

CLARIDGE, Brian COLLECTION
Architecture Museum, University of South Australia

CLARIDGE, Philip George Brian (Brian)

SERIES 305

Brian Claridge (1924-1979) influenced the architectural profession not only with his modernist designs but also through his writings on both architecture and art.

Claridge was the son of prominent Adelaide architect Philip Rupert Claridge (1884–1968). He was educated at Prince Alfred College and graduated with a Bachelor of Engineering from the University of Adelaide in 1945. He was then articled to his father's firm, Claridge, Hassell and McConnell. When this partnership was dissolved in 1949 Brian joined with his father in Claridge & Gunn for a decade then moved to the Adelaide office of Melbourne firm Stephenson & Turner, working there until he ceased practising architecture in 1969.

In the 1950s Claridge was a leading advocate of the modern movement, lobbying for change and also publishing widely on architecture and art. He joined with other young architects – John Morphett, Keith Neighbour, Dick Roberts, John Chappel, Laurie Brownell, Alan Godfrey and Newell Platten – to form the Contemporary Architects Group. He was on the organising committee of an exhibition staged in 1956 by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) in conjunction with the Sixth Australian Architectural Convention. Held in Botanic Park in the Adelaide Parklands the Exhibition was designed to showcase architecture by means of models and actual buildings and hence stimulate interest in the latest developments in architecture.

Claridge's residential designs included a house for his father at Toorak Gardens (1951) and for himself at Stonyfell (1952). His Sedunary House at Crafers (1957), which featured in *Best Australian Houses* (1961) and was included in *Houses around Adelaide* (1964), is regarded as one of the best Australian homes designed in the 1950s. Educational commissions included kindergartens at Rose Park (1958) and Newlands Park (1959), Loreto Convent Junior School (1961–62) and Cabra Senior School (1963–65). In the early 1960s he designed banks for the ES&A in Adelaide and Tanunda and oversaw renovations to several Catholic churches and buildings in central Adelaide.

As a young man, Claridge pursued his wider interests outside his formal education as an engineer and architect. From the mid-1940s he was active in the world of theatre as a performer and stage designer with the Adelaide University Theatre Guild and the Dutkiewicz Studio Players. Also interested in art, in the early 1950s he was Secretary, Vice-President and Acting President of the Contemporary Art Society of South Australia. He contributed many feature articles to *Ivor's Art Review (IAR)*, edited by local artist and critic Ivor Francis, as well as reviewing art exhibitions. In 'The New Eclecticism', a major critique of architecture published in *IAR*, he criticised architects for borrowing inappropriate features and styles rather than resolving design problems in a logical, organic manner.

Claridge's architectural career was relatively brief for he was involved in practice for only two decades. In 1969 he was appointed Lecturer in Architecture at the University of Adelaide. Until his premature death in 1979, when he was Senior Lecturer in Architecture, he continued to write and publish.

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SOURCES

Dutkiewicz, Adam (2008) *Brian Claridge. Architect of light and space*, Architecture Museum, Louis Laybourne Smith School of Architecture and Design, University of South Australia, Adelaide.

<http://moonarrow.nfshost.com/brian-claridge/> Accessed 12 November 2010

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

Plans, architectural drawings of a residence at Giles St, Toorak Gardens designed house for his father in 1951.

SERIES LIST

Residence, Giles St, Toorak Gardens

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Architectural drawings of house at Giles St, Toorak Gardens, 1951