

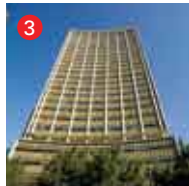
1. Cahill Expressway, Circular Quay
Public Works Department, 1948–1962

Intended as a symbol of postwar progress, Sydney's first urban freeway attracted bitter criticism. *The Sydney Morning Herald* declared that this 'great wall of steel and masonry' threatened to turn 'the pride of Sydney into the dumping ground for a traffic problem'.



2. Research sculpture, Quay Grand, Circular Quay
Tom Bass, 1959

In the postwar economy, companies translated their success into a new set of head offices, often festooned with artworks. Bass was the most active artist of the modern sculpture boom, giving symbolic form to numerous corporate identities. *Research* was commissioned for ICI House.



3. AMP Building, Circular Quay
Graham Thorp, Peddle Thorp & Walker, 1962

The first building to exceed Sydney's 45-metre building height limit – in force since 1912 – its steel frame and lightweight glass curtain wall became the generic office tower format.

4. Australia Square tower and plaza, 264 George Street
Harry Seidler with Pier Luigi Nervi, 1967 (front cover photo)
The site amalgamated 30 properties and two lanes across a city block, its circular tower dominated the skyline, while Alexander Calder's *Crossed blades* sculpture dominated the upper plaza. Calder's fellow international artist Sol LeWitt produced the wall drawing around the tower's core.



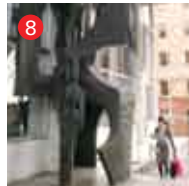
5. City Mutual Building, 66 Hunter Street
Emil Sodersten, 1936

Sydney's 45-metre height limit gave the first generation of Australian office towers a sympathetic scale. City Mutual Building set the standard for Sydney's bonsai skyscrapers, with Manhattan-style detailing and neo-classical sculpture by Rayner Hoff.



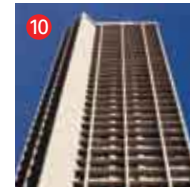
6. Wall fountain, 55 Hunter Street
Tom Bass, 1963

One of several artworks created for the former P&O Building, Bass' sculpture won fame when an *Oz* magazine satire – picturing the fountain being used as a urinal – saw Richard Neville, Richard Walsh and Martin Sharp charged with obscenity.



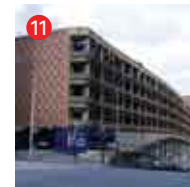
8. Reserve Bank sculpture, Reserve Bank, Martin Place
Margel Hinder and Bim Hilder, 1964

Sydney artists Bim Hilder and US born Margel Hinder won the sculpture competition for the Reserve Bank head office with monumental abstract works. US born Hinder's exterior free-standing copper sculpture and Hilder's copper and bronze wall relief in the foyer both evoke the play of abstract (market) forces across their surfaces.



9. David Jones department store
Market and Castlereagh streets
McKellar & Partridge, 1938

City department stores played a crucial role in introducing modernism to Sydney. Both David Jones and Grace Bros (now Myer) boasted galleries with a more contemporary focus than the Art Gallery of NSW at that time, while also promoting modernity in interior design and fashion.



10. Park Regis, 27 Park Street
Stocks and Holdings, 1968

Sydney's first major apartment building since the 1930s, the Park Regis initiated today's trend towards city living, reversing a century's decline in the CBD's residential population.



11. Goulburn Street car park
Goulburn and Elizabeth streets
City Council Engineer, 1963

Modernist town planners campaigned for cities remade with freeways and tall car parks. Neither materialised in Sydney until the 1960s. Like the recently demolished Kent Street car park, this functional structure was hailed as a monument to modernity.

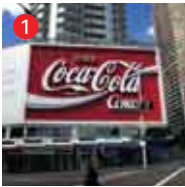
12. Civic Hotel, Pitt and Goulburn streets
Prevost & Ancher, 1940

Designed by young modernist Sydney Ancher, the Civic resulted from the Tooth brewing company's campaign to give the hotel industry a 'modern' image. The Hollywood Hotel (John M Hellyer, 1940) in Foster Street, Surry Hills, is similar.

Estimated walking time: 40–60 minutes

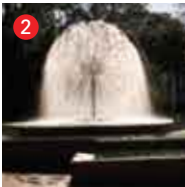


Kings Cross



1. Neons, Darlinghurst Road

Sydney's first neon sign was installed at the Tivoli Theatre, William Street, in 1927. Marrying electricity and movement, neons created a gallery of 'night architecture' in the Cross. Until the 1980s most signs advertised consumer products, like the Coke sign first installed at the top of William Street in 1973. Today's neons promote mainly bars and strip joints.



2. El Alamein fountain, Fitzroy Gardens, Kings Cross

Bob Woodward won the fountain design competition for Fitzroy Gardens in 1958. Inspired by Alvar Aalto's organic modernism, his abstract fountain was imitated internationally.



3. Gowrie Gate, 115 Macleay Street, Potts Point

Dudley Ward, 1938
Ward was one of numerous Australian architects to spend the Depression years in Europe and the UK. He imported the new architecture of European public housing, adapting it to Sydney's private market with designs such as this six-floor block of bachelor flats.

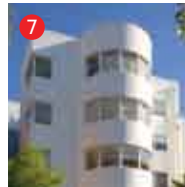
4. Metro (Minerva) Theatre and Cafe

30 and 32 Orwell Street, Kings Cross
Dudley Ward, Reginald Magoffin, Bruce Dellit, 1939
A stylish survivor of the 1930s cinema and theatre boom, the Metro has hosted vaudeville, movies, Sammy Lee's Roosevelt Club, the 1960s musical *Hair* and now the offices and studio of Kennedy Miller Productions.



5. Macleay Regis, 12 Macleay Street, Potts Point

Pitt & Phillips, 1940
The last grand apartment block built at the Cross before Manhattan-style blocks were outlawed, the Macleay Regis encapsulates the style of Kingsclere, Cahors, Birtley Towers and other glamorous apartment addresses.



6. Ithaca Gardens, 12 Ithaca Road, Elizabeth Bay

Harry Seidler, 1960
Seidler's first apartment building is still a model for high-density design: cross-ventilation, discreet entry galleries, energy efficiency, ample balconies, views, sun and breeze for all flats within an uncompromisingly functional exterior.



7. Ashdown, 96 Elizabeth Bay Road

Aaron Bolot, 1938
More than other types of building, apartments introduced modern architecture to Australia. Ashdown was one of the first 'International Style' buildings in Sydney. Russian-born Bolot was Sydney's most prolific apartment architect in the 1930s–60s.

8. The Gazebo, 2 Elizabeth Bay Road

Design & Construction P/L, 1969
The Gazebo was an 'international standard' hotel with spectacular design to match its guest list (which included *mafiosi*, film and pop stars). Its top floor bar was a favourite of Cross locals. Gentrification has seen the Gazebo converted to apartment use, like the Chevron Hilton (1959) at 81 Macleay Street, although it still offers a street-level bar.

Modernism transformed life in Australia across five tumultuous decades from 1917 and 1967. This tour highlights the diversity of Sydney modernism from office towers to public sculpture.

The self-guided walking tour was first developed for the 2008 Sydney Architecture Festival.

For more information on modernism go to powerhousemuseum.com/exhibitions/modern_times.asp

SYDNEY MODERNISM

Self-guided walking tour

ph^m powerhouse museum
science + design

Australia Square, Harry Seidler with Peg Lugi Nervi, 1967. Photo: Fabrizio Kojanowski

Photos: Sothea Bourn