

## Audette House

Address 265-267 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag, NSW, 2068

Practice Peter Muller

Designed 1952 Completed 1952

History & Description The Audette House was designed by Peter Muller on his return from studying at the University of Pennsylvania on a Fulbright postgraduate scholarship. His clients were Mr Hausalabe, the Chairman of the United States Education Foundation and his stepson, Bob Audette.

Dedicated to the modern, organic school of architecture, Muller designed the house along three axes: a longitudinal spine intersected by two traverse axes. The exterior walls consist of large panes of glass to maximise northern light and views to Middle Harbour; untreated and unpainted Australian hardwood and a distinctive style of brickwork. The mortar extrudes out of the joints (snotted brickwork) with random slabs of terrazzo protruding from the walls. The house has a distinctive linear form, composed of a flat roof and wide-banded walls.

The interior consisted of a large central living area in the longitudinal spine with a truss-like column and beam ceiling. The internal layout was altered in 2002-2003 when Monckten Fyfe Ltd, with the input of Peter Muller, designed extensive renovations and extensions. The extensions were carried out in the same style as Muller's original work and using similar material. Landscape architect Jane Irwin designed a terraced garden that complements the house.



View from street (Source: AIA NSW)



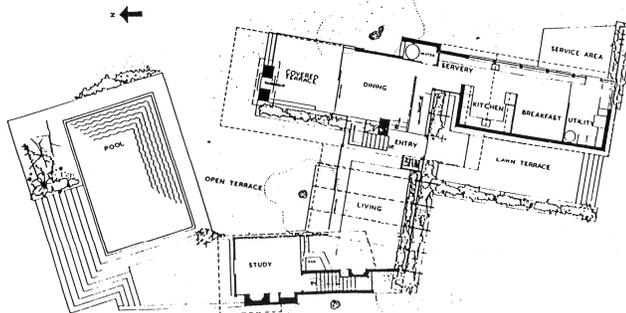
Central living area (Source: AIA NSW)

Statement of Significance The Audette House is historically significant as the first house designed and built in Australia by Peter Muller. It is architecturally significant for its bold and uncompromising visual statement. The house is characteristic of Muller's organic approach to architecture and exhibits key features of Muller's distinctive style.

The Audette House is significant for its acknowledgement of Walter and Marion Mahony Griffin's original design philosophy for the Castlecrag Estate, which by 1952 was generally being disregarded. The design responds to the natural landscape by utilising natural materials, setting the building back from Edinburgh Road and by not building to boundary fences.

Criteria Applicable

- N1.** Significant heritage value in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or period of design
- N2.** Significant heritage value in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics
- N3.** Significant heritage value in establishing a high degree of creative achievement
- N5.** Having a special association with the life or works of an architect of significant importance in our history



Ground floor plan (Source: *Architecture in Australia* (July-September 1955))