

TUESDAY 20TH OCTOBER

Queen Elizabeth II opened The Sydney Opera House on this day 1973. It is an instantly recognisable building regardless of whether you are a fan of opera or not.

It was designed by Danish architect Jørn Utzon after an international competition in 1957 entered by 233 architects from more than 30 countries. When construction began in 1959 nobody had yet worked out how to build its extraordinary roof.



The breakthrough came when Utzon realised that every curved roof section could be formed from the surface of the same sphere. Instead of making every section with a completely different curve, builders could manufacture concrete components using shared spherical moulds.

The sail-shaped roofs were designed to reflect the boats of Sydney Harbour, rather than for any **acoustic** properties. The two halls have their own carefully designed ceilings to reflect sound towards the audience. Despite the name, the Opera House hosts concerts, theatre and comedy as well as Opera, but has become a unique symbol of Sydney and Australia.

- Would you like to visit the Sydney Opera House one day?
- Can a building's appearance ever be as important as what happens inside it?
- Which building would represent your town or city, and why?

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