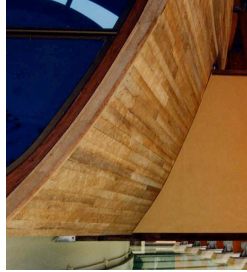


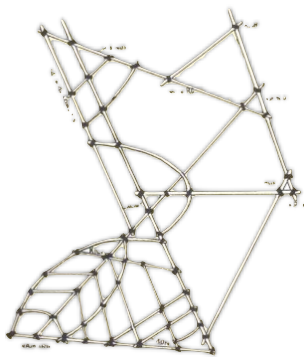
1992

SPC Headquarters, Noumea, New Caledonia



The stitched wall curves down to meet water, as the sides of a canoe would do, above.

Left: Micronesian navigational stick chart.



The South Pacific Commission, now known as the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, was founded in 1947, to, among other things, restore stability to the region after World War II. An original membership of 6 has expanded to a current membership of 26. Architects Pacific won an international competition to become the architects for a new headquarters in Noumea.

Our winning scheme was founded on the imagery of sailing the Pacific. A Micronesian navigational stick chart was used as inspiration during the concept planning.

A major reference to the maritime context of the Pacific nations is the form of the conference centre, symbolising an upturned hull of an outrigger canoe.

Traditional boat building techniques were incorporated into the construction process; the curved feature wall of the conference centre is planking stitched with coconut husk fibre, crafted by Kiribati canoe builders.

Documentation was bi-lingual with both French and English notation. Construction was supervised by local architects Atelier 13.



Far left: The interior of the conference centre, with fins of white masi (fibre textile) for controlling natural light in the auditorium.

Left: A moat bounces soft natural light into the building through the glass floor of the curved feature wall.

Client South Pacific Commission
 In collaboration with Atelier 13 of Noumea (construction supervision)
 Awards Fiji Association of Architects Main Award in 1997
 Link <http://www.spc.int/>