

AUSTRALIA'S TOP 10 CONCRETE PUBLIC ARCHITECTURAL WORKS UNVEILED BY EXPERT PANEL

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What do the Sydney Opera House, the High Court building in Canberra and the main carpark at the University of Melbourne have in common? They have all been named among the top 10 most outstanding concrete public architectural works in Australia of the past nine decades.

A judging panel comprising some of Australia's best-known architects and building experts today unveiled the first ever list of the 10 most outstanding concrete public buildings in the country.

The publication of the Top 10 List marks the 90th anniversary of the establishment of the organisation that represents the heavy construction materials industry, Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia (CCAA).

The Top 10 List was announced at a ceremony held at the Sydney Opera House, which is one of the buildings or structures on the list, along with iconic national buildings such as the High Court of Australia in Canberra, and more recent works like the Punchbowl Mosque in Sydney.

The other structures in the Top 10 List are: the Australian Academy of Sciences' Shine Dome in Canberra; Australia Square in Sydney, which was the country's first "round" skyscraper; the Gladesville Bridge in Sydney; James Cook University Library in Townsville; the Melbourne University Carpark; Victorian State Offices, also in Melbourne; and the Queensland Art Gallery, in Brisbane.

The Chief Executive Officer of CCAA, Ken Slattery, said the Top 10 List highlighted the aesthetic, environmental, and social contribution concrete has made, and continues to make, to Australia's urban landscapes since the organisation began nine decades ago.

"Since 1929, Cement, Concrete & Aggregates Australia has promoted the inherent qualities, flexibility and sustainability of concrete as a building and construction material," Mr Slattery said.

"To mark our 90th year, we embarked on a quest to find Australia's most important and distinctive concrete public architectural landmarks, highlighting the central role that concrete has played in Australia's urban landscape throughout the past nine decades.

"Some of the Top 10 structures sit in harmony with the landscape, while others are proudly uncompromising; some have Brutalist, geometric composition while others have continuous free-flowing forms, but collectively, this list captures the limitless potential of concrete."

The chair of the judging panel, Peter Poulet, a former NSW Government Architect and current Central City District Commissioner for the Greater Sydney Commission, said the ten had been selected from a list of 45 nominations based on three criteria.

“Choosing a top 10 from the hundreds of outstanding concrete public architectural works in Australia of the past 90 years was an extremely challenging but truly rewarding task,” Mr. Poulet said.

“The judging panel successfully managed to whittle down a long list of 45 nominations to 23 finalists, before reaching a consensus on the Top 10 we are announcing today.

“The selection was based on three criteria: Architectural Merit (the form, function and structure of the building); Innovation in the use of concrete as a material, as a structure, and aesthetically; and finally, Exemplar of the time, which determined whether the project redefined and expanded concrete’s potential.

“This list represents the most outstanding and iconic examples of Australian concrete public architecture from CCAA’s inception back in 1929.

“The buildings and structures remind us of the resilient, enduring beauty of concrete - and it is this durability that makes it a key enabling material to put society on a sustainable transition path.”

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