



National Commercial Bank

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

<i>Architect</i>	Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) Chicago, U.S.A.
<i>Client</i>	National Commercial Bank Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
<i>Completed</i>	November 1983
<i>Site area</i>	11'700 square metres
<i>Ground floor</i>	2'300 square metres
<i>Total floor</i>	56'300 square metres
<i>Costs</i>	not available



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This high-rise structure was designed to group several banking activities which were previously disseminated between four different buildings in Jeddah.

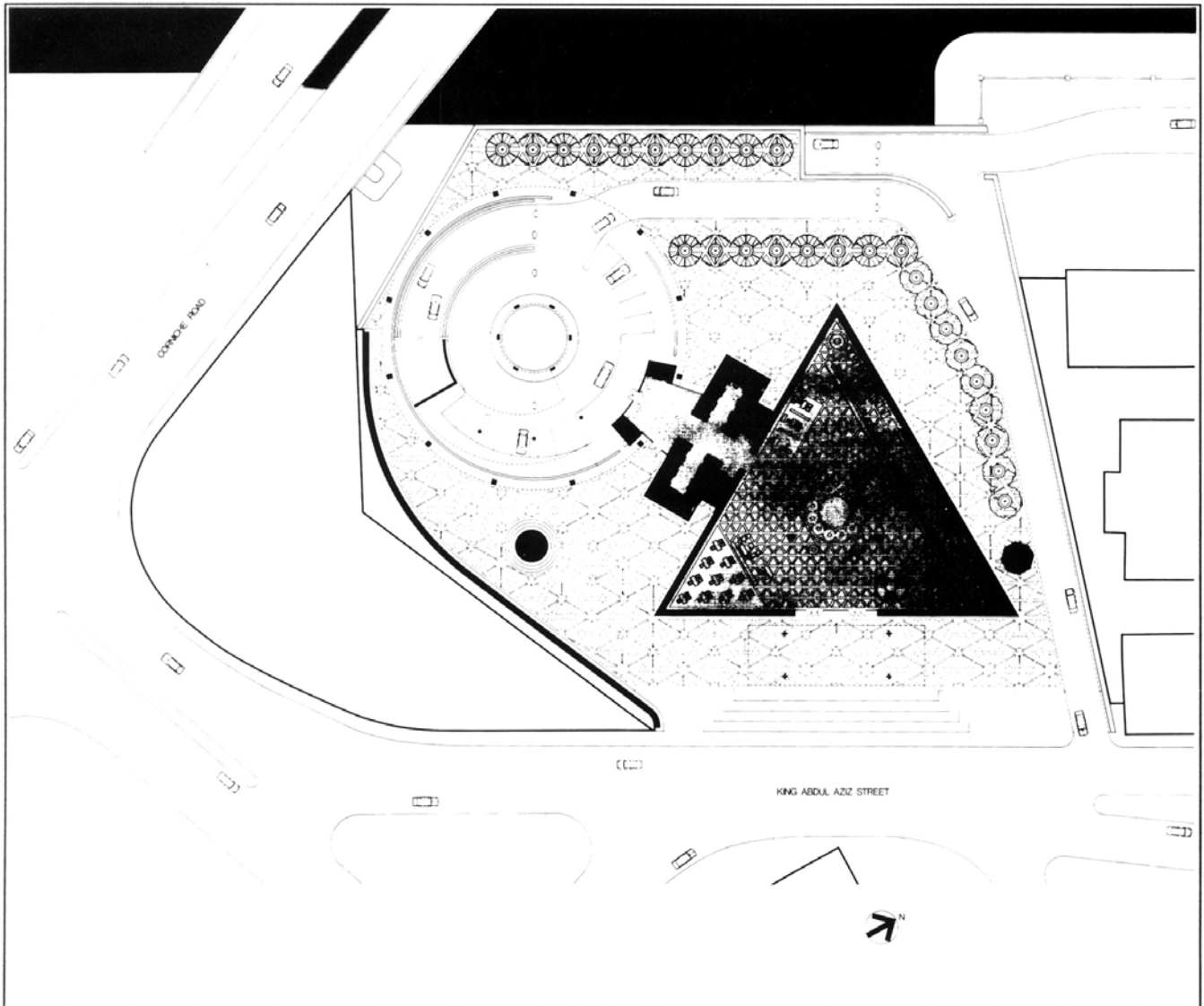
Site

The National Commercial Bank, situated at the mouth of the al-Manqabah Lagoon, towers over the Red Sea; it is bounded by King Abdul Aziz Street to the east and by the Corniche Road to the west. Jeddah old town lies to the east of the site which is

<i>Building type</i>	338 & 322
<i>1989 Award Cycle</i>	684.SAU

1. General view
2. Parking facilities

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part of an area designated for commercial development. Car access to the bank is through King Abdel Aziz Street and onto a lane leading directly into the parking lot.

