

PROJECT PROFILE

PROJECT:
State Bank, NSW.

DESIGNERS:
Marsh Freedman
Associates, Sydney.

TEXT: from Haig Beck.

FURNITURE:
Knoll International.

The State Bank of NSW, having shed its parochial institutional demeanour, has been recast in an adventurous, young, entrepreneurial role. The designers' perception of the client body included the image of them as "new princes". The top two floors of a slick 36 storey tower in Martin Place accommodates the top echelons of management.

The two floors are envisaged as being entirely detached from all previous reference to the rest of the building, the street, the city.

George Freedman wanted a hierarchically structured series of spatial expressions controlled by a circulation system that measures and manipulates the experience of users and visitors. It actively sets the agenda of what you will experience and how you will traverse from space to space.

All rooms are given a specific character.

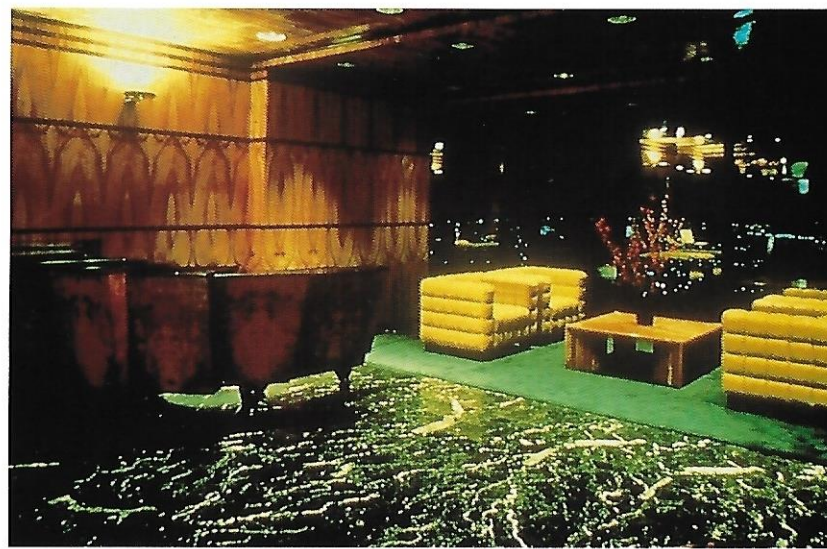
MANAGING DIRECTOR

The Managing Director and his deputy are paired, with similar wall and floor treatments.

All furniture selections for the M.D. are contemporary pieces designed by Otto Zapf for Knoll International.

"Nick Whitlam's office is full of strong accents and big statements But the furniture itself is really quite minimum in terms of numbers and placements. It is comfortable, highly coloured and generous in scale and form. An aspect that very much reflects the man - his scale attitudes and vision."

MANAGING DIRECTOR
Desk Chair: Otto Zapf.
Visitors: Otto Zapf.
Sofas: Otto Zapf.



RECEPTION

The timber veneered reception on the 35th floor pays homage to the work of Adolf Loos and Joseph Hoffmann. The multi-planned desk echos Marcel Duchamp's "Nude Descending the Stairs", painted when Loos and Hoffmann were the most influential architects in Northern Europe.

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RECEPTION
Sofas: Kubus, designed by Joseph Hoffmann, 1910. Now made in Australia under license by ASA.

