

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **Sydney Opera House celebrates World Heritage with joy and pride**

The Sydney Opera House community today celebrated the announcement of World Heritage Listing with excitement, pride and a deep sense of responsibility.

“Inclusion of Sydney Opera House on the World Heritage List confirms the very special significance it has for all people, wherever they live,” the Chair of the Sydney Opera House Trust, Kim Williams said.

“The Trust and staff feel very profoundly that we are the custodians of one of the world’s most important buildings, and that we are entrusted with a treasure of international significance on behalf of this generation and generations to come.”

The expert evaluation report to the World Heritage Committee stated: “...it stands by itself as one of the indisputable masterpieces of human creativity, not only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century but in the history of humankind.”

“Its staggering beauty draws millions of people each year to Bennelong Point,” Mr Williams said.

“We are indebted to the fearless vision of the man behind its genesis, former Premier Joe Cahill and the selection committee for the design competition which dared to embrace its unique design.

“Above all, we are indebted to architect Jørn Utzon and the architects, engineers, builders and craftsmen who were inspired by his designs and vision for a great building – a building which drew references from ancient and modern traditions but was so different to anything ever built before.

“They went with Utzon to the edge of the possible, making ground-breaking innovations in engineering and technology.

“We are blessed that Utzon is still the architect for Sydney Opera House, making functional and aesthetic improvements in keeping with his Design Principles and the Conservation Management Plan.

“We are in awe of his genius, generous spirit and deep affection for the building and the people of Sydney.”

It is 50 years since Utzon was announced as the competition winner (January 1957) and 33 years since Sydney Opera House was officially opened (October 1973). It is the youngest cultural site to ever be included on the World Heritage List.

The Chief Executive of Sydney Opera House, Dr Norman Gillespie, said preparation of the World Heritage nomination and the UNESCO evaluation processes were extremely rigorous, with international experts inspecting the site, and evaluating its merits against prescribed criteria as well as the management and legislative safeguards for the building.

“Sydney Opera House, the NSW Government and the Federal Government prepared a very detailed joint nomination and we felt passionately that it deserved this recognition,” Dr Gillespie said.

“This is a historic moment in the history of the House. We are thrilled to have secured World Heritage Listing on behalf of every Australian.”

The World Heritage Committee recognised Sydney Opera House as a daring and visionary experiment resulting in an unparalleled building that defied categorisation and found an original style in which to express civic values in monumental public buildings.

