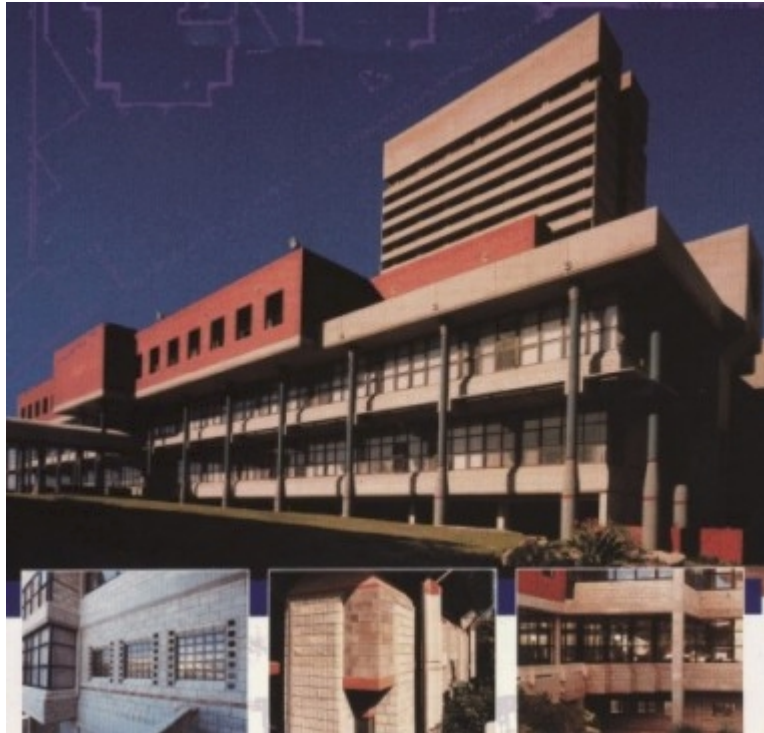


CONCRETE MASONRY

Creating harmony between function and design

University of Port Elizabeth
Winner of a 1998 Fulton Award



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The existing campus comprises mainly reinforced concrete buildings with exposed aggregate and bush-hammered finishes.

A modern idiom

By maintaining a harmonious balance between function and design of the old and new buildings, the architects created a user-friendly building that embodies the modern idiom.

The 8800m² building utilises a reinforced concrete column and post-tensioned slab construction, and houses additional administration facilities, examination and tutorial venues, computer and earth sciences laboratories and a clinic serving staff and students.

Red pigmented bands and features create a striking contrast to the natural grey concrete masonry used, whilst still maintaining the tradition of concrete construction on campus.



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The architects, Johan and Corris Barnard (who are previous Fulton Award winners) and SWS Architects, are widely recognised for their concrete masonry designs.

Attractive & maintenance free

By utilising concrete masonry in the UPE building, the architects were able to create a structure that is perfectly in harmony with the indigenous vegetation yet still possesses the dignity befitting a building of its stature - all within the tight budget and time constraints.

Products used included 90 and 190 mm wide hollow blocks, 90 mm wide six flute split-rib blocks, splayed sill blocks and 190 x 90 x 90 mm modular bricks.

The use of post-tensioned floor slabs eliminated the need for beams that project down below the slab and allows the slab soffit to function as a ceiling. The overhanging upper floors, which reflect the design of the existing library, are supported by circular columns treated with a trowelled Marmoran finish, adding some colour to the predominantly grey façade.

The earthy tones of the ceramic tiles, used for the floors inside the building, complement the concrete masonry used and facilitate an attractive maintenance-free interior.



The professional team

Client:	University of Port Elizabeth
Architects:	Johan & Corris Barnard with SWS Architects
Engineers:	Africon
Contractor:	Murray & Roberts (EP) (Pty) Ltd