

POST-WAR MELBOURNE REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE

Where: Generally found in the Melbourne region, some examples in Canberra

When: From 1945 to some late examples in the mid-1960s

Main practitioners: Robin Boyd, Roy Grounds, Neil Clerehan, Peter McIntyre



Background

After the Second World War, the international style put its stamp on cities throughout the western world. Possibly because of Australia's relative isolation, some recognisably regional modern architectural styles developed in Australia's major capital cities, most often found in houses and small buildings. The idea of a Melbourne interpretation of modern architecture was first articulated (and in many ways driven) by Robin Boyd. His book *Victorian Modern* (1947) traced the history of Victorian architecture and described a style of architecture that he hoped would be a response to local surroundings as well as the popular international style. He identified the early stages of a Melbourne regional style, seen in the work of Roy Grounds and in some outer suburban bush houses of the 1930s. The houses were typically narrow, linear, single storey with a low pitched gable roof with exposed rafters and wide eaves. Walls were generally bagged or painted brick and windows were large areas of glass with regularly spaced timber mullions. As the 1950s progressed, larger, more expensive versions of the style began to appear in the better suburbs of Melbourne (and Canberra) and the flat roofed house with the wide, overhanging eaves became more acceptable.

Features

- simple, unpretentious architecture
- flat or low-pitch gable roof
- low roofline emphasising horizontality
- narrow edge to roof
- widely projecting eaves
- long, unbroken roofline
- exposed rafters and joists
- timber posts, verandahs
- large areas of glass with regularly spaced timber mullions
- vertical or horizontal boarding, often left unpainted
- paint and colour used to highlight surfaces and edges