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Title:

Statement: Adelaide Festival Centre - Stage III

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STATEMENT

from the Premier

Date April 18, 1975.....
Embargo.....

State Administration Centre,
Victoria Square, Adelaide,
South Australia 5001
228 4811

ADELAIDE FESTIVAL CENTRE - STAGE III

Underground car parking; additional office and general purpose space, fountains and a major environmental sculpture are the main features of the third and final stage of the Adelaide Festival Centre.

Announcing this today, the Premier, Mr. Dunstan, said that a \$4,350,000 contract had been let to Dillingham Constructions Pty. Ltd. for completion of the \$17m centre. Mr. Dunstan said that the site for Stage III, which was behind Parliament House, had been an eyesore for some time..

He said that some people called it the "Parliamentary Bomb-site".

"When Stage III is completed and linked to the whole Festival Complex, the area will be one of Australia's best designed inner-city environments."

Mr. Dunstan said that the contract for the completion of the Festival Centre Project included:

- * extension of the present plaza up to the base of the northern facade of Parliament House creating an additional three-quarters of a hectare of open plaza (approximately two acres)
- * construction of a two level underground car park accommodating 304 vehicles
- * erection of 1,060 square metres (11,400 square feet) of office and general purpose space to be used by the Festival Centre Trust, the Adelaide Festival of Arts, other arts bodies, and such facilities as a child-minding service for the Centre's patrons.

Mr. Dunstan said that the plaza extensions included sculpture design work by the internationally acclaimed West German sculptor and artist, Herbert Hajek.

"His work will make the surface of the "Southern Plaza" one of the most exciting outdoor art projects in the world and Australia's largest public work of art."

Mr. Dunstan said that the five buildings surrounding the area emphasised and underlined its importance.

They were the House of Parliament, The Playhouse, The Festival Theatre, The Old Legislative Council Chamber Building and The Railways Building.

"Each of these in their own distinctive way adds scale and balance to the total area, and when the Old Legislative Council Chamber Building is restored as a Parliamentary Museum, the total group will blend excellently."

At a Press Conference at the Festival Centre today, Mr. Dunstan unveiled a scale model of the sculpture and released montage photographs of how the completed plaza will look.

He said that the Hajek sculpture will incorporate several areas of concrete buttresses rising from the ground (the artist calls them "artificial gardens") together with a large fountain element topped by an 11 metre (35 foot) "City Sign" and flanked by two 5 metre (16 foot) sculptures.

These will be tied together with pathways and intricate ground patterns in vivid primary colours. He said that Mr. Hajek's design included two additional City Signs to be erected subsequently in areas adjacent to the Centre.

The Premier said that Mr. Hajek had visited Adelaide as the guest of The Festival Centre in mid-1973 to work with the architects, Hassell and Partners of Adelaide, on the upper plaza design.

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"The Centre wanted an environmental work of art which would capture the imagination of Adelaide's citizens and give added pleasure to the thousands of tourists who visit the Centre each week", Mr. Dunstan said.

"It was always anticipated that the plaza areas of the Centre would become a community place on the edge of the city which the public could use for relaxation and recreation", he said.

"The new upper plaza with its attractive sculptural qualities is sure to give stimulus and enjoyment to all those who use it, particularly children for whom the artificial gardens will become exciting play areas."

The Premier said that work on the Centre is scheduled for completion late next year.

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NOTE:

Otto Herbert Hajek was born in Czechoslovakia but has lived most of his life in West Germany. He has become one of the leading figures in the post war European art movement and is world-famous for the series of highly acclaimed environmental commissions he has undertaken since 1954.

A believer that architecture should be enhanced by the sculptor to become part of a total aesthetic, human-scale environment, his designs have sought to eliminate the desolate quality of modern city systems.



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