

Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre

A cultural center designed by Renzo Piano to communicate the Kanak Culture



Project author or developer:
Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre

Where:
NC / Nouvelle-Calédonie / Nouméa

Website:
www.adck.nc

The Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre (NEW CALEDONIA), of Nouméa, the capital of New Caledonia, celebrates the vernacular Kanak culture, the indigenous culture of New Caledonia, amidst much political controversy over the independent status sought by the Kanaks from French colonial rule. It opened in June 1998 and was designed by Italian architect Renzo Piano and named after Jean-Marie Tjibaou, the leader of the independence movement who was assassinated in 1989 and who had a vision of establishing a cultural centre which blended the linguistic and artistic heritage of the Kanak people. The Kanak building traditions and the resources of modern international architecture were blended by Piano in accord to the architectural principles of the green buildings philosophy. The building is surrounded by landscaping which is also inspired by traditional Kanak design elements. Marie Claude Tjibaou, widow of Jean Marie Tjibaou and current leader of the Agency for the Development of Kanak Culture (ADCK), observed: "We, the Kanaks, see it as a culmination of a long struggle for the recognition of our identity; on the French Government's part it is a powerful gesture of restitution".