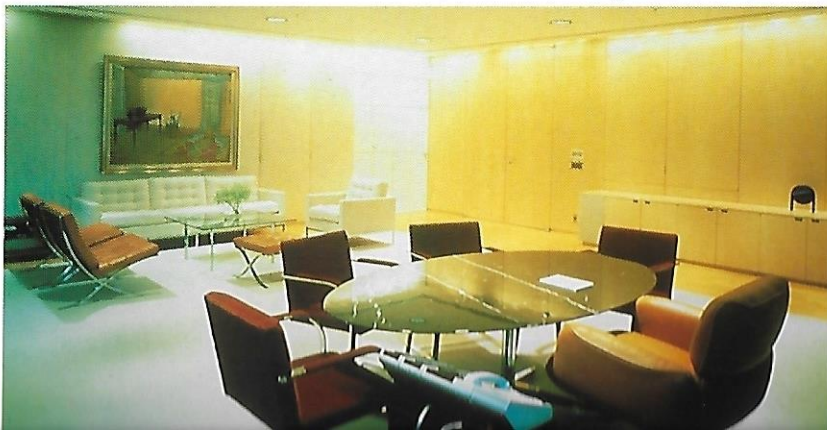
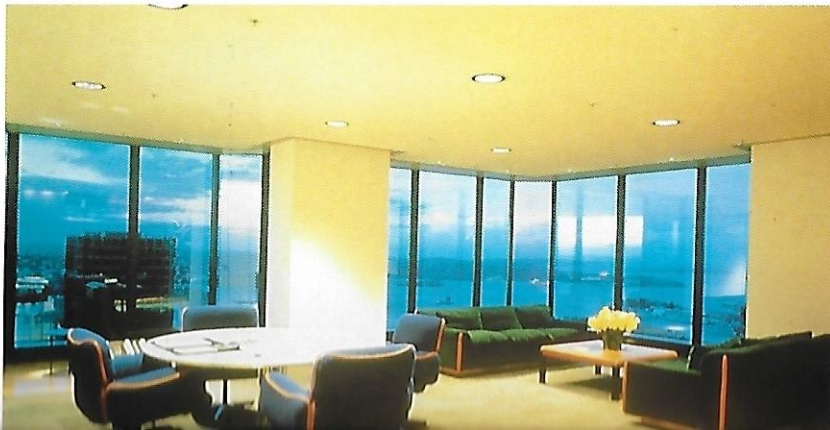
DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR

George Freedman trained under Florence Knoll in New York and the Deputy M.D.'s office is inspired by her International design of the early sixties.

"This room is my homage to her because she was my patron saint...The colour scheme is 60's New York."

Desk, credenza and sofas are designed by Florence Knoll. The *Barcelona* chairs, stool and coffee table were designed by Mies van der Rohe in 1927 for the Barcelona Pavilion. Flat bar *Bruno* visitors chairs, also by Mies van der Rohe were designed in 1930.

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DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR
Desk Chair: Otto Zapf.
Visitors: Bruno
Desk, Credenza, Sofa, Armchair: Florence Knoll.
Lounge Chair, Stool, Coffee Table: Barcelona.





▲ **GENERAL MANAGERS**
Desk Chair: Stephens.
Visitors: Brno.
Desk, Credenza, Coffee Table: Florence Knoll.
Sofas: Pfister.

GENERAL MANAGERS

The ten general Managers have been allocated identical office areas and plans. Different colours, design treatments and furniture items impart individuality within functional environments that reflect sound decision-making.

DINING ROOM ▶
Table: Pascal Mourgue.
Chairs: Brno.
Lounge Chairs: Mies van der Rohe.
Sofas, Armchair: Pfister.

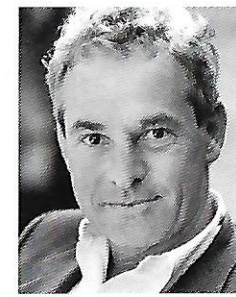


George Freedman's design for the State Bank substantially counters conventional assumptions of what a corporate interior might look like. Conventional corporate interiors express monolithic identity and power exercised through order and conformity, efficiency and sobriety.

Freedman defies this univalent reading of corporate identity in the State Bank. His design is a series of sets, different visions and backdrops, a pluralistic identity. The antecedents and precedents of interior design are freely invoked to express this pluralism, especially in references to the designers heroes: Soane, Hoffmann, Loos, Mies, and Ms Knoll.

What is being said about corporate image? The three senior offices are each given rooms of specific individual character. General Managers all have the same rooms with colour schemes tweaked to express individual preference. The current mega-star flamboyance of captains of commerce and industry is in quite a different league from the corporate anonymity of the pin-striped stuffed shirts of the 60's and 70's.

Given its time and place, the State Bank could hardly speak of things other than plurality and power, and the prestige and mystique of high finance and its merchant princes.



▲ **GEORGE FREEDMAN**