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ARCHITECT

2009 RAIC AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE



SAUCIER + PERROTTE ARCHITECTES

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OLIVIER BLOUIN

Founded in 1988 by Gilles Saucier and André Perrotte, Saucier + Perrotte architectes has gained international renown for its institutional, cultural, and residential projects. The firm represented Canada at the prestigious Architecture Biennale of Venice in 2004, and has been honoured with numerous awards, including five Governor General's Medals in Architecture. Saucier + Perrotte's highly acclaimed buildings have been published the world over, reflecting the office's status as one of Canada's premier design firms. While continuing to add to its body of significant built work in Quebec and Ontario, the firm is also currently working in Alberta and Malaysia. In addition, Saucier + Perrotte has designed projects in Japan, China, and the Middle East.

Located in the heart of Montreal's Little Italy, Saucier + Perrotte architectes occupies a 60-year-old industrial building converted by the firm. The partners are proud to be part of the

renewal of this area of the city. Recent S+P projects that have garnered top awards include the Communication, Culture and Technology Building (University of Toronto at Mississauga), which received the 2008 Governor General's Medal in Architecture, a 2007 Award of Excellence from the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA), and the Ordre des architectes du Québec (OAQ); the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics (Waterloo, Ontario), honoured with the 2006 Governor General's Medal in Architecture, and both an OAA and OAQ Award of Excellence in 2005; the new Schulich School of Music Building (McGill University); the New College Student Residence (University of Toronto), which received a *Canadian Architect* Award of Excellence; the First Nations Exhibition Pavilion in Montreal, also a recipient of a Governor General's Medal in Architecture, a *Canadian Architect* Award of Excellence, and an OAQ Award of Excellence; the School of Architecture and

ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT CONSTRUCTED OF PAINTED METAL, THE INTERPRETIVE MODEL OF THE CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WAS PART OF THE *FOUND OBJECTS* EXHIBITION BY SAUCIER + PERROTTE FOR THE 2004 BIENNALE OF ARCHITECTURE; INSIDE THE MONTREAL OFFICES OF SAUCIER + PERROTTE ARCHITECTES.

Design for the Université de Montréal; Gérard-Godin College in Ste-Geneviève, whose prizes include the OAQ Grand Prix d'Excellence; a hotel for the Orford Arts Centre; the Canadian Embassy in Abu Dhabi; Michel Brisson men's store in Old Montreal; and Boutique Philippe Dubuc.

Ongoing major projects include River City, a 1,000-unit, 3.8-acre LEED Gold master plan in Toronto's industrial West Don Lands; the new Science and Technology Building for John Abbott College in Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue; a hotel tower in Kuching, Malaysia; the National Mountain Centre Museum and Climbing Facility in Can-



MARC CRAMER



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TOP A LARGE PHOTOGRAPH OF QUEBEC'S KAMOURASKA REGION HANGS IN THE OFFICES OF S+P FOR CREATIVE INSPIRATION. IT IS REMINISCENT OF SAUCIER'S OWN CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF THE AREA. **ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT** DRAMATIC AND REFINED DETAILING IS EVIDENT THROUGHOUT THIS MENSWEAR STORE (2007), OPERATED BY MONTREAL CLOTHIER MICHEL BRISSON; THE FLAGSHIP STORE FOR MONTREAL CLOTHING DESIGNER PHILIPPE DUBUC (2006).

more, Alberta; and the Centre de Villégiature Montcalm, a 70-room hotel in Quebec's Lanaudière region.

Throughout the firm's history, Gilles Saucier and André Perrotte have recognized the importance of education and have been involved in lecturing and teaching locally and abroad. This year, Saucier has lectured at the AIA San Francisco and for the Séminaire international Phyllis Lambert at the Université de Montréal, and

Perrotte spoke in July 2008 at the Annual Conference of the Society of College and University Planning. Past lecture series for S+P have included talks at several universities, the New York Architectural League, and the Royal Ontario Museum. Notably, Saucier was one of three architects in Canada invited to accompany the Governor General's team to promote Canadian culture through a series of state visits to Finland and Iceland. In addition to the 2004 Architecture Biennale in Venice, Saucier + Perrotte has previously been part of three important exhibitions: *Les lieux de la couleur*, presented at the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) in 2000, *Childhood Landscapes/Topographical Unfoldings*, presented in Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, and Buffalo between 2002 and 2004, and more recently, *Substance Over Spectacle* in Vancouver (2005).

In 2002, the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) began archiving architectural drawings and models by Saucier + Perrotte, and in 2007,

they selected the firm to design its exhibition on the oil crisis of the 1970s, entitled *1973: Sorry, Out of Gas*.

