

The President's Award For Recycled Buildings

The Belle Interiors Award For Interior Design

The Sir Zelman Cowen Award Finalist

Winner

Powerhouse Museum, Sydney

Architect: NSW Public Works

Department

Principal Design Consultants

Denton Corker Marshall

This is the first project ever to have been nominated for three categories in the National Architecture Awards, and that says a great deal about its quality and national significance.

This project demonstrates clearly why a city's old buildings, even such apparently unusable ones as an old generating station, are not always write-offs. In fact, as this project shows, they can become even more significant the second time around.

The powerhouse used to generate electricity for the city's tram system and the cavernous space of the old building has been recycled and a major new section added. The result a great place to visit, to explore and be transported back into a land of memorabilia.

Of course, the Jury could have been captivated by the exhibits too but that would have been unfair. After all, how many architects get to use such magnificent props as space craft, trains, and aeroplanes as interior design modules. The reality is the building will remain a great project, even if all its displays were more mundane.

Being next to Darling Harbour has helped its popularity but the project would have been a success without this help. Architecturally it is interesting because of the skill in converting the old building, because of the fun created with the new building and because of the flexibility and quality of its display spaces.

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of the design is in the way it handles space. The forecourt provides a sense of excitement and expectation, giving a most appropriate welcome to a building with varied and exciting interiors.

The design of the interior exhibition spaces is exquisite, brilliantly complementing and enriching the architectural spaces while providing a tasteful background for the myriad of exhibits.



The Sydney Powerhouse is exuberant, brash, exhibitionist and, above all, fun. Old and new blends well, but wisely the temptation to copy the old structure has properly been resisted.

Large numbers of people visit the Powerhouse but the planning of interior spaces is an important change from the norm. We are used to museums forcing visitors along rigid routes through an exhibition. The Powerhouse is refreshingly different, even confusing.

The visitor is left intentionally wondering if they have seen everything and thinking that a return visit would be worthwhile. This is a charm seldom found in contemporary work but well loved in traditional museums.

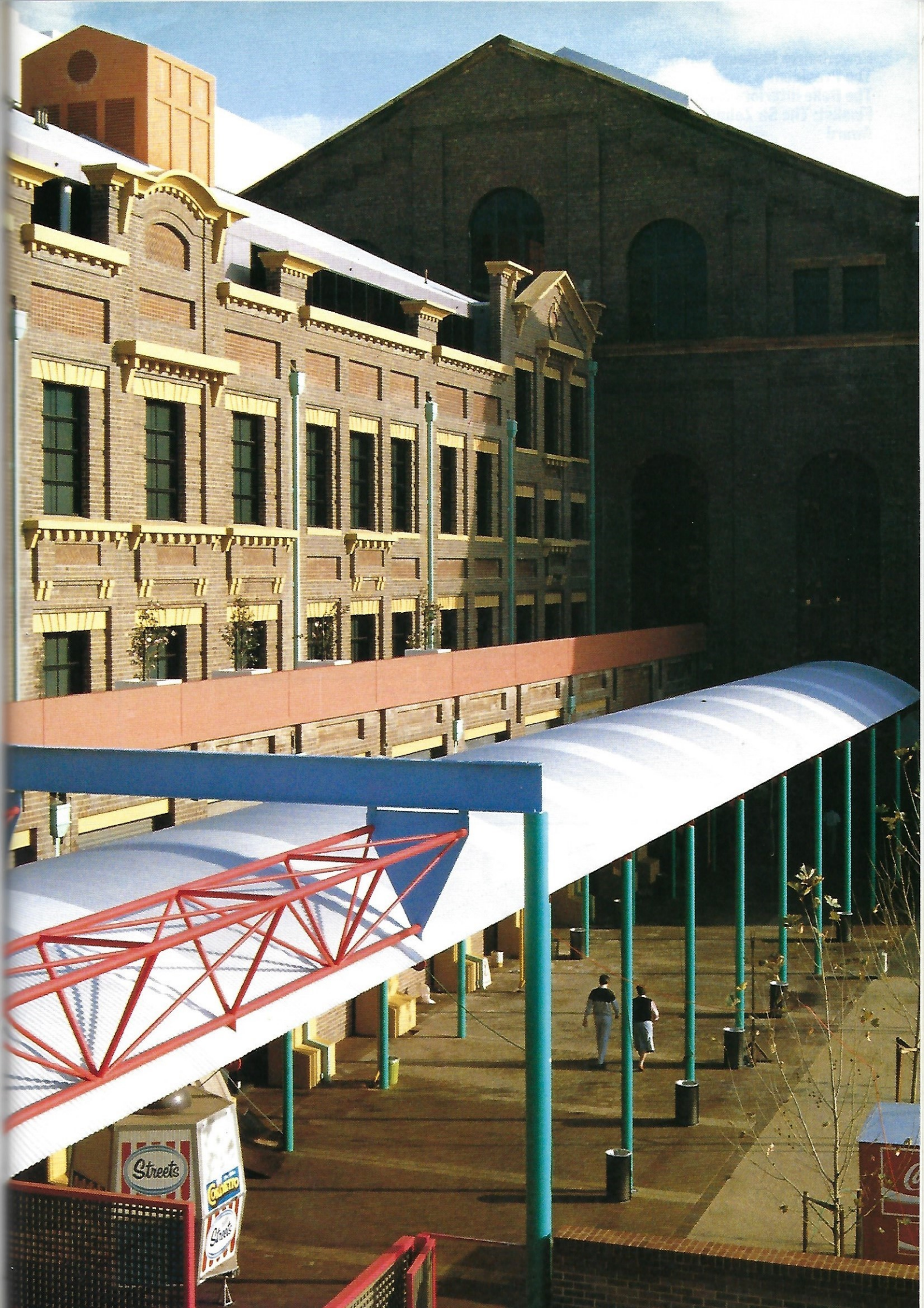
The interiors at the Powerhouse are dazzling. A tour-de-force of form, colour, shape, pattern and texture. Scope

