



Australian
Institute of
Architects

Nationally Significant 20th-Century Architecture

Bicentennial Conservatory



The Adelaide Bicentennial Conservatory was commissioned to facilitate the establishment of a tropical rainforest plantation in the Adelaide Botanic Garden, for the purposes of research, education and public enjoyment. The building is considered an excellent example of Late Modern architecture, within the context of Australia. Its sculptural form is a contemporary expression of its function utilises state-of-the-art technology in operation and was erected using innovative structural and cladding systems.

The form of the building was generated from the need to display plants of up to twenty metres in height; to shed condensate away from the tree canopy inside; collect rainwater outside; and, most importantly, maintain a constant climatic condition for the rainforest through the reflection of potential direct heat gains through its glazing - especially during the typically hot South Australian summer.

The architectural form evolved from a pitched roof, which was considered the best solution to achieve the performance requirements of the structure. The form is a segmental cone, elegant in resolution and economic in detail. The Conservatory stands as a significant landmark within the Garden, dominating the landscape and providing a focus for the Garden. In addition, locals refer to the building as 'the giant pastry', as it is reminiscent of the shape of a type of local baked pastry pie.

DETAILS:

Location

Botanic Gardens, Adelaide

Architect

Maron, Guy -
Raffen Maron Architects

Date

1989

Photos - Michael Queale