AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL WINS IALD AWARD OF MERIT
LIGHTING DESIGN BY STEENSEN VARMING

SAN DIEGO, CA USA, 28 APRIL | Luminaries of the lighting profession gathered at the San Diego Air and Space Museum on 27 April to honor the winners of the 33rd Annual International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD) International Lighting Design Awards. Seventeen projects from eight countries were on display – including religious spaces, memorials, façades, and even a gas station. Taken together, the winners represent some of the most innovative and inspiring work found anywhere in the world of architectural lighting design.

The Australian War Memorial in Canberra, Australia, with lighting design by Steensen Varming, took home an IALD Award of Merit, accepted in person by lead designer Mirjam Roos, Associate IALD.

Positioned just across from the nation’s Parliament House, the Australian War Memorial is enhanced by a powerful lighting scheme that strikes a balance between subtle and commemorative lighting languages, exhibits respect for the building’s narrative, and dramatically highlights the memorial’s position as one of the world’s great national monuments. Based on a holistic masterplan, the scheme emphasizes the building’s sculptural form through light and shade with a commanding hierarchy comprehensible from all sides. The team’s design choices reinforce the importance of the building’s memorial hall, while embracing building features and statues as visual anchors.

“This is quiet, respectful, focused lighting, with just enough to aid visibility after dark,” said one judge.

Utilizing concealed sources, the lighting designers from Steensen Varming applied light to radiate from the inside out, coming through stained glass windows, the gate, and other openings, symbolizing the heart of the building and creating a night time image to emphasize the space’s meaning. The importance of the dome is intensified by lighting – precisely aimed and with careful beam control – that enhances shape and material through striking contrast at night time and making a respectful impression even when competing with daylight.

The inner courtyard houses the Roll of Honour, featuring engraved names of the fallen. Names projected in light on the façade create a personal and intimate connection for visitors who have sent loved ones to war. The Eternal Flame’s warm glow is balanced by sensitively adjusted lighting levels, bathing the courtyard in a soft uniform glow from within cloistered walkways.

“Sensitive use of low light levels throughout the project consciously welcome darkness as a part of the composition,” another judge observed, “allowing the space’s solemnity to be clearly understood.”

Mounting details allowed for access and satisfied stringent heritage and architectural requirements for integration. While making a minimal impact on the building fabric, the final positioning achieved optimal light distribution and conceptual integrity.

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The IALD Lighting Design Awards program, established in 1983, honors lighting projects that display high aesthetic achievement backed by technical expertise. Additionally, projects can also be submitted for consideration in the sustainable design award category, which means the project undergoes an additional round of judging keyed solely to the fulfillment of sustainable design principles. A panel of award-winning lighting designers, architects and interior designers review the projects.

For complete details and high resolution photos of this year’s award-winning projects, visit iald.org.

The International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD), established in 1969, is an international organization supporting a network of more than 1,250 lighting design professionals who satisfy its rigorous qualification process. Its members are distinguished by a unique blend of aesthetic and technical expertise, and operate at the highest level of integrity to create a better world through leadership and excellence in lighting design; to cultivate the universal acknowledgement and appreciation of the Power of Light in human life.

33rd Annual International Association of Lighting Designers Awards Project Credits

Australian War Memorial
Canberra, Australia

Lighting Design
Mirjam Roos, Associate IALD
Emrah Baki Ulas, IALD
Michael Harrold, Associate IALD
Steensen Varming

Additional Credits
Architectural Advice
Johnson Pilton Walker

Facilities Management
David Fitzgerald
Stewart Mitchell
Australian War Memorial Buildings and Services

Other
Johnson Pilton Walter
Simm Steel, Steensen Varming
Former Steensen Varming employees: Craig Spring, IALD and Simon Lefort, Junior Associate IALD

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