public areas (auditoria, lobbies, function rooms, foyers, stairs, passageways, bathrooms, restaurants, cafes and kitchens)*

- Repair and maintenance of existing lifts and escalators including mechanisms and associated elements.
- Repair and maintenance to bathrooms and kitchens where fabric, design, size, form and method of fixing is repaired and/or replaced like for like (excluding leather and associated trim at the entrances to the toilets in Hamer Hall).
- All non-structural and internal works to the Vic Cafe excluding any works which impact or obscure the ceiling.
- Installation, removal or replacement of devices for the hanging of paintings and other wall mounted artworks in existing locations.
- Replacement of carpets and/or flexible floor coverings like with like, provided that a representative sample of the original is recorded and retained.
- Maintenance, repair and replacement of non-original lighting fixtures, tracks and the like.
- Maintenance and repair of original lighting fixtures, tracks and the like, including replacement of bulbs to original lighting, as long as the light quality remains the same.
- Removal and replacement of information, directional and advertising signage within existing signage and display cases.
- The removal and replacement of temporary banners or signage in existing locations.
- All works within display cases.
- All non-structural works in the exhibition space (the Australian Music Vault) behind the St Kilda Road entrance foyer in the Theatres Building.

*Back of house areas (offices, dressing rooms and associated areas, set construction and storage areas, wings and back stage areas, flytowers, loading dock and associated areas)*

- Removal or installation of non-original shelving and built-in cupboards in back of house areas if no structural work is required.
- Installation, removal or replacement of window dressings.
- Installation, removal or replacement of carpets and/or flexible floor coverings.
- Repainting of painted surfaces in the same colour, type and quality of finish.
- The replacement of escalator and lift mechanisms, motors, cars and any associated elements.
- Installation, removal or replacement of existing lighting.
- Repair, replacement and installation of equipment within the stage areas, fly towers, wings and backstage areas as required.
- Alterations within the orchestra pits.
- Temporary installation and removal of all structures and equipment required to stage a performance.
- Works that facilitate DDA compliance in toilets, back of house areas and areas of no-significance providing the works do not harm the significance of the place

### ***Plant Equipment and Services***

- Installation, removal or replacement of plant within existing plant areas.
- Installation, removal or replacement of mechanical systems, electrical systems and equipment, switchboards, communications, hydraulics and fire services.
- The installation of light switches and GPOs. Cover plates to have the same finish as the original.
- Installation, removal or replacement (in the same location) of electric clocks, public address/EWIS systems, CCTV, detectors, alarms, emergency lights, exit signs and the like.

## **Venue operations**

- Any works associated with short term events including:
  - The introduction of temporary structures provided that structures will be erected within and used for a maximum period of three months after which they are removed.
  - The introduction of temporary security fencing, scaffolding, hoardings or surveillance systems to prevent unauthorised access or secure public safety for a maximum period of three months after which they will be removed.
- The use of temporary micro tenancies such as food trucks, market stalls and the like.
- Temporary works for operational purposes, for example, the establishment of temporary wayfinding/directional signage.
- The display, installation and removal of temporary promotional elements such as banners, billboards, flagpoles in existing locations.

## **Safety and security**

- Works or activities, including emergency stabilisation, necessary to secure safety where a structure or part of a structure has been irreparably damaged or destabilised and poses a safety risk to its users or the public. It is acknowledged that in some instances additional damage to significant fabric may be required to stabilise and make safe. In these instances every attempt must be made to conserve and retain as much significant fabric as possible. The Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, must be notified within seven days of the commencement of these works or activities.
- Installation of bollards and other hostile vehicle mitigation devices along the extremities of the site.

