

Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture

RSTCA No: R022

Name of Place: ScreenSound Australia

Other/Former Names: National Film and Sound Archive, Australian Institute of Anatomy

Address/Location: McCoy Street ACTON 2601

Block 2 Section 25 of Acton

Listing Status:	Registered	Other Heritage Listings:	
Date of Listing:	1984	Level of Significance:	National
Citation Revision No:	2	Category:	Educational
Citation Revision Date:	November 1986	Style:	Stripped Classical

Date of Design:	1928-30	Designer:	Federal Capital Commission Architect W Hayward Morris
Construction Period:		Client/Owner/Lessee:	
Date of Additions:		Builder:	

Statement of Significance

The Australian Institute of Anatomy established in 1922, was designed by W. Hayward Morris, Design Architect, FCC, assisted by R. Casboulte, and was one of the last FCC projects. The building is an outstanding example of restrained Art Deco, with significant interiors and exterior in pristine state. The decorative elements are strong nationalistic motifs of animals, flora and Aboriginal art, and are unequalled elsewhere. Of particular interest is the entry's geometrically patterned marble floor inspired by Aboriginal art using local stone. Beaux Art symmetry is exhibited in the entrance, portico, pilasters and proportions of the institute.

Description

The building is Neo-Classical with extensive Art Deco ornamentation. Faced in Hawkesbury sandstone, the symmetrical U-shaped layout of the building surrounds a courtyard, originally grassed, landscaped in 1961 to include a memorial pool and enclosed at the rear. Arcades and cloisters surround the courtyard leading to twin exhibition halls in facing wings, both with mezzanine galleries. The nationalistic Art Deco decoration is consistent throughout the building. Decorative Art Deco elements include wombats in roundels, frilled lizards on door surrounds, and goannas on capitals. The entry foyer is of particular interest with its geometrically patterned marble floor inspired by Aboriginal art, and above the foyer is a large stained glass skylight of a stylised platypus. The stone for the floor and pilasters in the entry was quarried on the Action Flats. The decorative elements and fittings are also significant examples of the Art Deco style and include - lights, ventilators, clocks, ceramic tiling, glass and heater surrounds. The director's residence, a separate building, was designed at the same time.

Condition and Integrity

Presently being restored and refurbished.

Background/History

Analysis against the Criteria specified in Schedule 2 of the Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991

(i) a place which demonstrates a high degree of technical and/or creative achievement, by showing qualities of innovation or departure or representing a new achievement of its time

(ii) a place which exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group

(iii) a place which demonstrates a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function which is no longer practised, is in danger or being lost, or is of exceptional interest

(iv) a place which is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations

(v) a place which is the only known or only comparatively intact example of its type

(vi) a place which is a notable example of a class of natural or cultural places or landscapes and which demonstrates the principal characteristics of that class

(vii) a place which has strong or special associations with person, group, event, development or cultural phase which played a significant part in local or national history

(xi) a place which demonstrates a likelihood of providing information which will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history, by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality or benchmark site

References

Other Information Sources