

The Guardian

Sydney Opera House: the designs that didn't make it - in pictures

In 1956, the New South Wales premier Joseph Cahill announced a competition - open to anyone - to design a national opera house at Bennelong Point in Sydney. There were more than 200 entries and the eventual winner, Jørn Utzon's concrete shells, took 17 years to realise. But what of the designs that didn't make the cut? UK-based creative studio NeoMan were commissioned by Budget Direct to research and render seven of those entries, working with Venezuelan architecture specialists Projection Comunicación Arquitectónica to produce the final images, republished with permission below.

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Philadelphia collaborative group

The seven architects who created the second place design were described as a 'pick-up band'. They included Leon Loschetter, George Qualls, Walter Weisman, and Robert Geddes, who taught at the University of Pennsylvania. Loschetter was a visiting critic from Grasse, France.





Philadelphia collaborative group

The group's design was praised for its 'robust' spiral structure which was 'well-suited' to its position on Bennelong Point.



Paul Boissevain and Barbara Osmond

The Dutch-British team's entry was conservative next to Marzella and Utzon's concrete seashells, which is why it was consigned to third place in the contest. Paul Boissevan was born in Hilversum, Netherlands. He retained his Dutch citizenship, despite living in Scotland. He married fellow architect Barbara Joan Osmond at Eton.



Paul Boissevain and Barbara Osmond

The Boissevain & Osmond architecture practice started in 1947. Boissevain and Osmond spent six months working with theatre and acoustic consultants to perfect their design. The judges were impressed with the human scale of the building and its promenade.



SW Milburn and Partners

Stanley Wayman Milburn and Eric Dow's design was not so dissimilar from Boissevain and Osmond's box-shape-with-promenade. But Milburn and Dow tucked their promenade under the raised building and planted a helicopter pad up on the roof, presumably in case the conductor needed to get somewhere in a hurry.



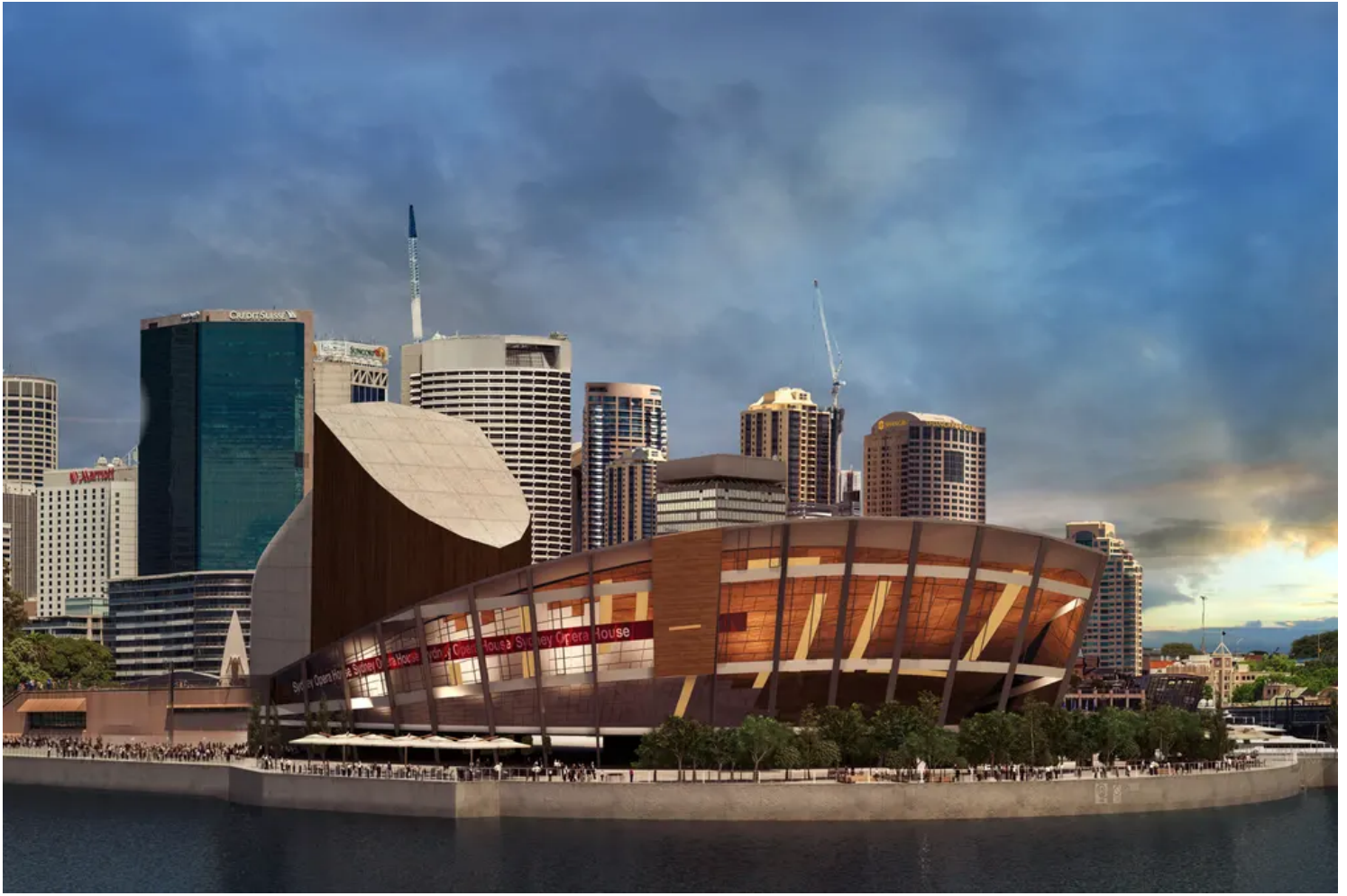
SW Milburn and Partners

Milburn was born in 1887 and studied architecture at Durham University. Little is known about Eric Dow. He apprenticed at W & TR Milburn. He eventually left with Stanley Milburn to form a new firm. He studied architecture at University College London.



Peter Kollar and Balthazar Korab

Refugees from the communist regime in Hungary, Kollar and Korab's entry was the highest-ranking entry from an Australian entity. The judges commented on the project's 'very skilful planning'.



Peter Kollar and Balthazar Korab -

Kollar moved to Australia in 1950. He eventually joined the faculty of architecture of the University of New South Wales, where he lectured until his death in 2000.



Vine and Vine

The sprawling design by British firm Vine and Vine was made up of two auditoria, separated by a restaurant. Like many of their competitors, the Vines made provision for outdoor space - in their case with a sunken waterside plaza.



Vine and Vine

Two auditoriums was too many for the judges, who consigned the firm's idea, complete with vivid red facade, to history.



Sir Eugene Goossens

Although never entered into the competition, the design created by Sir Eugene Goossens, a famous English conductor and composer, could have been realised as he held substantial political sway.



Sir Eugene Goossens

Goossens was not only the conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra but also the director of the NSW Conservatorium of Music and one of the key voices in demanding an opera house be built.