

AUSTRALIAN PAVILION - EXPO 67

Australia goes on show to the world in April this year when Expo 67, Canada's international exhibition opens.

It is planned that the visitor to the Australian pavilion at Expo '67 will come away with the knowledge that Australia is no longer an isolated wilderness but a sophisticated, self-reliant national equal to any in the world.

The theme of the Australian exhibit is The Spirit of Adventure - the spirit that has enabled Australians to convert one of the oldest land masses in the world from Stone Age to Space Age in less than 200 years.

In addition to the pavilion, Australia will take part in the World Festival and present an interesting and varied programme of features on its Special Day, June 6th.

Robert Helpmann, the world-famous ballet dancer and choreographer, has been appointed producer of Australia's Special Day entertainment.

On this day visitors to Expo 67 will be able to see champion Australian axemen challenge the world, sheep dogs working, a tennis match between two of Australia's leading amateurs and other items of a distinctly Australian character.

The younger visitors to Expo will be able to enjoy the talents of some of Australia's top pop artists, while in the evening the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra will perform in the Wilfrid Pelletier Theatre. From May 23 to May 27 the Australian Ballet will take the spotlight of the World Festival performing distinctive Australian ballets in the Wilfrid Pelletier Theatre.

The Pavilion

The Australian pavilion at Expo 67 is described by its architect, Mr. James C. McCormick, as basically a floating box 136 feet square. It stands on a 65,000 sq.ft. site.

It will rise above a bushland setting on pillars of concrete and steel, providing the visitor with a harmonious example of imaginative Australian architecture and landscaping.

Complete freedom of design was allowed and the architect, bearing in mind that this would be the largest international exposition ever held - almost twice the size of the Brussels World Exposition - and the first world fair in which Australia would be participating, developed a building of the highest standard of contemporary design and quality.

Three design principles were established. The first was to provide a simple enclosure for the exhibition hall, standing off the ground, with air-conditioning, generous seating and thick carpets.

It is a place of relaxation and comfort, a quiet haven of tranquillity away from the hustle and bustle of the fair.

The second principle was that the number of exhibits should be reduced to what was practical to tell the story of the Australian Adventure. They are of the highest quality and harmonise with the architecture of the building.

Thirdly, it was decided that the theme of the Spirit of Adventure should be expressed in tree forms that supported four independent roof sections together covering 152ft. by 152ft.

This roofing system has its parallels in the Nervi Pavilion at Turin, Niemeyer's Cathedral at Brasilia and the Gothic fan vaulting of the past.

But the concept has been taken further, for it has incorporated within the hollow trunk of each tree a 15ft. diameter light and ventilation well, an innovation without parallel in previously designed buildings.

When the visitor approaches the Australian pavilion he will walk on to a large plaza adjacent to a reflecting pool that has set in it a display of natural Australian sandstone.

The visitor walks right under the pavilion and to get to the exhibition area he enters the main doors into an enclosed vestibule in which a spiral ramp rises 10ft to the main exhibition floor.

In this vestibule is a central exhibit referred to as the Aluminium Tree. It has a series of back-lit colour photographs of Australian people which the visitor can appreciate at varying levels as he moves up the spiral ramp.

The Main Exhibition Floor

The main exhibition floor has a 23ft. ceiling and the visitor is conscious first of the vaulting of the four tree forms that form the roof construction.

On the north and south walls he will see two completely glazed walls, and on the east and west two solid walls covered with the floor carpeting. This gives an impressive visual effect and improves acoustics.

On the west wall is a line of paintings, and on the east wall a huge, oval, artist's representation of the southern night sky.

Then he will see four sections of display with 60 chairs in each section arranged in groups about the major exhibits.

These "sound chairs" were designed by Mr. Grant Featherston, a Melbourne furniture designer. The recording equipment that provides the sound was designed and made by the Rola Company, Melbourne, while a number of other agencies helped in the production of this unique system.

When a chair is occupied the added weight switches on the system. An "unoccupied" tape recording is selected automatically and the visitor hears a section of the Australian story "The Spirit of Adventure". There are 33 different records altogether, many made by famous Australians.

Coral, Kangaroos

The visitor leaves the building via a concrete ramp which leads to the fauna exhibits. Under the exit ramp is an arc of water representing a billabong.

Another pool represents a fragment of the Great Barrier Reef. The coral is real, but artificially coloured because coral's natural colour cannot be preserved out of the water. The colours, however, are accurate.

