

Precaster awarded major prizes at national concrete awards

National Precast members, SA Precast and J Woodside Consulting, have won the major prize at the Concrete Institute of Australia's *Awards for Excellence* and the coveted *Kevin Kavanagh Trophy*.

Last night's event saw the team awarded the prizes for their work on the Song School project in Western Australia.

National Precast's Chief Executive Officer, Sarah Bachmann, believes the achievements are a testament to the quality of precast concrete that the organisation's members produce.

"Specialty Architectural Precast – known as SA Precast – are one of Australia's leading architectural precasters, and we are delighted they have won these awards as recognition of their outstanding achievement for the Song School project," Ms Bachmann says.

Situated in a limited space between three heritage-listed buildings, the Song School project included a unique brief - to design and construct a building that seamlessly fuses with the surrounding 140-year-old architecture.

To achieve this architectural vision, SA Precast and J Woodside Consulting were contracted to manufacture five types of precast concrete products for five different parts of the structure. These included:

- curved beams for the rehearsal room
- two precast concrete spires
- three panels for a feature wall
- columns for the first storey that support the shells on the second storey
- shells for the second storey that form the colonnade.

The *Awards for Excellence* celebrate the outstanding achievements in concrete design, construction and materials in Australia, and Ms Bachmann says the awards make a statement about the local state of play of concrete.

"Precast concrete provides a range of advantages over cast-on-site (insitu) concrete, and the Song School is merely one example of this," she details.

"With finishes that cannot be matched by insitu concrete, and other properties that position precast streets ahead of competing building products, precast is one to be reckoned with."

Often specified for the design flexibility it offers, precast concrete also boasts other redeeming features, such as unsurpassed durability, fire-resistant qualities, thermal and acoustic benefits, and construction efficiency qualities.

"It's fantastic to see a project like this recognised because of the exemplary workmanship it entails", she says.

Not only has the Song School enriched Perth's CBD with a beautiful and contemporary structure, but it also showcases precast concrete's ability to create high quality and complex construction.

"This is simply an outstanding result in every aspect and we are incredibly proud of what has been achieved."