## **Objects integral to the place**

There are a number of fixed and non-fixed objects which are integral to the Victorian Arts Centre. They include:

1. Objects in the Foundation Art collection which were commissioned or acquired for the place prior to the opening in 1984 (refer to Attachment 1, Inventory 1)
2. Furniture designed by John Truscott as an integral part of the interiors. (refer to Attachment 1, Inventory 2)
3. Elements in storage which were part of the place at the time of opening in 1984. (refer to Attachment 1, Inventory 3)
4. Archive (refer to Attachment 1, Inventory 4)

## **Specific permit exemptions for objects in the Foundation Art Collection (Inventory 1)**

All of the following exemptions must be in accordance with the National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries and/or in accordance with the accepted collection management standards, policies and procedures of Arts Centre Melbourne.

- Management of artworks (including removal and relocation, display, conservation, and temporary loans of eighteen months or less).
- All storage and exhibition locations, methods and materials must be designed to prevent light damage to the colours, damage from handling and other deterioration.
- Artworks must be removed or protected in the event of any building or maintenance works occurring nearby.
- The conservation, research or analysis of registered heritage objects does not require approval by the Executive Director pursuant to the *Heritage Act 2017*, where the Arts Centre employs qualified conservators.
- The installation, relocation or removal of items of the art collection that are not included in the inventory of Registered Objects Integral to the Registered Place.
- The sculpture *Forward Surge* should remain on its current, original site within the Arts Centre Lawn. Full public access to the sculpture should be maintained. *Forward Surge* (VHR H2378) is included in the VHR as a Registered Place. Refer to *Forward Surge* (VHR H2378) for full permit policy and permit exemptions. Permit applications or exemptions approved under the registration for *Forward Surge* (VHR H2378) are permit exempt under this registration.
- The sculpture *Dervish* is not in its original location and can be re-located, preferably returned to its original position on the middle terrace of Hamer Hall. *Dervish* should be regularly maintained to stop corrosion of

the metal beyond the intended finish of the weathered steel. It should be cleaned in a way which maintains the overall patination. Spot cleaning which results in an uneven appearance should be avoided.

#### *Specific permit exemptions for furniture (Inventory 2)*

- Re-upholstering and repair of original furniture like with like, provided that a representative sample of the original upholstery (where it survives) is recorded and retained.
- General cleaning and maintenance.
- Temporary relocation within the Arts Centre of furniture for events or functions.

## **Theme**

### 9. Shaping cultural and creative life

Construction dates 1973, 1976,

Architect/Designer Grounds, Roy,

Heritage Act Categories Registered place, Registered object integral to a registered place,

Hermes Number 1067

Property Number

## **History**

The location of an Arts Centre along St Kilda Road was first proposed in 1943 but the site was not officially proclaimed until 1957. In 1959 Grounds, Romberg and Boyd were appointed as the architects of the ambitious project. In awarding the commission, emphasis was placed on Grounds' thirty years of experience and he subsequently became solely responsible for the project. He devoted much of his time, from 1959 until his death in 1981, to its design and construction.

Although funded primarily by the Victorian State Government, the project also had a high level of public engagement. The National Gallery and Cultural Centre Appeal raised £600,000 in 1960 and represents the extent to which Victorians offered their support to the concept of a cultural centre which would serve the entire community. Responsibility for the project lay with the Building Committee which was established in 1956 and comprised a number of representative members from the community, local councils, regional Victoria, the Victorian Government and the National Gallery of Victoria. These included Kenneth Myer, who was chairman from 1965 to 1989, Professor Joseph Burke and later, Professor Margaret Manion from the Fine Arts Department at Melbourne University, Councillor Michael Winneke and Sir Ian Potter. For twenty five years this committee was a consistent force in the completion of the complex. It became the Victorian Arts Centre Trust in 1980, with actor and film director, George Fairfax, as its first General Manager, a position he held until 1989. Originally appointed as a technical officer, and Chief Executive Officer in 1972, Fairfax played an influential role in the development of the Arts Centre.