Kangaroos and wallabies can be seen in a recessed pit 3ft. 6in. below ground level. They were selected for the display because they represent Australia yet are semi-domesticated to the extent that they do not require special enclosures. They have been reared in captivity and so are more likely to be more companionable than wild ones.

From this area the visitor moves out through a turnstile to an information booth where he can get further details and pamphlets.

The Exhibits

The design of the exhibits is the work of Mr. Robin Boyd, of Melbourne. His broad idea was to represent the Australian environment in the landscaping and ground floor exhibits.

The landscaping gives some impression of the unique qualities of Australian flora. There are limitations on the size of native plants that can be shown alive in Canadian conditions, but an effort has been made to provide a representative collection of trees and flowering shrubs, many of which are not found anywhere else in the world.

Outside, too, there are five large painted panels. All the painters responsible are distinguished artists, specially commissioned for the Works.

Australia in the World shows the world in a projection which places Australia in the centre rather than in the south-east corner, showing Australia's relationship to neighbouring countries.

This was painted by Michael Shannon, an artist whose studies of city-scapes are represented in all major Australian art galleries.

The Australian Land depicts the continent with a colourful indication of its geological and mineral characteristics. It was painted by Kenneth Jack, well known for stylish, conventionalised landscapes.

Australia and North America is a striking panel of vertical plastic strips oven-pressed on to the backboard. Australia and North America are drawn to the same scale for comparison.

This was done by Stan Ostoja, of Adelaide, who specialises in advanced techniques such as electronic "painting" and whose work is shown in Australian, American and European galleries.

Pacific Communications was also painted by Michael Shannon. It indicates the links between Australia and North America - cables, sea lanes, air routes and satellites.

The fifth is a free-standing panel introducing the kangaroo exhibit, an impression of kangaroos in their wild state. It was painted by Clifton Pugh, who specialises in interpreting the Australian bush and its animals.

All the internal exhibits were manufactured and designed in Australia and made of Australian materials. All fabrics and carpets are woollen. All timber is Tasmanian blackwood.

Main Exhibits

The area devoted to exhibits is divided into four sections - science, national development, the arts and way-of-life.

The science exhibit includes a scale model of the Parkes radiotelescope, three examples of original Australian research in the medical sciences and six examples of Australian research in agricultural science. A big panel overhead depicts the night sky of the southern hemisphere, painted by Donald Laycock, the Melbourne artist.

The main national development display is a map of Australia following the curvature of the earth and lit from within by a number of moving diagrams indicating activities in different regions. Heinz Grunwald was the graphic artist.

A second display is a cutaway model of the central section of the Snowy Mountains hydroelectric scheme.

The main arts exhibit comprises 32 paintings, a broad cross-section of modern Australian art. There are also Aboriginal bark paintings and a contrasting display of early Australian architecture and representative modern buildings.

One stand of the way-of-life exhibit has photographs of Australians in characteristic activities each one carrying on its reverse side a commentary of the same activity by a leading Australian newspaper cartoonist. A second stand carries a model of Canberra.

Structural Details

In the structure itself there are four mechanical equipment basements, 18ft. below ground, enclosed by circular concrete walls which form the foundations for the four tree forms.

The roof is entirely of timber. Each roof form has 16 laminated cantilevers rising to 34ft. with a cantilever span of 44ft. Each cantilever springs from a circular plan on ground level to form a square roof. The outward thrust is restrained by a circular tension cable in the roof.

The roof covering is of 4" tongued and grooved boards in the large spans, varying to 2" boards close in to the trunk of the tree.

On the top surfaces a light plastic membrane was applied for water-proofing. Internally, between cantilevers, a sprayed application of limpit asbestos deadens sound reflection.

The east and west solid walls are covered with 4ft. metal panels fixed to 3" rolled steel joists from floor to ceiling. They are finished internally with insulation covered with carpet.

The north and south walls are completely glazed with grey glass in 4ft. modules 11ft. 6in. high. They are framed with natural finished aluminium mullions from floor to ceiling.

All four walls of the exhibition area are braced externally with 8" by 4" steel box sections standing free 2 1/2" from the window frame and spanning between concrete floor beam and timber roof beam to give extra rigidity for wind loading.

The building is completely air-conditioned, air being brought down from the hollow tree trunks to the four mechanical basements. There it is processed and ducted back through the hollow laminated cantilevers.

Return air ducting is through the elaborate double-glazed space separating the timber cantilevers between the exhibition and ground floors.

Interior temperature is partially controlled by the slope of the external walls. The exhibition floor is set 8ft. back from the roof perimeter giving an inclining wall to provide overhang and reduce reflection. The inclined, glazed walls also reduce penetration by the sun's rays.

