

in creating a prestigious cultural centre, and the Aula remained the major venue in the city until the State Theatre was completed in the early 1980s.

The auditorium remains the type of the Moderns, adhering to the 'form follows function' injunction and yet showing great structural daring, with the precarious balancing of large masses on slender pilotis. The huge mass of the Aula hovers above the Rautenbach Student Hall below, an effect emphasized by the transparency of large sliding glass doors on the western and eastern walls.

The concrete is *béton brut*, and its use in the main foyer was novel and adventurous for its time. Finish and structure are articulated as distinct, with the waved ceilings floating between exposed concrete ribs. Stairs are cut free of the supporting floors to emphasize their structural independence. In the Student Hall the young architect took his greatest liberties – the sculpted free-form cut-out concrete screen, the concrete lectern, the wedge-shaped ancillary screen to the dais. The sliding doors are part of the repertoire which distinguished the Pretoria School – an innovative exploitation of ordinary off-the-shelf industrial materials. In a remote corner is the most offbeat device, Georgian wire glass set directly into the jagged edge of a random-rubble wall.

The Aula is a building in the round, showing its structural muscle, clearly identifying its functional spaces. It has weathered both the elements and the vagaries of architectural taste well; its worst enemy has been the university itself with insensitive demolitions and additions.

Jooste was one of the early students of the Pretoria School, obtaining his diploma in 1947 and his degree in 1953. He undertook various study tours to Europe and briefly met Le Corbusier in the year before his death. As a student Jooste worked in the office of his mentor Norman Eaton, and this relationship made him the natural heir to that strain of architecture that could be termed Pretoria Regionalism, whose major proponent was Eaton.

Jooste established a practice in Pretoria in 1957, and his associates and partners included Gus Gerneke, Willem Steyn, Francois Viljoen, Anton du Toit, George Wilsenach and Johan Malherbe. His oeuvre comprises private houses, hospitals, banks and public buildings, but much of it remains relatively unknown because of its remoteness – some of his largest commissions were rural hospitals – and because the firm eschewed publication of their work or the use of architect's board, believing that good architecture is its own advertisement. The Aula was his earliest work, produced under the auspices of the architectural firm Philip Nel even before he graduated, and remains his crowning achievement.

5 New Brutalism

While the Smithsons and Paul Rudolph visited South Africa and left their mark on its architecture, New Brutalism arrived at the University of Pretoria through Brian Sandrock. Sandrock had been active on the campus since 1956, when he added a wing to the second Mathematics and Sciences building, using face brick in a reserved Dutch Modern style. Eventually he would dominate the campus, just as he dominated the southern gateway to the city with his building for the University of South Africa, with projects that were ever larger and more stolid, culminating in the New Humanities tower block of 1973, which bestrides Roper Street between the old and new campuses.

As chief architect to the university, Sandrock's idiom prevailed even when other firms were commissioned, for instance, the New Merensky Library on the old campus and the Faculty of Law on the new campus, west and east of Sandrock's tower block, which are both by Tectura, the heirs to Norman Eaton's practice. Sandrock's involvement in the Atomic Energy Board complex at Pelindaba seems to have nurtured a fascination with the plasticity of concrete and a confidence about its engineering, which he explored on the campus even when it was not a functional requirement. His buildings are daringly engineered: the concrete façade of the Administration Building is suspended on rubber hangers, the floors of the Engineering tower are suspended from central service towers on cables, the New Humanities building rises off an enormous concrete bridge podium. Yet the planning is uninspired and often bad, and spatial qualities are ignored – except in the Administration Building.