Construction of stage one of the project, the art gallery, commenced in 1962. The rectangular building was constructed of bluestone with a triangular art school to the west completed in 1970. The area to the north, between the newly constructed gallery and the Snowden Gardens had been allocated to the theatre and concert halls which were to be located under a circular spire with covered access to the gallery. The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) opened as the first stage of the Victorian Arts Centre in 1968, and attention then turned to the completion of the remainder of the complex. This included a concert hall and theatres originally conceived by Roy Grounds as one building under a spire, linked to the gallery via a covered porch.

Work began on the theatre site in 1973, with excavation work not completed until 1978, two years later than expected. Work on the more stable concert hall site began in 1976. A high level of technical accomplishment was required to address the difficulties of the site, including innovative engineering solutions in relation to the substructure, or 'bathtub' of the buildings and particularly for the Theatres Building where the steel piling was

protected from corrosion by a cathodic system of a type and scale previously only used in engineering structures such as wharves and pipelines. As work began on the substructures, the plans of the buildings and their interiors were developed. Plans for the auditoria components grew and the State government was persuaded to annex land all the way to the Yarra River. The design for the State Theatre was altered to accommodate 2,000 patrons and concerns over the implications of structural works associated with underground proposals, particularly after the collapse of the West Gate Bridge in 1970, forced Grounds to consider alternatives to his original design. The Theatres Building was modified and extended above the level of St Kilda Road as a bush-hammered concrete building, and the spire, lifted to house the flytower, became an enormous latticed space frame. The Concert Hall (now Hamer Hall), also originally intended to be primarily underground, became a massive, sandstone coloured precast concrete panelled cylinder.

In 1980 Academy Award-winning expatriate set and costume designer, John Truscott, was employed to decorate the interiors, and his theatrical connections added another dimension to the project. His work on the interiors was constrained only by the requirement to leave elements already constructed, such as Ground's faceted cave-like interior of the Concert Hall and his steel mesh draped ceiling in the State Theatre. Truscott embellished these elements, applying a painted finish to imitate striated rock to the Concert Hall interior and adding perforated brass cups to the steel mesh ceiling. Generally, the interiors of the Theatres Building and Hamer Hall are a combination of the form and layout designed by Roy Grounds, overlaid with the decorative designs of John Truscott. Instead of continuing with Grounds' earth tones and restrained materials and finishes palette, Truscott took his inspiration from the underground world of precious metals and stones. The result is rich, theatrical and colourful interiors which are in strong contrast to the austerity of the exteriors.

Truscott's interiors are highly considered and every aspect was custom designed and made for the place - from decorative painted finishes, to furniture, lamps, planters and rubbish bins. Most of the artworks were commissioned during the 1970s and 1980s from Australia's most well-known twentieth century artists including Arthur Boyd, Roger Kemp, Sidney Nolan, John Olsen, David Rankin, Jeffrey Smart and Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri for the Theatres Building and Asher Bilu and Donald Laycock for Hamer Hall. The size and shape of many were specified to ensure the overall visual proportions of the spaces were maintained.

The original estimates for the project included £100,000 for special architectural finishes, murals, sculpture, or other works of art of a permanent nature. Grounds, the Building Committee and selected members of Melbourne's artistic community were involved in the commissioning, selecting and placement of artworks for both the interior and exterior of the complex. In 1972 Mrs Diana Gibson made a significant donation in memory of her grandfather, Sir William Angliss. This established the William Angliss Art Fund, overseen by the William Angliss Art Committee (later the Works of Art Advisory Committee) which was used to purchase works of art for the Arts Centre. Roy Grounds 'indicated a number of spaces where large works of art could be displayed'. The first two works purchased from the Fund were Inge King's *Forward Surge*, and Clement Meadmore's *Dervish* which were both specifically commissioned for the Arts Centre site. In 1980, the third piece, Carl Milles' *Hand of God* (since relocated to the Sidney Myer Music Bowl), was donated by Sir Ian and Lady Potter and accepted by the Victorian Arts Centre Trust. Internally, some works, such as Hugh Oliveiro's *Mural* are integral parts of the fabric of the building, while paintings by Arthur Boyd, John Olsen Sidney Nolan, and other eminent Australian artists were commissioned or purchased for particular spaces.