Functional Requirements

Internal usable floor space was to reach some 56'300 sq m and provide sufficiently spacious offices for the bank's 2'000 employees as well as to house the following functions:

- a large banking hall on the ground floor for day-to-day operations;

- vaults for safes and security zones in the basement;
- regional management offices;
- general management offices;
- international division with lounges, dining rooms, etc.;
- luxury offices for directors.

Description

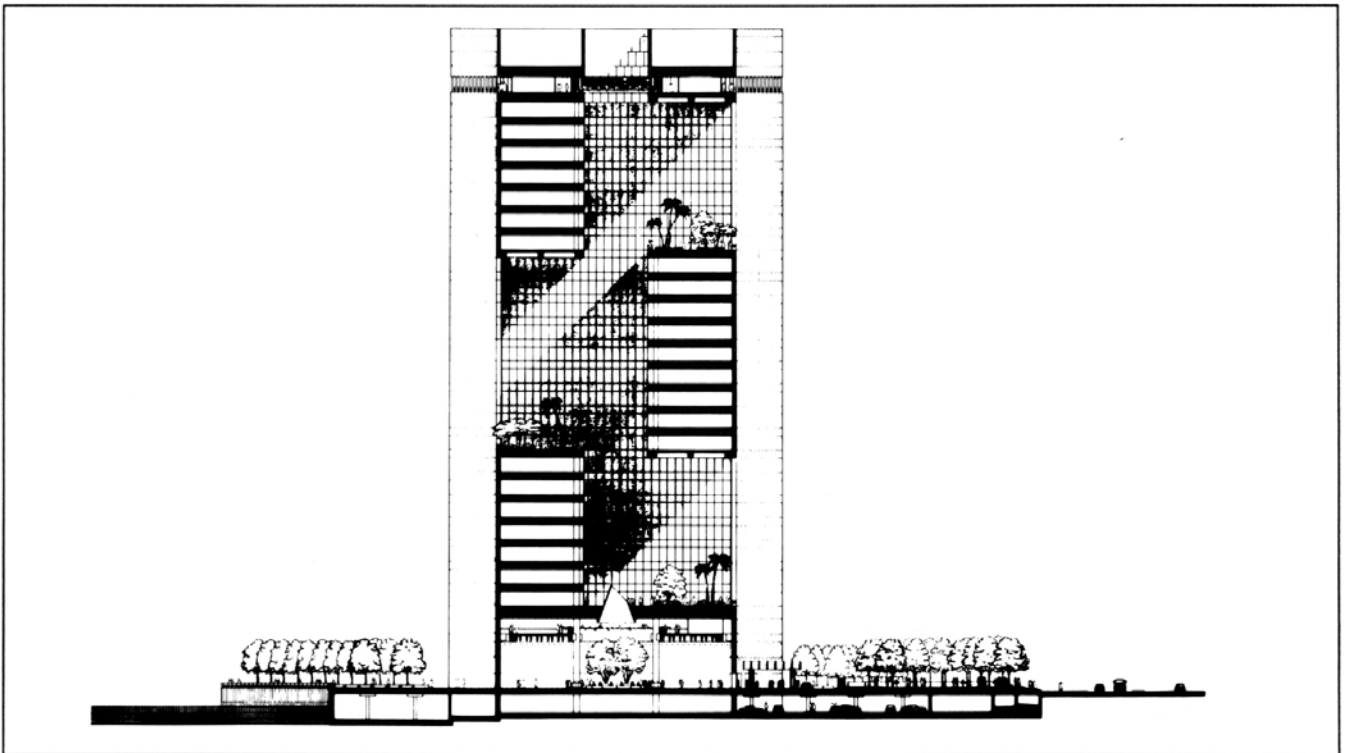
The 27-storeyed triangular tower is placed next to a six-storey high car park of circular ground plan. Lifts and services are grouped in a separate, rectangular tower abutting one side of

the equilateral triangle and linked at its base to the car park. The triangular plan of the main structure is repeated on all floor levels. Vertically, the levels are divided into increments of 7, 9 and 7 floors, each of these with office space on two sides and a glazed wall facing inward onto an open loggia. This loggia, or "garden in the air", allows for the glazed walls to be well shaded and provides views over the city. A triangular court extends vertically through the building providing both

3. Site plan



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ventilation and relief of heat build-up. The stacked courtyards, combined with the windowless exterior ward off direct sunlight, but allow diffuse daylight into the building. The tower is capped by the executive floor extending over the entire area of

the triangle. Externally, it is expressed as an arcade shielding a glazed wall set back from it. The banking hall at the main plaza level also spans over the full triangle; it has a mezzanine level supported on three columns and is covered by a conical skylight.

