

Citation – John Denton

John Denton is one of Australia's best-known architects, whose practice Denton Corker Marshall is internationally renowned for aesthetic innovation and design excellence. Denton was born in 1945 in Fiji, where he spent his first five years before moving with his family to Melbourne in 1950. From 1963 until 1969 he studied architecture at the University of Melbourne, where he also graduated with a Diploma of Town and Regional Planning in 1971. In 1972, he co-founded the architecture practice Denton Corker Marshall (DCM) with fellow University of Melbourne graduates Bill Corker and Barrie Marshall.

Denton has been influential in growing and shaping Denton Corker Marshall into one of the most successful and significant Australian-owned international architecture and design practices, comprising at various times more than 150 staff worldwide. The practice has expanded to include offices in Melbourne, London, Manchester and Jakarta. At one time, DCM also had offices in Kuala Lumpur, Warsaw and Hanoi. In 2011, 75% of the work of Denton Corker Marshall was conducted overseas.

In Australia, the firm gained national attention first with its winning design for Melbourne City Square (1976), then its shortlisted entry for Parliament House, Canberra (1980), and, with Robert Peck YFHK Pty Ltd, the multi-award-winning No.1 Collins Street, Melbourne (1981), a sensitive combination of new office tower and heritage buildings. The firm's work has been characterised by careful contextual and programmatic responses and an architectural vocabulary that fosters the tradition of abstraction in modernism and bold architectonic formalism.

Denton Corker Marshall gained national prominence during in the late 1990s through a series of highly visible and multi-award-winning public commissions including the Adelphi Hotel, the Museum of Victoria, the Melbourne Exhibition Centre, the Melbourne Gateway on Tullamarine Freeway, and the Bolte Bridge. Their distinctive work has continued to raise the profile of Australian Architecture both in Australia and overseas, through exhibitions, publications and projects like the award-winning Manchester Civil Justice Centre, the Stonehenge Visitor Centre and Interpretive Museum, the Museum of Sydney and Governor Phillip Tower, Sydney, and successive buildings and additions to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, including ANZAC Hall, as well as Australian embassies in Tokyo, Beijing and Jakarta. In 2015, the new Australian Pavilion, designed by Denton Corker Marshall, was opened in Venice's Giardini Pubblici.

In addition to his work within Denton Corker Marshall, John Denton has held significant positions with external organisations. In 2006 he was appointed the first Victorian Government Architect for a period of two years, during which he advised the Premier and Cabinet on architecture and design outcomes for Government. He has been a member of the Expert Advisory Panel on Cities for the Council of Australian Government's Reform Council (COAG). He has held positions on the South Australian Government Integrated Design Commission Advisory Board and the Board of the Victorian Endowment for Science Knowledge and Innovation (VESKI), and is former Chairman of the Australian Government Interim Advisory Board for the establishment of the Creative Innovation Centre in Sydney. He is currently Chairman of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) and Adjunct Professor of Architecture at Monash University.

Denton is recognised as being highly skilled in the design of major institutional and public buildings, and numerous projects under his control have been recognised with national and international awards. He also shares his considerable passion and knowledge of architecture and design with others, lecturing on the work of Denton Corker Marshall to architecture schools and professional institutes in Australia and abroad, and through engagements as a keynote speaker. He has guest lectured frequently on the firm's work in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning (ABP) at the University of Melbourne and has been a regular critic in the school for more than two decades. In 2013, the firm's work was exhibited in ABP's Wunderlich Gallery. Denton is a Life Fellow of the Australian Institute of Architects (AIA). His contributions to the discipline were recognised with the award of the prestigious AIA Gold Medal in 1996 and with an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Monash University in 2007.