

Richard Johnsons presentation

GUEST SPEAKER

Richard Johnson AO, MBE



This summary is deliberately brief as the full presentation is available via the Zoom link below.

Richard delivered his presentation in two parts, the significance of the building and then his practice's role in the refurbishments prior to the Sydney Olympic games around 1998.

He described at length the beauty and balance of the Opera House in its location by the harbour, the geometry and inspiration of the of its design before leading into the large number of direct benefits to Sydney and Australia. He noted that it is one of the busiest performing arts centres in the world, its worldwide significance even attracting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra on two separate occasions.

Further emphasising the impact of the building, Richard outlined the large number of remarkable innovations attributed to the building, the crucial importance of ticket sales to support Ballet and Opera in Australia, the huge number of visitors each year and the many jobs it supports.

With regard to his firm's role in the refurbishment, they made their involvement conditional upon being allowed to involve Jørn Utzon in their work. Richard highlighted the vital relationship that was developed with Utzon by numerous visits to Majorca and Denmark. He gave examples of their work that conformed with Utzon's original design principles and also evidence of Utzon's specific contributions were outlined.

A number of questions were addressed and then Ray Hyslop gave a vote of thanks for Richard's thoroughly interesting and informative presentation.