Project Significance

The design has ingeniously turned a skyscraper inside out and the tower is

4. *Typical floor plans*

5. *Section*



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reminiscent of a light-house on the Red Sea. The National Commercial Bank makes a bold statement within an immediate context which lacks a unified character.

Construction

The tower is of structural steel with a clear span of c. 15m. The flooring is a cellular steel deck and there is a concrete coffered ceiling in the banking hall. Materials and labour were foreign.



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- 6. Garage & elevator core
- 7. View into the banking hall from mezzanine level
- 8. Main entrance

I. IDENTIFICATION**National Commercial Bank**

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Date Completed : 1983, November

Architect : Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, U. S. A.Client : National Commercial Bank, Saudi Arabia

Building Type I : (338) ADM/COM : Monetary : Banks

Building Type II : (322) ADM/COM : Offices : Large

II. DESCRIPTION

The site of the National Commercial Bank is a headland on the Red Sea; to the east is the old city and to the northeast the al Manqubah lagoon. It marks the entrance to the harbour in what is envisaged to become a commercial centre.

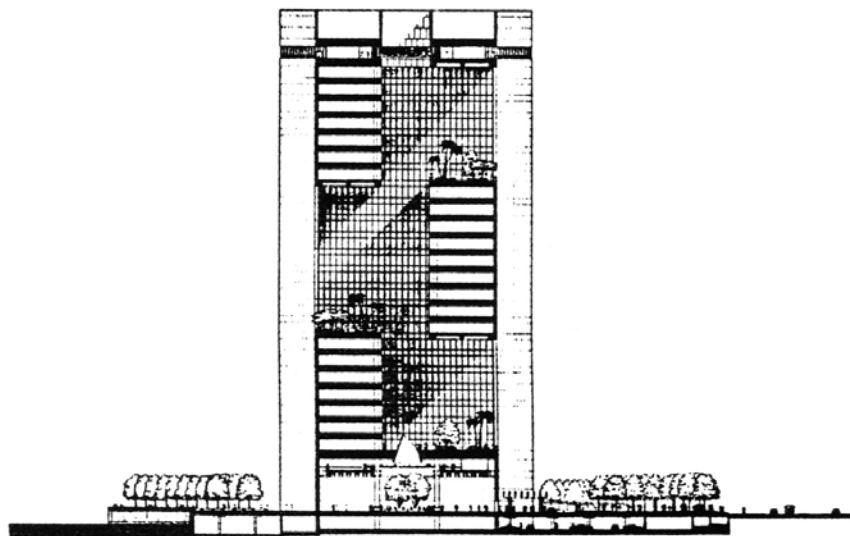
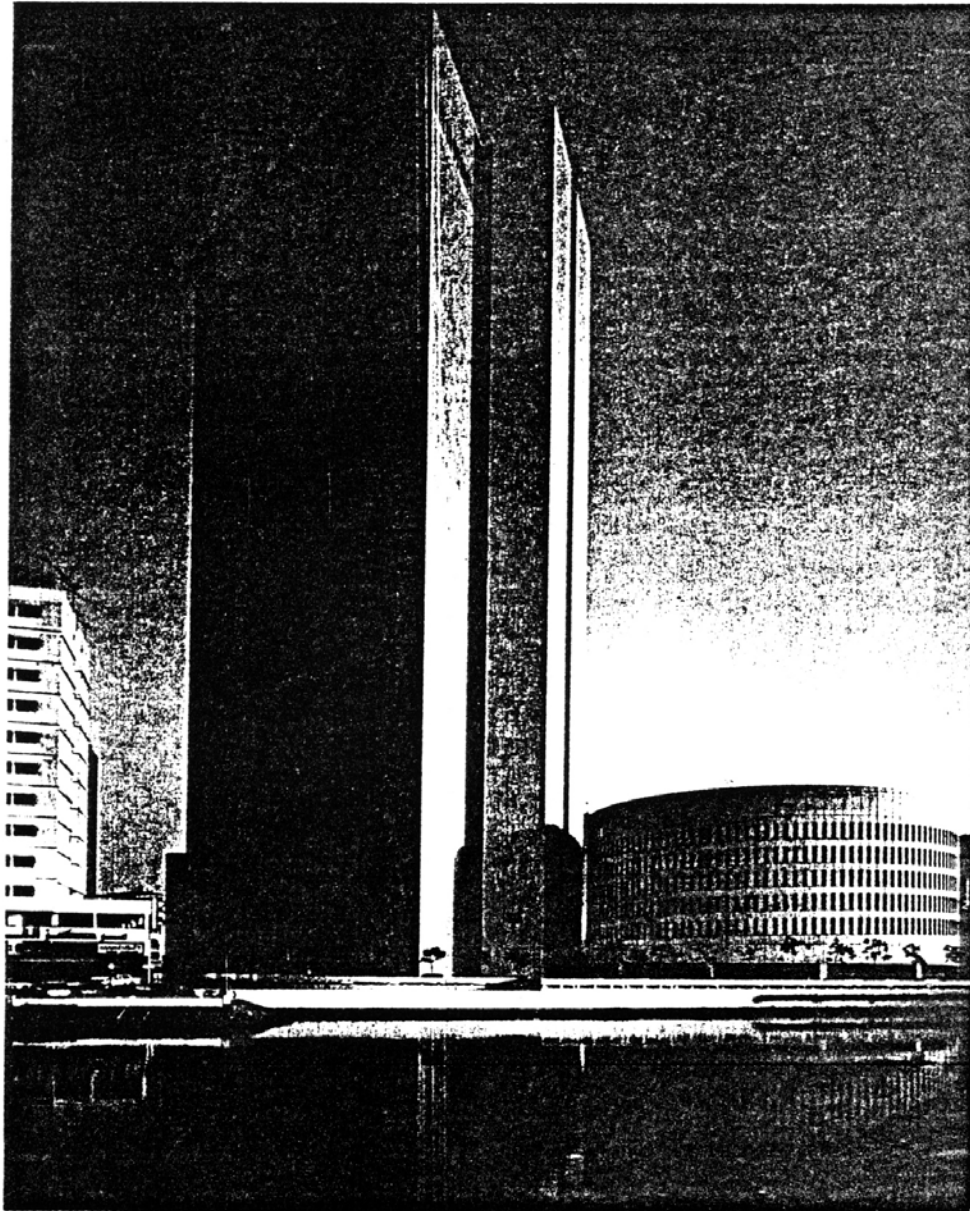
The design grew from an aim to incorporate both advanced planning organisation and technology into a building which would also be culturally and climatically responsive. Striving for a solution of climatic control which went beyond the passive systems of the 1960's/70's, a standard office building layout with a central core would not have been appropriate; the solution developed actually turns this form inside out.

