



A Bespoke Metal Ceiling With A Story: How durlum Integrated Indigenous Art Into A Multi-Use School Hall

When Matthew Pearce Public School embarked on the construction of a multifunctional hall and sports centre, they sought more than just a functional space—they wanted a structure that would reflect the cultural heritage of the community while delivering outstanding acoustic and visual quality.



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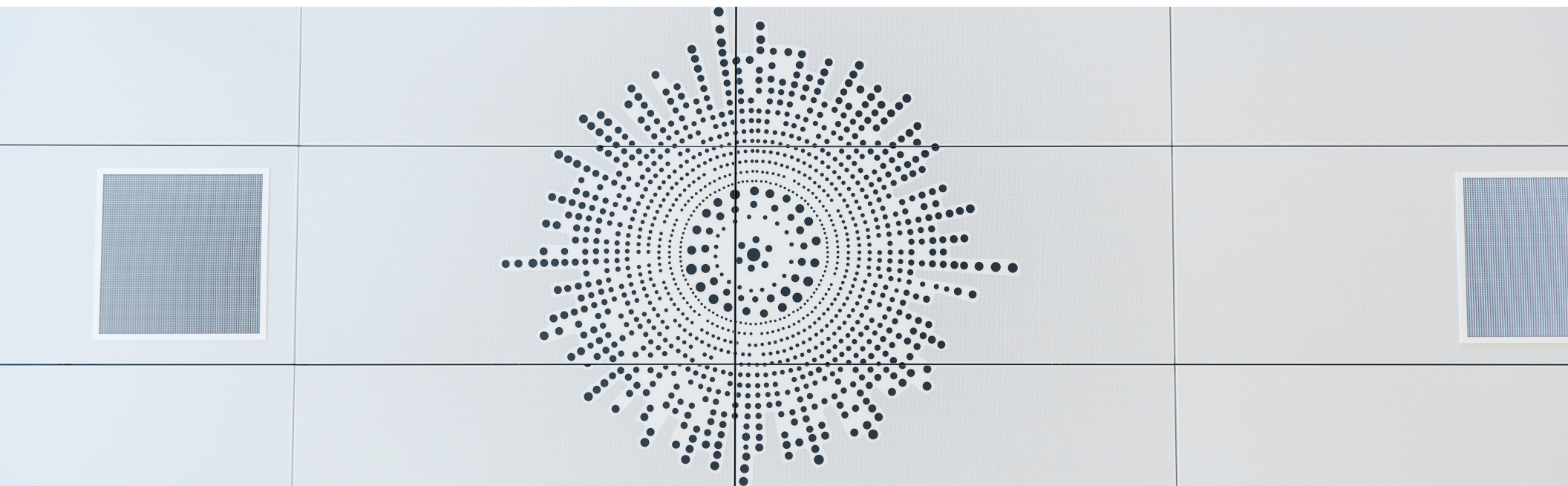
Network Architectural, in partnership with Stephen Edwards Constructions and indigenous artist Jamie Eastwood, brought this vision to life with a stunning custom-designed durlum metal ceiling.

Matthew Pearce Public School's new facility was designed as both a school hall and a fully functional basketball court and sports centre, requiring a ceiling solution that was not only durable and high-performing but also aesthetically striking. Network Architectural supplied and customised durlum's S7 metal ceiling system, incorporating intricate indigenous artwork that honoured the school's connection to Country.

"This project was unique because of its strong cultural significance. We needed to ensure that the ceiling design was not only beautiful but also practical,

blending acoustics, lighting, and services seamlessly into the architecture." Paul Sheehan, Ceiling Division Manager, Network Architectural.

The ceiling's design centered around indigenous artwork created by Jamie Eastwood, a celebrated Dharug artist. Each custom-perforated panel represented a different year group, from Kindergarten to Year 6, forming an interconnected story across the ceiling.



Matthew Edmonds from Stephen Edwards Constructions explained the process: “We engaged Jamie early on to ensure the artwork was an integral part of the ceiling. The challenge was converting his intricate designs into perforated patterns that worked within the ceiling panels while maintaining their cultural significance.”

Network Architectural’s ability to customise durlum’s S7 system proved critical. While many manufacturers struggle with custom perforations on pre-perforated panels, Network Architectural delivered a flawless

result, ensuring the designs were accurately translated into the metal surfaces.

Internally, the hall’s ceiling incorporated a combination of perforated panels with campfire and shooting star motifs, symbolising knowledge-sharing and community. The panels were backed with black acoustic SoundTex, pre-assembled with adhesive fixing to enhance sound absorption and reduce echo—an essential feature in a multi-use school space.

Externally, non-perforated white durlum S7 panels were used for the soffit, ensuring a clean, modern finish. In areas where perforations formed indigenous artwork,

black aluminum backing was placed behind the panels to make the designs stand out.

The installation, led by Auzoom Projects, initially presented several challenges, including tight plumbing spaces and the integration of lighting, sprinklers, and fans within designated non-perforated panels. However, these challenges were overcome with precision and expertise. Paul highlighted the attention to detail, stating, “The service channel was incorporated into every fourth panel, strategically designed to accommodate lighting and other fixtures while maintaining a sleek and cohesive aesthetic.”



The completed ceiling has been met with fantastic feedback. Teachers, school infrastructure teams, and project managers have all commented on its quality and seamless integration into the space. The bright white finish helps to enhance natural light, while the perforated design improves acoustics, making the hall a more comfortable and functional environment for students.

Matthew Edmonds reflected on the project's success: "The quality of the product was outstanding. The design process took longer than expected due to the detailed artwork conversion, but the final result was worth it. The panels blended perfectly, and the artwork transitioned smoothly from one panel to the next. The client was thrilled with the outcome."

Beyond functionality and aesthetics, the project represents the importance of integrating indigenous culture into contemporary educational spaces. Jamie Eastwood's artwork ensures that every student who enters the hall is reminded of their connection to Country and the rich history of the community.

"This was the showpiece of the build," said Matthew Edmonds. "It gave the school a sense of identity and cultural significance that will last for generations."

The Matthew Pearce Public School project exemplifies the craftsmanship, flexibility, and innovation that durlum and Network Architectural brings to every build. From the technical precision required to integrate indigenous artwork into metal panels to the seamless installation process, the

project highlights our expertise in creating high-quality, visually striking bespoke ceiling solutions.

Network Architectural and durlum's expertise extends far beyond educational projects. Our expertise spans commercial, transport, healthcare, and hospitality sectors, delivering high-performance

architectural ceiling solutions tailored to each project's unique needs. With a full in-house team managing every step from initial concept to installation, we ensure seamless execution and outstanding results for architects, designers, and builders alike.



To learn more about how Network Architectural can support
your next project, contact us today.

**Contact us today
to discuss your next bespoke ceiling project**

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