

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Location Orica House, Level 6,
1 Nicholson Street, Melbourne

Client Bates Smart Pty Ltd

Design Bates Smart Pty Ltd –
Jeff Copolov, Kendra Pinkus, Allan Lamb

Schiavello (Vic) Systems

Arthur Salmon, Susanna Tigani, Rex Lambert

Schiavello (Vic) Fitout

Richard Halasa, Kyle Jensen

Prima Architectural Darren Callander

Eledat Stuart Darke

Area 950 m²

Bates Smart

Leading Australian design practice creates its own evocative workspace within one of its own renowned architectural commissions.

When one of Australia's leading architecture and interior design practices designs its own new workspace, the result deserves close attention.

Bates Smart's recently completed Melbourne office is located in Orica House, formerly ICI House and Melbourne's first skyscraper. Originally designed by the practice in 1955, ICI House is one of Australia's best modern buildings. Bates Smart has drawn from a wealth of in-house talent to create an office designed for creativity and collaboration.

In determining the design and quality of the finished spaces, Bates Smart conceived a simple and dramatic scheme, essentially enclosed spaces inserted into a larger open-plan floor plate. The building's original design and architectural fabric was retained, creating a dialogue between old and new.

"The new office unified our practice. We moved from a two-level cellular heritage building to a one-level unencumbered studio space designed for direct and easy communication," explained Roger Poole, Chairman of Bates Smart. "Everyone in the office works in one big room and can see everyone else."

The spacious central open plan studio environment is expressed through strong horizontal planes, reflecting the firm's horizontal team structures and emphasis on team communication. The elements of natural light, equal access to views, and centrally-configured, custom designed Schiavello workstations merge with the charcoal carpet, to create clear vision paths. Clean surfaces and finishes, and a monochromatic scheme provide a calm, ordered feel to the work environment.

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Above Image The black epoxy resin floor, contrasting with the satin white counter proves to be a striking reception lobby for Bates Smart.



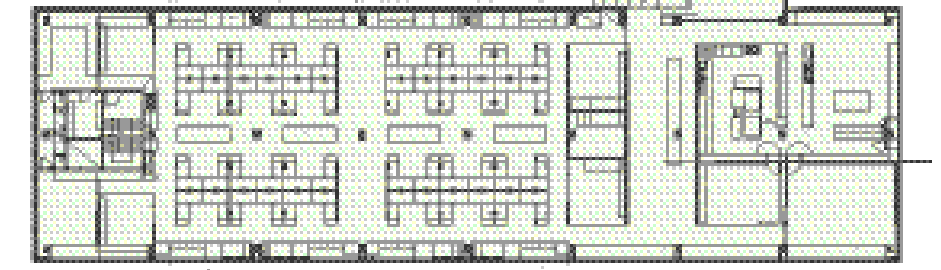
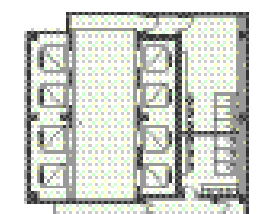
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White ceilings and exposed services add light and a newfound sense of space. "The fitout involved the complete removal of the suspended ceiling system revealing the building's original structure and services," said Richard Halasa of Schiavello Fitout.

"Schiavello's ability to deal with both fitout works and fitout joinery was an important factor in selecting them to implement the works, particularly as specially crafted fitout joinery was a substantial part of the design," said Jeffrey Copolov, Bates Smart's Interiors Director, who led the design team.

Schiavello workstations, specially designed by Bates Smart, feature a laminate finish with natural aluminium trim. The workplaces are arranged to encourage interaction between teams and project groups while affording ample flexibility to facilitate change. Directors' offices are freestanding cubes inserted into the studio space, detached from the building fabric, with glass walls to provide some acoustic isolation while they are still visually open to the wider studio space.

The reception lobby boasts an outstanding city view, and divides the studio and the multi-purpose print room, café, and trade library. Schiavello architectural joinery includes elements made from dark-stained timber veneer with routed joints which refer back to the building's original lift lobby timber strip panelling. A black epoxy resin floor finish contrasts with glossy white panelling in the lift lobby by creating a play of light and reflections upon entry to the striking office.



Typical Floor

Opposite Page [1] Freestanding glass cubed directors' offices. This Page [2] The specially designed workstations filled into the open plan environment encourage team communication. [3] Multi-purpose print room, café, and trade library in use.



[2]



[3]