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Though most of our daily existence is spent in a built environment, little thought is generally given to the architecture that surrounds us. The Canadian Museum of Architecture explores the nature of architecture – how it comes about, its relevance, and its role in forming the places where we spend our lives.

Uniquely combining technology with art, architecture draws on many sources of knowledge, from the chemistry of concrete to the esthetics of design. It responds to societal needs and, in turn, architecture is a factor in shaping society.

Architectural concepts reach back to prehistory and the discipline's exponential evolution has created a rich history. Developments in engineering, materials science, information technology and our climate are new challenges to architects.

## ABOUT

### Introduction

The Canadian Museum of Architecture is incorporated as a non-profit entity with a federal charter. It has been granted Charitable Status by the Canada Revenue Agency (819385592 RR0001). At this time it is an incipient organization that seeks to establish a museum of architecture in Toronto for the general public to enhance understanding of this discipline and of its role in our society. The Canadian Museum of Architecture will foster interest in architectural issues and encourage debate about creative solutions to problems, from the local to the global.

### Mission

The mission of the Canadian Museum of Architecture is to inform the populace about the nature, history and relevance of architecture, helping us fulfill our responsibility to teach ourselves to understand our built environment, including its relationship to the natural environment.

### Objective

The Canadian Museum of Architecture will establish a facility to fulfill its mission and advance the understanding and appreciation of architecture by producing displays, presentations and architecture events. The Museum will provide a forum for the exhibition and interpretation of architectural works and discussions of relevant topics. Programs will be developed to broaden understanding of the methods and processes through which our built environment is created, enjoyed and maintained.

In its initial stage, the Museum will deal primarily with western architecture and include Canadian aboriginal works. It will not be a collecting institution so currently there are no plans to acquire rare artifacts, documents or to establish archives. The principal language of the Museum will be English with a long term plan to render it bilingual.

Architecture is associated and works in conjunction with a broad array of disciplines such as urban planning, landscape architecture, art, engineering, building technology, interior design, resource management, social science, environmental and climate studies and so on. The museum will illustrate some of these interdependencies in its exhibits and explain the function of architecture in daily life.

### Education

A specific effort will be made to serve the needs of students with the design of displays taking this objective into account. Presentations and, where appropriate, programs will be developed for educational purposes. As well, the Canadian Museum of Architecture will endeavor to communicate with Canada's schools of architecture.

## **GOVERNANCE and OPERATIONS**

### Administration

The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for the Museum. The board will be expanded over time to ensure that individuals with experience in architecture, museum operations, financial management, public relations and fund raising are included and that the institution is culturally diverse.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Museum of Architecture is Peter Brueckner who can be reached at [pbrueckner@cmarch.ca](mailto:pbrueckner@cmarch.ca).

A process is underway to secure the services of staff. A curator will manage the creation and display of exhibits and will work, where appropriate, with consultants who are able to furnish the requisite specialized knowledge.

One or more advisory committees will be struck to obtain the services of experts to assist with the development of exhibits and the associated displays and ensure that the intended themes are presented clearly and accurately. It is expected that these services will be available on a voluntary basis.

### Displays

Displays will be based on:

- Scale models, to illustrate external form, the relationships of building components to each other and to surroundings, the nature of the structure and where applicable, engineering concepts and, where relevant, the internal structure. Use of standardized scales will permit comparisons of buildings to each other and to the human dimension.
- Text and graphics to explain the exhibit and provide pertinent information for its understanding. Particular care will be taken to ensure that the material can be understood by the general public and that graphic material is clear and illustrates the key features of the display.
- Computer based data, to supplement the previously presented information and to provide more specialized details. Animation and video clips will explain more complex aspects and interactive programs will enhance the user experience.

Care will be taken to make the displays coherent, that is, that individual components relate properly and logically to each other and that an overall theme is followed. Describing the connection of the subject matter to other disciplines will be important, as will the illustration of its relationship to everyday experience.

## **PERSPECTIVE**

### Development Plan

The development of the Canadian Museum of Architecture in its entirety is a long term endeavour, expected to be accomplished in phases. At this time the Museum is at the initial planning stage with a focus on the successful design and execution of the first phase.

This first phase (Phase One) may be thought of as a prototype or proof of concept. It will see the establishment of an infrastructure and the creation of several permanent exhibits and possibly a temporary exhibit. Phase One will provide a base for further development and yield experience that can guide the evolution of the Museum.

Subsequent phases are anticipated to see an expansion of the number of exhibits, a more sophisticated service delivery model, a stronger fundraising effort and more intensive public relations. Major effort will

be devoted to integrating the Museum into its various communities, establishing relationships with other museums, sponsoring special exhibitions, and so on.

### The Relevance of Architecture

Though our natural surroundings have been extensively modified with the creation of built environments, we seldom pause to consider the impact that this has on the lives of individuals at all levels. In fact, who we are as a people is reflected in our architecture and, in turn, that architecture is a key factor that shapes us.

The origins of architecture date to prehistoric times and even as a formally studied discipline, it has a lengthy history. Architecture has undergone rapid evolution in recent decades with the development of technology, new materials and dramatically changing societal needs.

Constructing and maintaining the structures for living, working and leisure activity consume a large share of the world's resources. In turn, the deployment of those resources and optimization of their use is a function of architectural design.

In Canada some 40% of energy consumption is devoted to heating and cooling buildings. Bringing about the necessary conservation measures and accommodating to our changing climate will require modifications to our built environment and hence our architectural approach.

Population growth is putting pressure on our urban centers and causing increasingly severe and deleterious effects on our environment. Adequate housing is considered to be a human right. Architecture is a key tool with which to address these complex problems.

Architectural esthetics are a function of our culture and play a fundamental role in defining the stature of our country and affect the well-being of its population. This is particularly important in our major cities and their suburbs. Pleasing, well designed and attractive buildings foster innovation and productivity.

The architecture of an age or a people reflects its technology, historical events, artistic styles, political processes, social organization and so on. Consequently the study of architecture is integral to understanding the human condition.

### The Changing Role of Museums

Driven increasingly by information technology, our way of life has undergone a great deal of disruption and change in the last two decades. The role of museums is shifting in conjunction with many other aspects of our social and cultural environment. It is not possible to predict even the near term course of this trend for museums with any degree of accuracy.

The inception of the Canadian Museum of Architecture will provide an opportunity to observe the relative success or failure of various approaches to museum structure, organization and operations. Effort will be made to gather information about these factors and use it to guide the development of the institution.

## **CONTACT**

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