A simple organisation of space entails an equilateral triangle in plan for all floor levels. Vertically the levels are divided into increments of 7, 9 and 7 floors, each of these with office space on 2 sides and a glazed wall facing inward to an open loggia. This loggia, or "garden in the air", permits the glazed walls to be well shaded and provides views through proposed vegetation and trees out over the city. A triangular court extends vertically through the building providing both ventilation and relief for heat build-up. The stacked courtyards, combined with the windowless exterior, exclude the direct sunlight but allow diffuse daylight into the building. In order to achieve the desired office area in the tower, all the lifts and services were grouped together in a separate, rectangular tower which abuts the 3rd side of the triangle. This undistinguishable elevation is linked at its base to the circular garage providing access from the parking areas.

The tower is capped by the executive floor which extends over the full area of the triangle. Externally, it is expressed as an arcade which shields a glazed wall set back from it. The banking hall at the main plaza level likewise extends over the full triangle. This generous space has a mezzanine level, and supported on 3 central columns, it floats free of the exterior walls. A triangular opening in the mezzanine extends the full height of the space culminating in a conical skylight.

Construction : The tower is of structural steel with a clear span of approximately 15 m. The flooring is a cellular steel deck and there is a concrete coffered ceiling in the banking room.

AREA and COSTS :**Site and Building Area (in square metres):**Site 11'700 Ground Floor 2'300 Total Floor 56'300**Total cost :** not available



National Commercial Bank, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia