

Victoria, Australia

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International working party for  
**documentation and conservation**  
of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the  
**modern movement**

## NR & NIS MINIMUM FICHE

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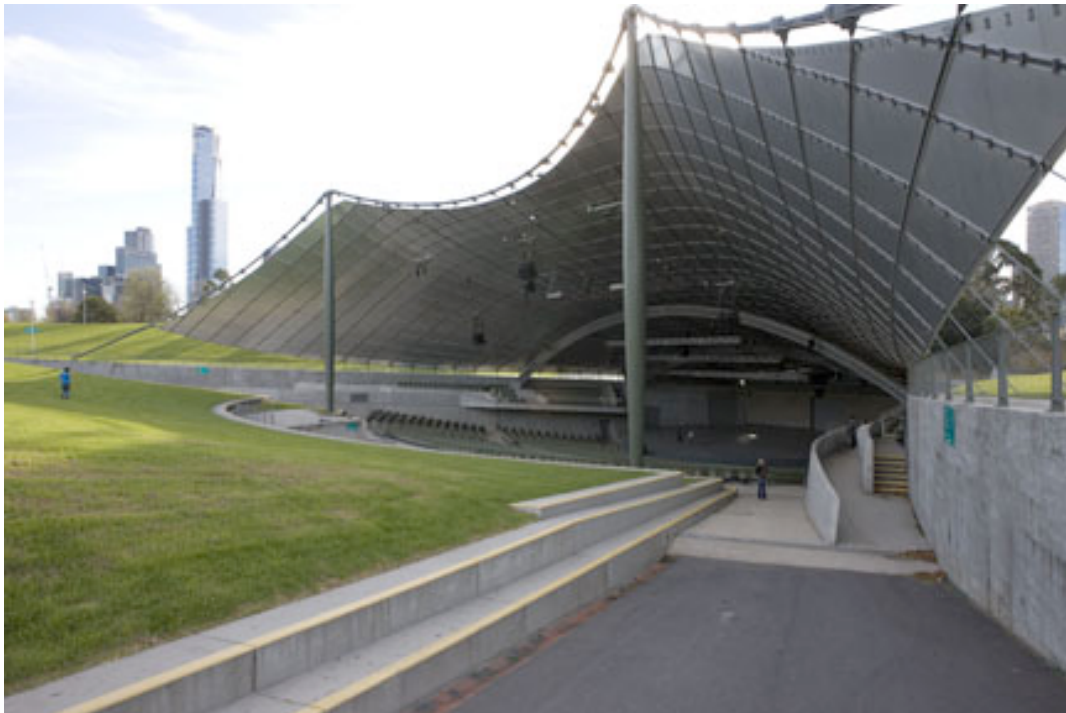
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composed by working party of:

- |   |   |                               |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | <b>Identity of building/group of buildings/urban scheme/ landscape/garden</b> | <b>Sidney Myer Music Bowl</b> |
|---|---|-------------------------------|



View of the Sidney Myer Music Bowl  
Source <http://www.environment.gov.au>

- |     |                          |                               |
|-----|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1.1 | current name of building | <b>Sidney Myer Music Bowl</b> |
| 1.2 | variant or former name   | n/a                           |
| 1.3 | number & name of street  | Alexandra Avenue              |

1.4	town	Melbourne
1.5	province	Victoria
1.6	zip code	3000
1.7	country	Australia
1.8	national grid reference	
1.9	classification/typology	Cultural Venue
1.10	protection status & date	Victorian Heritage Register H1772 National Heritage Register 105743

## **2 History of building**

2.1	original brief/purpose	Outdoor Cultural venue
2.2	dates: commission/completion	1956-59
2.3	architectural designers	Barry Patten, assisted by Angel Dimitroff at the practice Yuncken Freeman Brothers Griffiths & Simpson
2.4	others associated with building	Sidney Myer (Benefactor)
2.5	significant alterations with dates	No significant alterations.
	current use	Cultural venue
	current condition	The building is in excellent condition, and underwent major conservation work from 1998-2001.

## **3.0 Description**

3.1	general description	The building is described in the Australian Heritage Database entry, "The Sidney Myer Music Bowl is a canopy of aluminium-faced plywood supported by steel cables and tapered steel masts, stretched over a stage and orchestra pit with some fixed timber seating, and a sloping lawn area. Service and support rooms are located at the rear of the stage and underground, including beneath the stage." (AHD entry for the Music Bowl)
3.2	construction	At the time of its construction the Sidney Myer Music Bowl was one of a small number of structures in Australia to combine a tensile structural system with a free form roof and was the most important in terms of scale, sophistication and structural expression. The Sidney Myer Music Bowl differed from the international concrete shell structures which may have partly inspired its designers, and which offered a challenge to traditional architectural forms during this period. Its structural design appeared to echo the thinking of German

architect Frei Otto, yet it predated experiments in tensile-stress construction by Otto and others by almost ten years. It also demonstrates outstanding use of a particular material, Alumphly cladding in preference to the preferred thin concrete shell cladding. (AHD entry for the Music Bowl)

3.3 context

The Sidney Myer Music Bowl is set within 2.734 hectares of landscaped parkland located in the King's Domain. The slightly modified natural slope was used to provide the amphitheatre form. (AHD entry for the Music Bowl)

**4 Evaluation**

4.1

technical

The Sidney Myer Music Bowl is of technical importance for its contribution to the development of engineering and construction techniques which were required to complete this large scale and technically unusual project. (VHR entry for the Music Bowl)

4.2

social

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The Sidney Myer Music Bowl is of cultural importance to Victoria as a major and long serving location for a wide range of open air cultural events and performances and is a well known venue through-out Australia.

4.3

cultural & aesthetic

The Sidney Myer Music Bowl has architectural importance and is rare as the largest, purpose built, permanent outdoor performance venue in Australia. (VHR entry for the Music Bowl)

4.4

Historical

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The Sidney Myer Music Bowl is of historical importance for its association with the Sidney Myer Charitable Trust established after the death of the founder of the Myer Department Store empire Simcha Baevski Myer, and for its association with the Myer family particularly Norman Myer the chairman of the Trust who oversaw the completion of the project. (VHR entry for the Music Bowl)

4.5

general assessment

The Sidney Myer Music Bowl, the first major purpose-built outdoor cultural venue constructed in Melbourne, is an excellent representative example of the Late Twentieth Century Structuralist style. It demonstrates the broad characteristics of the style include large scale free, sculptural, non-rectilinear spaces floating above the site. The Sidney Myer Music Bowl is an exemplar of a free standing structure featuring its large landscaped setting for dramatic effect. (AHD entry for the Music Bowl)

**5 Documentation**

5.1

principal references

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) entry for the Sidney Myer Music bowl <http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/>

Goad, Philip, *Melbourne Architecture*, Watermark Press, Sydney, 1999

5.2 visual material attached

5.3 rapporteur/date

Andrew Murray June 2014