remains for change and growth, yet one is never left with a sense of incompleteness.

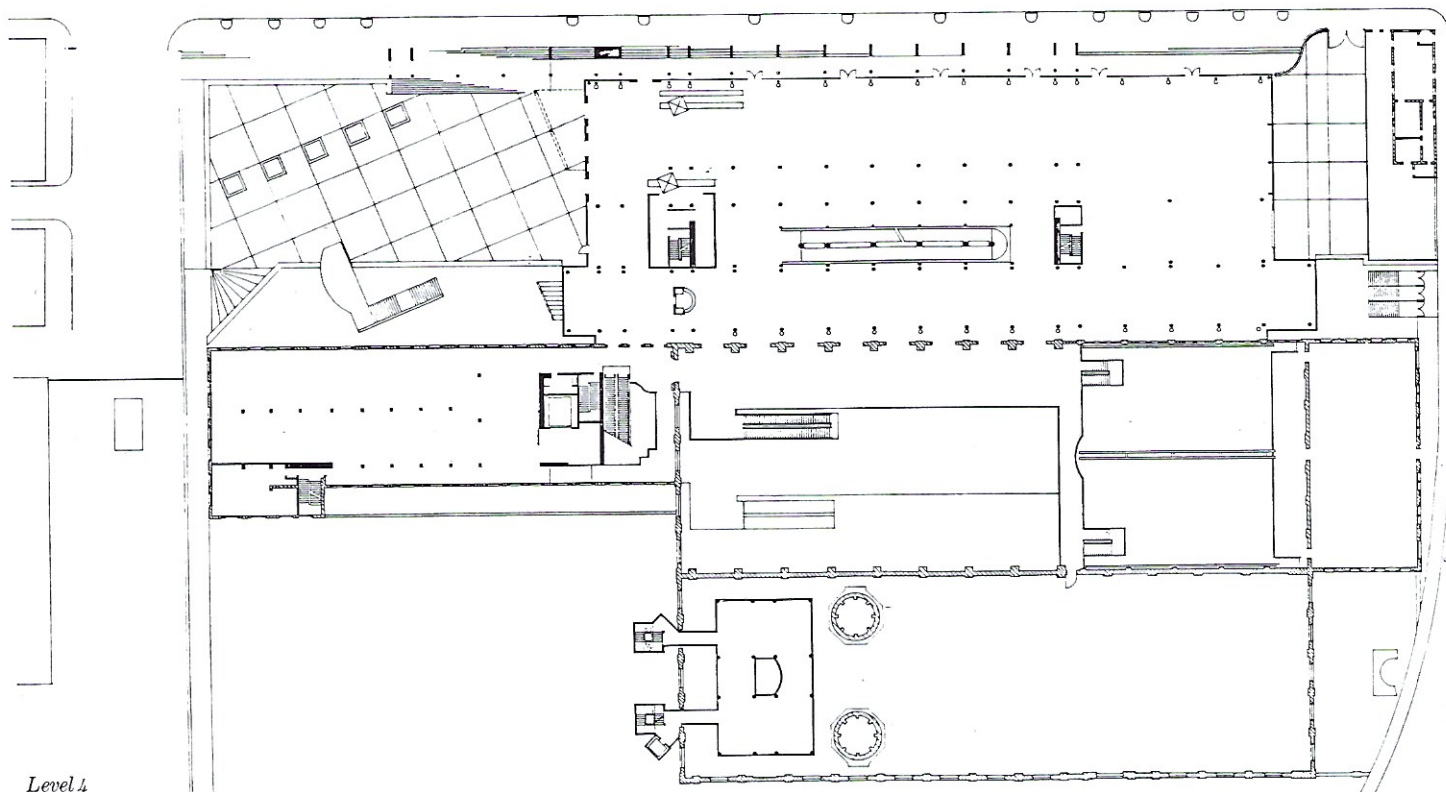
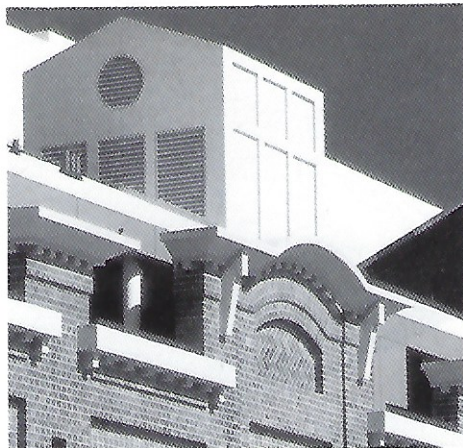
In an era which demands the separation of architecture, interiors and exhibition design, this project demonstrates that they are very much part and parcel of the same family. The result is stunning. Public acceptance and enthusiasm is overwhelming.

