

## Mr Glenn Marcus Murcutt AO

The degree of Doctor of Science in Architecture (honoris causa) was conferred upon Glenn Marcus Murcutt AO at the ceremony held at 2.00pm on 23 April 2004.



Glenn Murcutt, DSc(Arch) honoris causa, *photo by and used with the kind permission of Daniel Murcutt.*



Glenn Murcutt (centre) with Professor Tom Heneghan, Chair of Architecture (left) and Professor Gary Moore, then Dean of the Faculty of Architecture (right), after the conferring ceremony held on 23 April 2004, *photo by and used with the kind permission of Daniel Murcutt.*

## Citation

Chancellor, I have the honour to present Glenn Marcus Murcutt, AO, for admission to the degree of Doctor of Science in Architecture, *honoris causa*.

Glenn Murcutt is the most famous architect in Australia, and most would agree the most famous Australian architect of all time. No Australian architect, living or dead, has furthered the cause of architecture and architectural education, within our shores and internationally, to the same extent. So great is the international reputation of Glenn Murcutt that his place as a representative of Australian architecture is assured for all time.

Glenn Murcutt is an architect, a designer, a subject of the scholarly work of many, and an educator.

Murcutt has achieved more architectural awards and honours, both national and international, than any other Australian architect, including the Royal Australian Institute of Architects' Gold Medal in 1992, the Finnish Alvar Aalto Medal in 1992, the 1999 Green Pin International Award for Architecture and Ecology from the Academy of Architects, Denmark, the Richard Neutra Award for Architecture and Teaching, and the 2001 Thomas Jefferson Medal for Architecture in America. In 2002 he became the first Australian Pritzker Prize Laureate, the most prestigious architectural award in the world, an honour internationally recognized as the equivalent of the Nobel Prize for Architecture.

J Carter Brown, Jury Chairman of the Pritzker Prize, observed on the occasion of the awarding of that honour at Michelangelo's Campidoglio in Rome:

"Glenn Murcutt occupies a unique place in today's architectural firmament. In an age obsessed with celebrity, the glitz of our 'starchitects' [sic] backed by large staffs and copious public relations support dominates the headlines. As a total contrast, our laureate works in a one-man office on the other side of the world from much of the architectural profession, yet has a long waiting list of clients, so intent is he to give each project his personal best. He is an innovative architectural technician who is capable of turning his sensitivity to the environment and to locality into forthright, totally honest, non-showy works of art. Bravo!"

Murcutt is the most written about architect in our history. Distinguished French architectural historian and critic, Françoise Fromont, recognized Murcutt as the "first Australian architect whose work has attracted international attention." Indeed the subsequent great interest in, and admiration of Australian contemporary architecture abroad, owe immeasurable debt to Murcutt and his remarkable body of work. The eminent architectural historian and critic, Professor Kenneth Frampton of Columbia University, has observed:

"There can be no question as to the salient role played by Glenn Murcutt over the past 25 years, particularly with regard to the self-conscious cultivation of a specifically Australian version of modern architecture, the undeniable excellence of which is now being recognized as a significant national culture all over the world."

Throughout his career Murcutt has devoted, and continues to dedicate, much of his time to teaching young architects. He began his long experience as a Design Tutor in the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Sydney where he taught a generation of students from 1970 to 1979. Amongst some of his subsequent teaching positions have been Adjunct Professor at the Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania, Visiting Professor at the University of Technology, Helsinki, Thomas Jefferson Professor at the University of Virginia, Visiting Professor at the School of Architecture, Aarhus, Denmark, Visiting Professor at UCLA, William Henry Bishop Visiting Professor at Yale University, and Ruth and Norman Moore Visiting Professor at Washington University St Louis. He has continued his association with our Faculty of Architecture through occasional lectures throughout the years. From the decade of his design tutorship, through his lectures, his buildings and the publications about his buildings, he has made an outstanding contribution to and has immeasurably influenced several generations of students and young architects around Australia and the world.

Perhaps the concluding words could come from Richard Leplastrier, one of our most distinguished alumni, a fellow RAI Gold Medallist, who first met Murcutt when they tutored design here at the University of Sydney:

"Murcutt's work and teaching (how can they be separated) started like this. From simple beginnings it has become over the years one of the main stems to which so many branches of architecture now refer. His impact is far reaching both inside and outside the country. His formidable body of work is an interlocking trunk of the many strands that underpin the ethos of sustainable place, the land, how it is formed and how things fit to and within it."

Chancellor, I present Glenn Marcus Murcutt for admission to the degree of Doctor of Science in Architecture, *honoris causa*, and I invite you to confer the degree upon him.