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AUSTRALIA IN THEME PAVILIONS

Australia has contributed exhibits and displays to four of Expo '67's Theme Pavilions. These reflect a variety of achievements in industry and communications as well as the unique background of its Aborigines.

Man the Explorer -

Aboriginal bark painting
Didgeridoo, a primitive wind instrument
Aboriginal language and music tapes
Antarctic protective clothing.

Man in the Community -

The Royal Flying Doctor Services
School of the Air - education in the remote outback
Wool Technology
Native Birds

Man the Producer -

Model of a coal dredge
Samples of brown coal and fossils
Film on Yallourn open-cut coalfield, Victoria

Man the Provider -

Australian merino ram
Merino wethers producing quality Australian wool
Merino-Border Leicester ewes used for production of
prime lamb

INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

A selection of Australian films of scientific and general interest have been supplied for the International Film Festival.

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SPECIAL DAY PROGRAMME

Each nation taking part in Expo '67 has been allotted a special day to present some aspect of its national traditions and character. These open-air performances will take place several times a week at the Place des Nations, Ile St. Helene. Australia's Special Day has been set down for June 6th.

PROGRAMME

Morning:

A brief ceremony will begin at approximately 10.25 a.m. with the arrival of the Commissioner-General of Expo '67, His Excellency Pierre Dupuy. A guard of honour will be provided by Expo and the Australian and Expo flags raised. M. Dupuy will give an address of welcome to the Head of State, or his official representative, and later visit the Australian Pavilion.

Afternoon:

A programme depicting the vigor and variety of Australia's outdoor life will begin at 2 p.m. Principal events are as follows:

Boomerang throw by Frank Donnellan of Sydney, New South Wales,

Sheep dog trial conducted by Allan McPherson Miller of Romney, Victoria.

Woodchopping contests between champion axemen of Australia, Canada and the United States.

Exhibition of lawn tennis, doubles and singles, between leading Australian and United States players.

The Central Band of the Royal Australian Air Force will also appear during the afternoon.

DIRECT TELECAST

The day's events will be telecast direct to Australia by a special unit of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. Transmission will be by Telestar, which provides a new link for major programmes of this kind across the Pacific Ocean. The Place des Nations programme is devised and directed by Robert Weipmann; commentary written by George Farwell.

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AUSTRALIAN ROLE AT WORLD FESTIVAL

Australia's representation at Expo '67 is not limited to its Pavilion. It will also play a prominent part at the World Festival in ballet, symphony music, popular entertainment and band concert.

BALLET:

The Australian Ballet gives six performances at the Salle Wilfrid Pelletier, Place des Arts, May 23rd-27th. Ballets to be performed are - THE DISPLAY, YUGEN, ELECTRA, all to choreography by Robert Helpmann; MELBOURNE CUP, John Reid; THE LADY AND THE FOOL, John Cranko; RAYMONDA, Rudolph Nureyev. Principal dancers - Marilyn Jones, Garth Welch, Brian Lawrence, Karl Welander. Joint artistic directors - Peggy van Praagh, C.B.E., Robert Helpmann, C.B.E.

The company was formed in 1962 by the Australian Ballet Foundation, under the joint sponsorship of the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust and J.C. Williamson Theatres Ltd. The Australian Ballet will tour South America after leaving Montreal.

MUSIC:

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra gives two performances at the Salle Wilfrid Pelletier on June 5th and 6th. Programme I comprises works by Mozart, Brahms and Australian composer Robert Hughes. Programme II works by Bach, Ravel, Dvorak, with Australian-born operatic soprano Marie Collier as Soloist, and the world premiere of Australian Peter Sculthorpe's Sun Music IV. Conductor - Willem van Otterloo.

The orchestra, founded in the early 1930's, is one of six major orchestras sponsored by the Australian Broadcasting Commission and financed by Federal, State and City Council funds. This is its first appearance in North America.

POP CONCERT:

"Pop Goes Australia" presents leading entertainers of stage and television in nine performances at the Expo Theatre, from May 29th - June 3rd, and two more on Australia's Special Day, June 6th, at the main bandshell, Ile St. Helene. Performers - The Seekers, Rolf Harris, Bobby Limb, Frank Donnellan and Normie Rowe. The group is sponsored by NLT Productions Ltd., Sydney.

BAND CONCERT:

The Central Band of the Royal Australian Air Force, which takes part in Australia's Special Day programme at the Place des Nations, Ile St. Helene, on June 6th, also gives several open-air concerts in the band shell nearby. Director of Music - Wing Commander L. Hicks.