Statement of Significance: Santosa, 33 Albany Road, Toorak (March 2022)

Heritage Place: Santosa, Toorak	**PS ref no:** HO741



(Source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021)

What is significant?

The property at 33 Albany Road, Toorak (otherwise known as Santosa) is significant. The built form, materiality, siting, orientation and fenestration of the post-war modernist flat building is of local significance, along with the brick boundary wall, pedestrian entrance path and integrated undercroft car park. Later alterations and additions to the property are not significant.

How is it significant?

Santosa is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington. It also has significance as a design by the prolific post-war modernist Australian architect, Guilford Bell.

Why is it significant?

Santosa is of historical significance as an architect designed luxury apartment building constructed in the post-war period. An outcome of the growing popularity of higher density living and population increases in the post-war era, Santosa reflects the growth of architect designed luxury apartments in Toorak between the 1940s and 1960s. While the emergence of architect designed apartments has its roots in the interwar period, whereby local opposition to flat development saw developers employing noted architects to design apartments and maisonettes that emulated interwar style mansions, the post-war period saw the incorporation of Modernism into flat design and construction amongst leading architects. Santosa therefore forms a tangible link to this period of suburban development in Toorak. (Criterion A)

Santosa is of aesthetic significance as an intact and fine example of post-war modernism in flat design by virtue of its monumental qualities, repetitive detailing and considered composition. Key features contributing to its aesthetic value include its large rectilinear form built in brick, balanced in scale by the use of a shallow skillion roof and undercroft, minimal use of ornamentation, recessed floor-to-ceiling glazing, tiled entrance stairs and brick boundary wall. The use of an undercroft carpark featuring thin pilasters achieves a lightness and floating effect for the upper storey, generating a design that, when setback behind mature plantings, appears both luxurious and monumental. (Criterion E)

Santosa is of associative significance as a flat design by the prolific post-war modernist Australian architect, Guilford Bell. Santosa exemplifies the key elements characteristic of Bell's oeuvre, including his signature incorporation of aesthetic restraint, visual anonymity, blank walls to the street, rectilinear forms and symmetry in design. (Criterion H)

Primary source

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