The Sydney Powerhouse is a powerful exhibit, an exhibition and a design centre. It will make a significant contribution to architecture in raising the general design consciousness of all its visitors in an entertaining and memorable way. (AA)

*Above: Main Entry.
Right: Switch House covered way.*

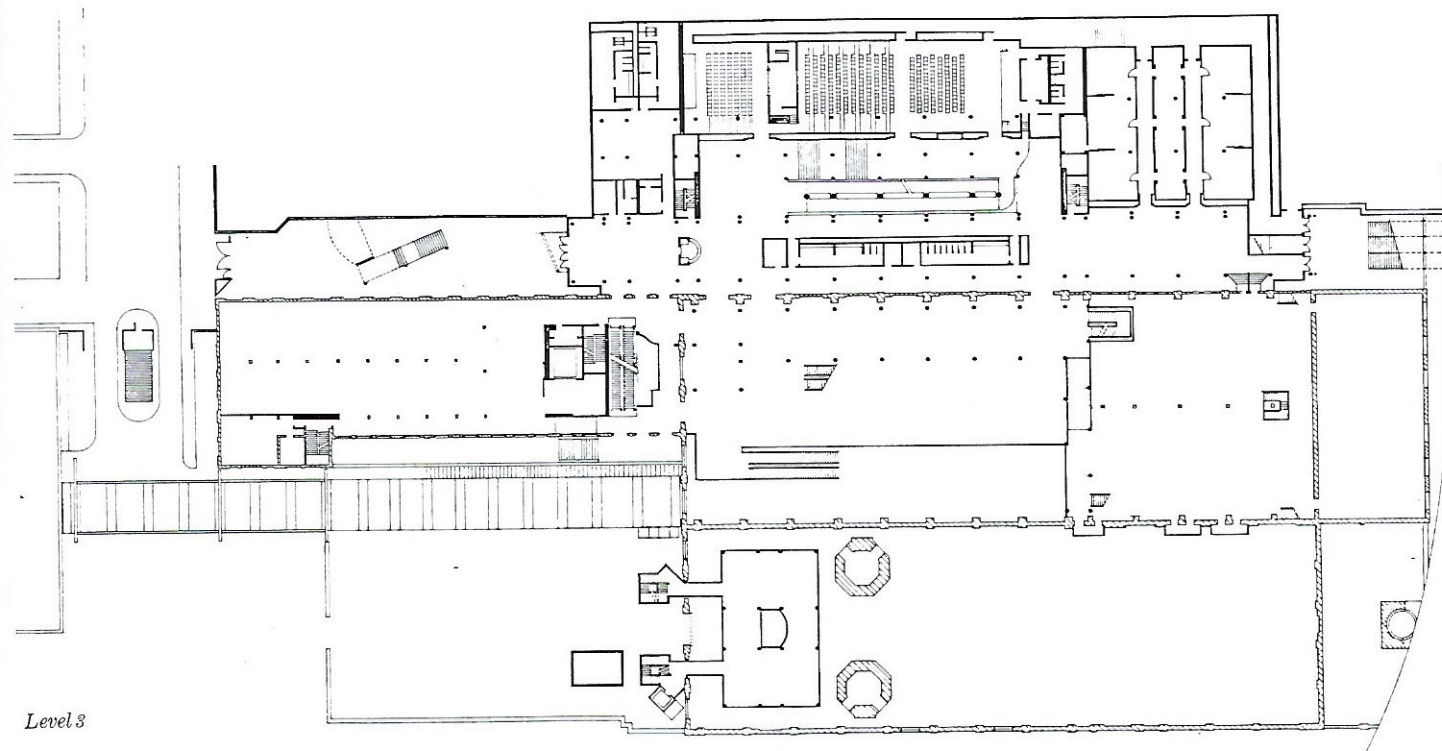
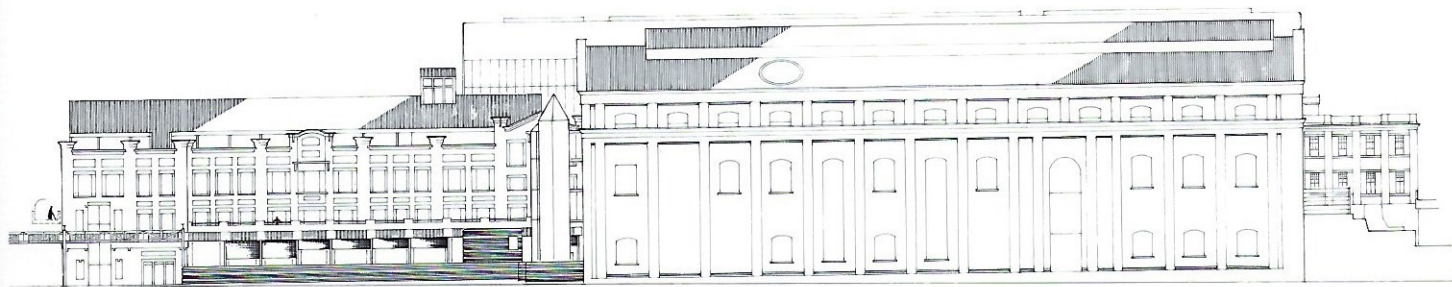


Powerhouse Museum, Sydney
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Finalist: The Sir Zelman Cowen
Award