The Concert Hall opened in November 1982, while substantial work remained to be completed on the Theatres site. The rest of the Arts Centre was opened progressively in 1984, with the Theatres building officially opened in October that year. This signified the completion of one of the largest public works projects in Victorian history, which had taken twenty five years to complete.

#### Roy Grounds

After leaving school, Roy Grounds joined his brother in the practice of Blackett and Forster. He attended the Melbourne University Architectural Atelier in 1927-28 and took night classes at Brighton Technical School, developing an interest in the Bauhaus and architectural modernism. In his late twenties, Grounds worked in Britain and Europe and then the United States of America. On his return to Melbourne in 1932, he established a partnership with Geoffrey Mewton, a former Blackett and Forster colleague and they became known as the leading Australian exponents of modernism in house design. From 1951-53, Grounds was a senior lecturer in the University of Melbourne Faculty of Architecture. He retained his private practice, styling himself as both a modernist and traditionalist and became well known for the use of geometric forms in his designs. In 1953 Grounds formed a partnership with his university colleagues Robin Boyd and Frederick Romberg. Over the next eight years the firm designed some of the leading modern buildings in Australia. They provided plans for

Melbourne's new arts precinct (the Victorian Arts Centre) in 1961, but by 1962 Grounds had established his own design team and left the partnership. Grounds continued to design other projects but the Arts Centre consumed most of his time until his death in 1981.

#### John Truscott

John Truscott's career in the theatre began with his first design commission for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the National Theatre Movement at the age of eighteen. In 1957, he began working for the Melbourne Little Theatre (later St Martin's Theatre Company) where he designed almost eighty productions in six years. His work for the J.C. Williamson Theatres Ltd production of *Camelot* (1963) led to an invitation to design the Hollywood film version of *Camelot*, for which he received two Academy Awards. He was also nominated for Best Art Direction for the feature film *Paint Your Wagon* (1969). Truscott returned to Australia in 1978 and began designing the interiors of the Melbourne Concert Hall (now Hamer Hall) in 1980. On completion of the Theatres building which officially opened on 29 October 1984, Truscott returned to Los Angeles. In 1988 he returned to Australia as creative consultant to Brisbane's World Expo. At the time of his death in 1993 Truscott was the government appointed artist-in-residence at Arts Centre Melbourne.

#### Key references

Allom Lovell and Associates (1995) *Victorian Arts Centre Conservation Management Plan*

Lovell Chen (2013) *Theatres Building Arts Centre Melbourne Conservation Management Plan*

Arts Centre Melbourne documents:

- . *Foundation Art Collection Inventory*
- . Arts Centre Melbourne *Self-Guided Tour booklet*
- . <https://performingartscollection.files.wordpress.com>

#### Plaque Citation

Work began on this concert hall, theatre and spire complex in 1973. Designed by Roy Grounds, with interiors by John Truscott, the opening in 1982-84 signified the completion of one of Victoria's largest public works projects.

#### Extent of Registration

Heritage Act 2017

#### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act 2017, I give notice under section 53 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by modifying a place in the Heritage Register:

Number: H1500

Category: Registered Place, Registered Objects Integral to a Registered Place

Place: Victorian Arts Centre

Location: 100 St Kilda Road, Southbank

Municipality: Melbourne City

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 1500 encompassing all of Crown Allotment 3 Parish of Melbourne South; Crown Allotment 2342 Parish of Melbourne South; Crown Allotment 2341 Parish of Melbourne South; Crown Allotment 2336 Parish of Melbourne South; and part of Crown Allotment 13F, Section C, Parish of Melbourne South; and all of the objects integral to the place which are listed in the four inventories held by the Executive Director.

STEVEN AVERY

Executive Director

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*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/>*