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The Design of the Mayfair Flats

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Abstract

Constructed in Parnell, Auckland, in 1929, and listed as Category 2 place by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust in 1981, the Mayfair Flats are a remarkably well-preserved example of 1920s apartment design in Aotearoa New Zealand. This paper aims to comprehensively analyse the Mayfair Flats building, exploring its historical context, and how the limitations and opportunities of the budget, materials and technology inform the architectural response. The spatial organisation, layout between the private and shared spaces, the structural system, materials and architectural elements that define this character of the building can be understood by examining the architectural principles employed by the architect, William Gummer, learned during his time at London's Royal Academy of Art, and made clear by the design books he read and recommended to other professionals and students. This paper will also discuss the client's motivations and the building's construction history. This research aims to deepen our understanding of the architectural significance of the Mayfair Flats in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland.

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