

Pause for thought...

"Where the spirit does not work with the hand there is no art."

— Leonardo Da Vinci

Recent Art News

- ['Corot to Monet'](#)
- [Ars Electronica Center](#)
- [8 Foot Atlantic Herring](#)
- [Grace in Stone](#)
- [David Malikovic Solos at Metro](#)
- [Mary Randlett Photography](#)
- [Michael Brunswick's "In Motion"](#)
- [Crimean War Nurse Portrait](#)
- [Claremont Museum shows "Multiverse"](#)
- [Michael Kane Book Launch](#)

[more](#)

Art News Worldwide

Links to [Art News Worldwide](#)

Subscribe Free to Art Knowledge News

Click [here](#) to register for the Art Knowledge News Email newsletter.

Of Continuing Interest...

- ▣ [Picasso's Blue Period 1901-04](#)
- ▣ [Van Gogh pps With Music & Words](#)

Home

Danish Architect Joern Utzon, Who Designed Sidney Opera House, Dies



Danish architect, Joern Utzon - The Sydney Opera House - Photo: Bjarte Sorensen

COPENHAGEN.- Danish architect, Joern Utzon, who conceived the Sydney Opera House, has died aged 90, the director of the Utzon art and architecture centre in Denmark said Saturday to AFP. "He died overnight at a care centre north of Copenhagen after suffering a heart attack," Adrian Carter told AFP, adding that Utzon had undergone "major surgery" earlier this year which left him in a weakened state.

Utzon was born in Copenhagen as the son of a naval engineer, and grew up in Denmark. From 1937 he studied architecture at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts and worked for Alvar Aalto and Frank Lloyd Wright. He started his own office in 1950 in Copenhagen. In 1957 he unexpectedly won the competition to design the Sydney Opera House, despite the fact that it was his first non-domestic design and his entry did not meet the contest criteria; the designs he submitted were little more than preliminary drawings. **One of the judges, Eero Saarinen, described it as "genius" and declared he could not endorse any other choice. In contrast, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe turned his back when introduced to Utzon.**

Over several years Utzon gradually made major changes from his original concept designs and gradually developed a way to construct the large shells that cover the two halls, replacing the original elliptical shells with a design based on complex sections of a sphere. Utzon says his design was inspired by the simple act of peeling an orange: the 14 shells of the building, if combined, would form a perfect sphere.

Although Utzon had spectacular plans for the interior of these halls, he was unable to realize this part of his design. In mid-1965 the state Liberal government of Robert Askin was elected and Utzon soon found himself in conflict with the new Minister for Public Works, Davis Hughes. Attempting to rein in the escalating cost of the project, Hughes began questioning Utzon's designs, schedules and cost estimates, and he eventually stopped the payments to Utzon, who was forced to resign as chief architect in February 1966. He secretly left the country days later, never to return.

In an article in Harvard Design Magazine in 2005, Professor Bent Flyvbjerg argues that Utzon fell victim to a politically lowballed construction budget, which eventually resulted in a cost overrun of 1,400 per cent. The overrun and the scandal it created kept Utzon from building more masterpieces. This, according to Flyvbjerg, is the real cost of the Sydney Opera House



A masterpiece of human creative genius. Joern Utzon after meeting the media at the site of the Sydney Opera House on March 8, 1966.

House.

The Opera House was finally completed, and opened in 1973 by Elizabeth II, Queen of Australia. The architect was not invited to the ceremony, nor was his name mentioned.

In March 2003, Utzon was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Sydney for his work on the Opera House. Utzon's son accepted the award on his behalf as he himself was too ill to travel to Australia. Utzon has also been made a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) and given the Keys to the City of Sydney. He has also been involved in redesigning the Opera House, and in particular, the Reception Hall, following an agreement made in 2000. Also, in 2003, he received the Pritzker Prize, architecture's highest honor.

On 28 June 2007, the Sydney Opera House was declared a World Heritage site

- [Dali Exhibition pps](#)
- [Visit the Louvre](#)
- [Renoir Exhibit pps](#)
- [Marc Chagall Paintings pps](#)
- [Rob Gonsalves : Amazing Illusions](#)
- [Monet Seascapes w/ music pps](#)
- [Russian Masterpieces pps w/ music](#)
- [Paul Cezanne Paintings pps](#)
- [Paris by Night Photos... PPS](#)
- [Michelangelo pps](#)
- [GAUDI ...His World](#)
- [Outstanding Caricatures](#)
- [Antique Cars Photos](#)
- [Antique Automobiles pps](#)
- [Vatican Views pps with Sound](#)
- [Japanese Paper Art pps](#)
- [Moscow's Subway Stations](#)
- [Diego Rivera - pps](#)
- [Pissarro Exhibition pps / with sound](#)
- [Satire . . The Church of Art and Apathy](#)
- [Venus by Ricardo Celma](#)
- [Art Deco - High Style](#)
- [Art Licensing Basics...](#)
- [Galleries Reject Artists...Why?](#)
- [Good Fake/Bad Fake?](#)
- [How to Donate to a Museum](#)
- [The Forbidden City China PPS with Music](#)
- [Museum Paintings Computer Adjusted](#)
- [Art of Sleeping pps](#)
- [Essay...Rebels of the 1950's](#)
- [Kung Hey Fat Choy, The 2 Faces of China...pps](#)
- [Google Doodler: Sketch artist Dennis Hwang achieves cult status](#)

[Old Master's Profiles...](#)

02-01-2009

Danish Architect Joern Utzon, Who D...

Click [here](#) to view the profiles.

[Visit the Louvre Museum](#)

Click [here](#) to visit the Louvre Museum

[Subscribe to RSS](#)

[XML](#)

[Subscribe to Magazine](#) * [Links](#) * [FAQ](#) * [Quotes](#) * [Contact Us](#) * [Link 2 Us](#) *