Level 4

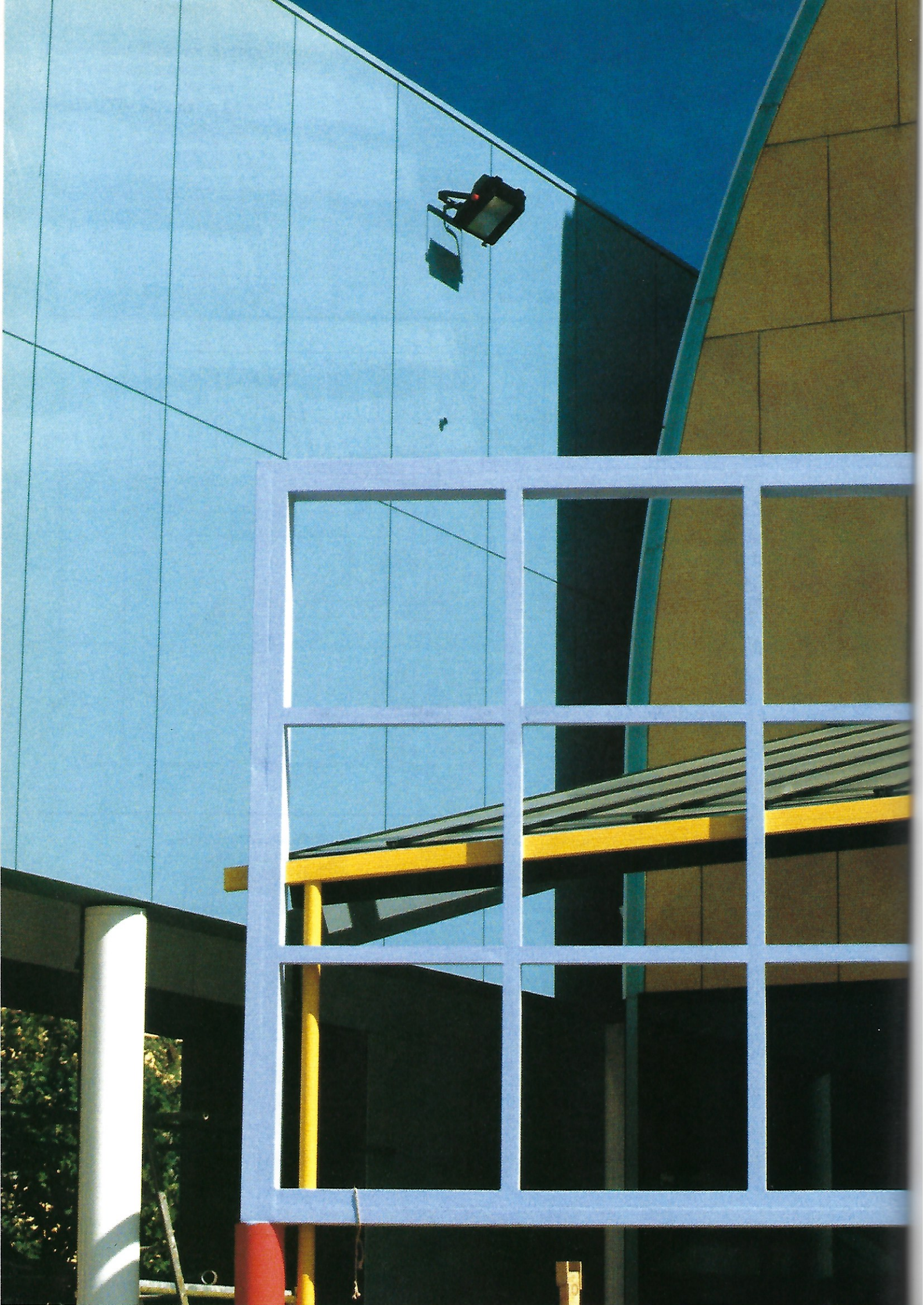




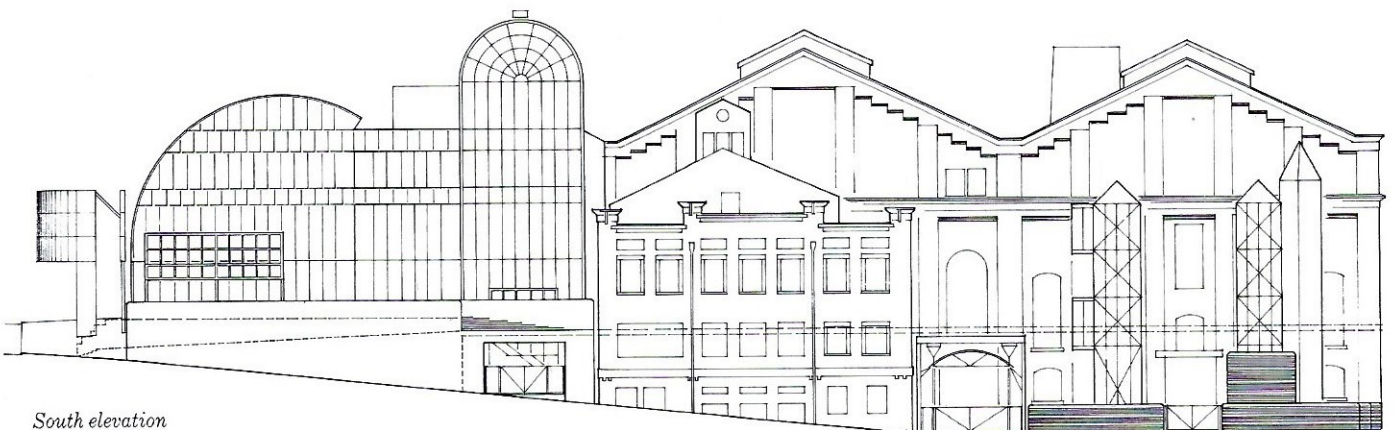
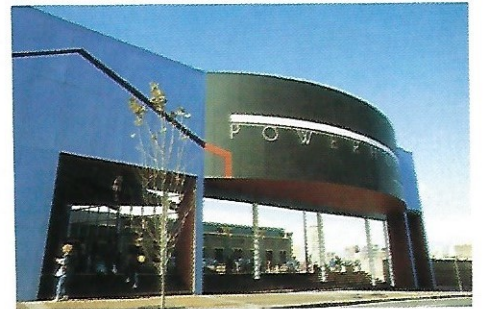
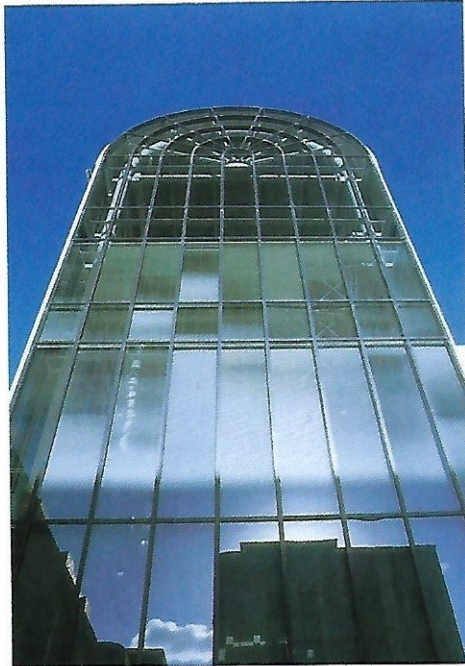
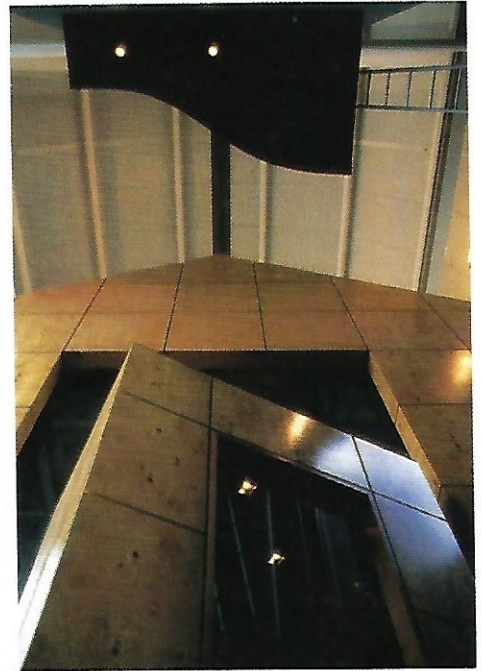
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South elevation

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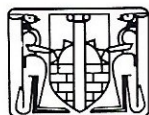
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Award Winning Architecture

National Awards	19
The President's Address	20
Address from Monier Redland	21
National award winners and finalists	22
Comments by the National Jury Chairman	24
Brisbane Airport Terminal	26
Henwood House	30
Dundullimal Homestead, Dubbo	34
Macquarie Street and Circular Quay Redevelopment	38
One Adelaide Terrace Perth	42
Powerhouse Museum, Sydney	46
National Tennis Centre, Melbourne	52
Swift House	53
House in Bassendean	54
Nankervis House	55
Belgenny Farm Group, Camden	56
Cunningham Residence	57
Office and Warehouse, Maroochydore	58
Apple Computer Headquarters	59
St Peter's College Chapel, Adelaide	60
Armoury and Barracks, Adelaide	61
Deutscher Gallery & Residence, Melbourne	62
Emery Vincent Offices, Melbourne	63
State award winners and finalists	77
State winners and finalists, residential	81
State winners and finalists, non-residential	89
State winners and finalists, conservation/civic design	98
Index to 1988 Award entries	107



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