

## The Opera Hat



Danish architect Jørn Utzon was initially delighted when the Australian government commissioned him to build the Sydney Opera House. But delight swiftly turned to despair when he learned that the design had to embody “modern expressionism.” Utzon was, after all, an ardent proponent of the Socialist Classical architectural style that favored concrete block panel houses, and his comfort level with modern expressionism was a skosh less than nil. Just when he was about to give up, though, Aunt Deidre unexpectedly popped in wearing a fanciful hat that all but screamed “l’opéra.” The result, two years later, was one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century’s most distinctive buildings, one that even doubled as a fashion accessory, albeit a rather large one.