

Langer house

Address Swann Road, St Lucia, Brisbane

Practice Karl Langer

Designed c1950 Completed 1950

History & Description The house was erected in 1950 for Karl and Gertrude Langer and remained their home until their deaths in 1969 and 1984 respectively. The two storeyed brick structure with flat roof was constructed under post war building restrictions, with a floor area limit of 12.5 squares or 13.5 squares if a staircase was incorporated. At the rear of the house a rainforest garden was established using indigenous plants; ferns, native violets and verbenas, cunjevois, walking stick palms, myrtle bushes, ground orchids and rainforest trees. The front garden, a more formal arrangement with a hedge and fish pond was designed in the Japanese style. Timber furniture designed by Karl Langer in the 1930s was used to furnish the house. The house has since been altered internally and a lower level added.

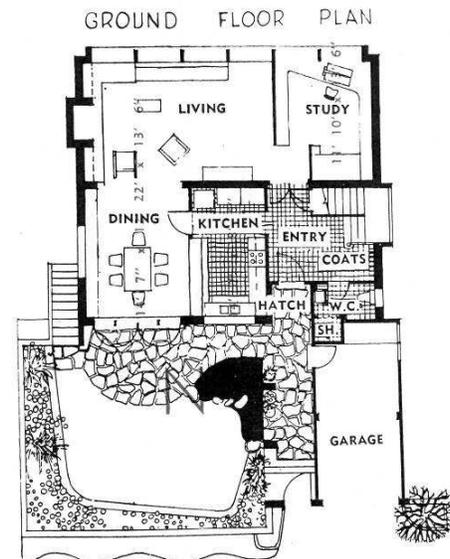
Architect, planner, and landscape architect Karl Langer (1903-69) was one of the most influential Queensland architect of the 1950s. Born in Vienna in 1903, from 1928-34 he was head architect in the Vienna office of Peter Behrens. Following the annexation of Austria, he came to Australia, together with his wife, art historian and critic, Gertrude Langer (1908-84), settling in Brisbane in 1939. Langer brought direct experience of the European Modern Movement to Queensland and influenced a whole generation of architects in the 1950s, particularly with his pioneering work on climatic design.

Statement of Significance The Langer House is an excellent example of the work of the influential architect Karl Langer. Through the decorative restraint of the facade detailing and composition, and the efficient planning of the house, Langer introduced to Brisbane aesthetic ideals and social concerns drawn from his experience of European modernism. It was an inventive solution to the problem of domestic design in Brisbane under post-Second World War building restrictions. Karl Langer's original observations of local climate and landscape led to the incorporation of climatic design principles and an innovative approach to garden design including experimental gardening in the Japanese style and the suburban rainforest garden. (QHR #600317)

Criteria Applicable N2 – Significant heritage value in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

N3 – Significant heritage value in establishing a high degree of creative achievement.

N5 – Having a special association with the life or works of an architect of significant importance in our history.



Images: *Australian Home Beautiful* (July 1953)

