Innova Concrete

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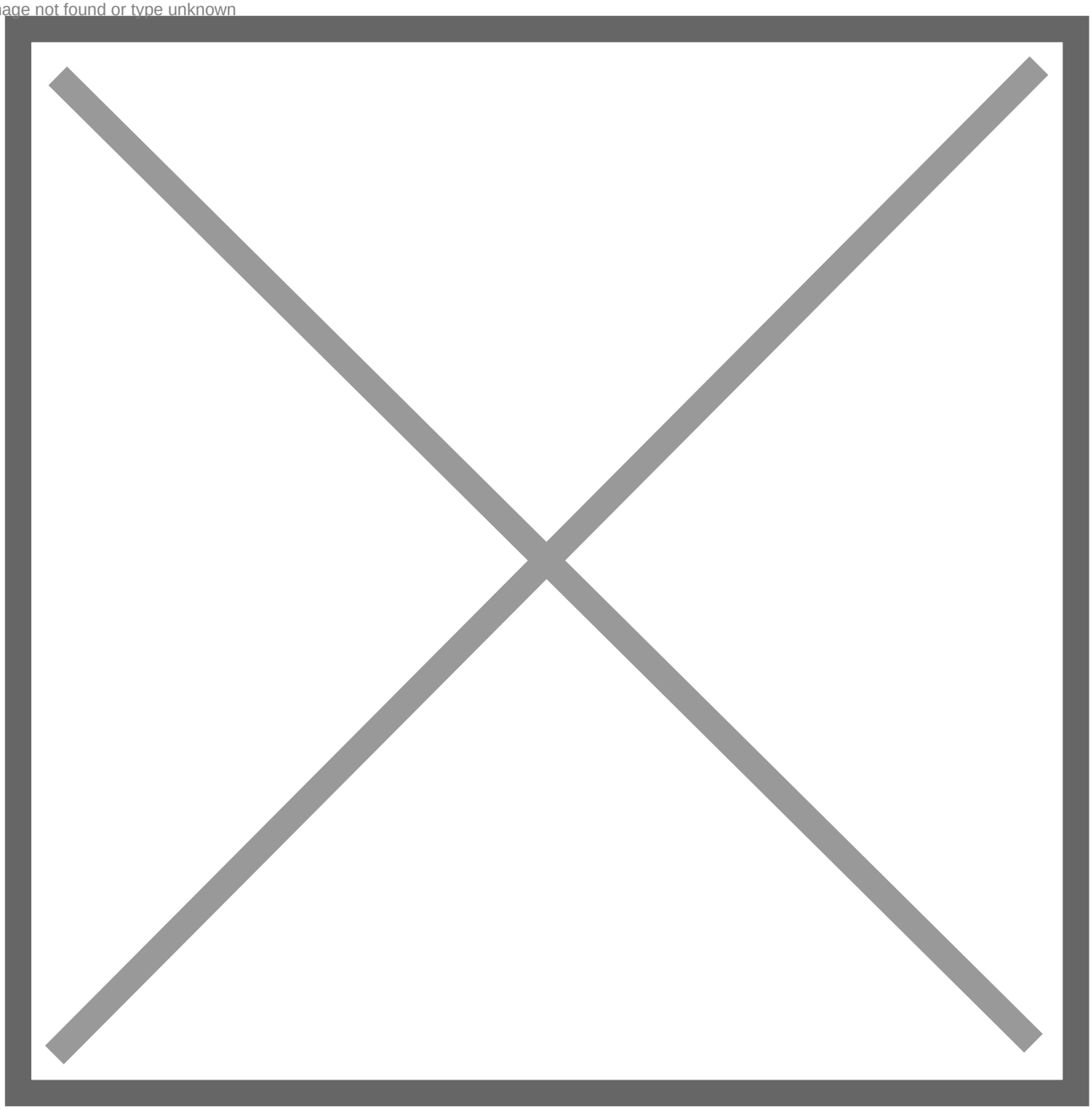

Aula Congress Center, Technische Universiteit Delft (TU Delft)

Netherlands

Mekelweg 5
South Holland 2628 CN Delft

Commission

1959

Completion

1966

Original name

Aula Congress Center, Technische Universiteit Delft (TU Delft)

Other denominations

Aula Technical University, Building 20

Original use

Education, Center for higher education / conference and congress hall

Current use

Education, Center for higher education / conferenc and congress hall

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Architects

Johannes van den Broek and Jaap Bakema (Van den Broek en Bakema)

Concrete by reinforcement

Reinforced concrete, Prestressed concrete

Construction method

Cast-in-place concrete, in-situ concrete

Architectural concrete

Architectural concrete

Structural types

One-dimensional/diaphragmatic arches, Two-dimensional/[cantilever] roof, [suspended] roof

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Description

The Brutalist architecture by the team of Van den Broek & Bakema had a remarkable influence on the Dutch architecture boom, led by Rem Koolhaas, at the end of the 20th century. One of the hallmarks of that movement, drawing on the architecture by Van den Broek & Bakema, were buildings that could express the functions they housed inside through their exterior volumes. Expressing the building's section on the façade was the fundamental mechanism for the architectural definition of a building. The conference centre on the TU Delft campus clearly embodies this principle and, to achieve this, its authors take full advantage of the formal and structural capabilities of reinforced concrete.
The building, now an emblem of the campus, takes advantage of the sloping section of the auditoriums and classrooms to generate a bowl-shaped exterior volume, creating futuristic lines that have earned it the nickname of "UFO". The entry points are protected and highlighted by the large sloping concrete surfaces, such that the floor plan on the ground level is smaller in area than

the floors above it. A continuous exposed concrete structure – which is both the volume and the structure of the building – is combined, on the roof, with folded concrete surfaces that provide the necessary rigidity to span the large rooms without intermediate supports.
Van den Broek & Bakema played a key role in the post-war reconstruction and urban transformation process in the Netherlands. Like in other European countries, Brutalist concrete architecture – as well as the trend towards integrating architecture and urban planning – were essential aspects of that process.

Links

NL Architecture Guide
Broek & Bakema
Hiveminer