A touch of classroom

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By Georgia Waters

Queensland has snatched one of the nation's top architecture prizes for the second year in a row.

The Sir Zelman Cowen Award for Public Buildings, one of the country's most distinguished architecture gongs, was last night awarded to a multipurpose building at a top Brisbane private school.

Designed by Albion-based m3architecture, the Cherrell Hirst Creative Learning Centre at the Brisbane Girls Grammar School's inner-city campus was one of a number of "remarkable" school buildings to be built this year, the jury panel said.

Judges described the building, which is visible from the Inner City Bypass at Red Hill, as "directly detailed, well thought-out and robust in character."

"It conveys a no-nonsense message - a bold and purposeful architecture that is heartening to contemplate when considering the education of young women," the jury declared in its findings.

The only other Sunshine State building to snag a prize was the Queensland Brain Institute, at the University of Queensland, which won a National Commendation for Interior Architecture.

Last year, the Sir Zelman Cowen award - named for the former Governor-General - was awarded to the new State Library of Queensland, designed by Brisbane-based firms Donovan Hill and Peddle Thorp.

It is the fifth time in the award's 28-year history that the prestigious gong has been given to a Queensland building.

Previous winners include the Sunshine Coast University College Library (1997); Brisbane Airport Terminal (1988) and Queensland Art Gallery (1982).

For this year's Australian Institute of Architects National Architecture Awards, the jury waded through 129 submissions in 12 categories, with the winners announced at a ceremony in Adelaide tonight.

Other major winners include:

**The Robin Boyd Award for Residential Architecture: Houses**

Klein Bottle House, Victoria, by McBride Charles Ryan

**The Frederick Romberg Award for Residential Architecture: Multiple Housing**

EDO, New South Wales, by Stanisic Associates

**The Harry Seidler Award for Commercial Architecture**
Hume City Council Offices, Victoria, by Lyons

The National Award for Sustainable Architecture
RSPCA Burwood Redevelopment (Stage 1: Kennels), Victoria, by NHArchitecture

The Lachlan Macquarie Award for Heritage
Carriageworks, New South Wales, by Tonkin Zulaikha Greer

The Walter Burley Griffin Award for Urban Design
Rouse Hill Town Centre, New South Wales, by Rice Daubney, Allen Jack+Cottier and Group GSA

The National Award for Small Project Architecture
Children's Activity Centre, Victoria, by PHOOEY Architects

The Emil Sodersten Award for Interior Architecture
Nigel Peck Centre for Learning and Leadership, Victoria, by John Wardle Architects

The National 25 Year Award for Enduring Architecture
The Wharf, New South Wales, by Vivian Fraser in association with NSW Government Architect

The Jorn Utzon Award for International Architecture
Watercube, National Swimming Centre, Beijing, by CSCEC, PTW Architects, CCDI and ARUP

The Colorbond Award for Steel Architecture
Aurora Operations Facility, Tasmania, by Heffernan Button Voss Architects