Saucier + Perrotte is regularly invited to participate in major international competitions and has been a finalist in several in recent years. The firm won the prestigious competition for the Bank Street Building on Parliament Hill in Ottawa and was shortlisted for the design of the Grande Bibliothèque du Québec, the new Montreal Cultural and Administrative Complex, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, and the AIST African Institute of Science and Technology International Competition in Nigeria. Saucier + Perrotte also recently worked on the design of a new 2,300-seat permanent theatre for the Cirque du Soleil in Tokyo.

Gilles Saucier received his diploma in architecture from the University of Laval (B.Arch. in 1982). After working at Cayouette Saia in the 1980s with André Perrotte, he founded Saucier +



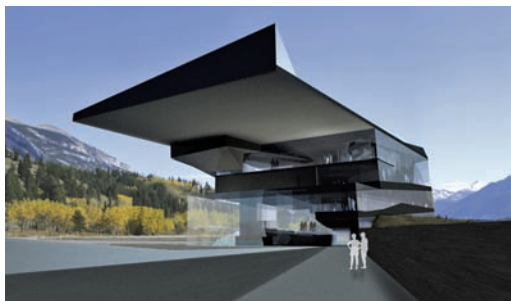
ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT COMPLETED DURING MONTREAL'S RECESSION OF THE 1990S, THE CINÉMATHEQUE QUÉBÉCOISE (1997) INTRODUCES SOME OF THE FIRM'S UNIQUE TREATMENT OF STEEL-AND-GLASS DETAILING; INSPIRED BY THE ADJACENT TREE CANOPY, THE FIRST NATIONS GARDEN PAVILION AT THE MONTREAL BOTANICAL GARDEN (2001) MARKS ONE OF MANY TURNING POINTS IN THE FIRM'S FINE BALANCE OF LANDSCAPE AND BUILDING; S+P WAS A FINALIST IN THE INFAMOUS DESIGN COMPETITION FOR THE CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN WINNIPEG (2005). **LEFT** DESIGNED IN COLLABORATION WITH DMA, GÉRALD-GODIN COLLEGE (1999) REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT ADVANCEMENT IN S+P'S ABILITY TO WORK WITH EXPRESSIVE CURTAIN WALLS. **BOTTOM LEFT** THE ICONIC SOUTH FAÇADE OF THE PERIMETER INSTITUTE FOR THEORETICAL PHYSICS IN WATERLOO, ONTARIO (2004).



Perrotte architectes with Perrotte in 1988. Since 1990, he has been a visiting professor and an invited critic at several Canadian and American universities, including the Université de Montréal, McGill University, the University of Toronto, the University of British Columbia, and Seattle University. As design partner, he is responsible for the overall design of each project, ensuring that the team responds to all design criteria. His commitment to design excellence is well recognized by the architectural press worldwide. Additionally, his work as a photographer has fine-tuned his approach to architecture and has helped evolve his perspective on the world and his work.

Along with Saucier, André Perrotte studied architecture at Laval University in Quebec City, graduating the same year. Co-founding the firm in 1988, Perrotte's role is as project architect, in charge of the co-ordination of each step of the design and construction process, and in charge of the administrative management of each client. In conjunction with Saucier, he is involved in the design of every project, and directs the flow of information between all parties involved in the design process.

Perrotte possesses a vast field of expertise, mainly in managing multidisciplinary teams from control to production, costs to schedules,



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT THE PROPOSAL FOR THE NATIONAL MOUNTAIN CENTRE IN CANMORE, ALBERTA WAS DESIGNED BY SAUCIER + PERROTTE ARCHITECTES IN COLLABORATION WITH MARC BOUTIN ARCHITECTS; THE NEW BUILDING FOR THE SCHULICH SCHOOL OF MUSIC AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY (2005) IN MONTREAL; THE REFLECTIVE FAÇADE OF THE COMMUNICATION, CULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY BUILDING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO AT MISSISSAUGA (2004).

and techniques to construction systems. He is widely recognized for the rigour and creativity of his approach towards construction as an expression of contemporary culture.

Since 1989, Perrotte has taught architecture and has been a visiting critic at several Canadian universities, including the Université de Montréal, the University of Waterloo, the University of Toronto, McGill University, and UQAM (Université du Québec à Montréal).

The work of Saucier + Perrotte varies in scope and scale as the firm believes that the architectural process can touch all aspects of design intervention—from master planning to the redevelopment of heritage projects, from single-family homes to sustainably designed dwelling complexes, from museums and theatres to interiors and exhibition spaces. The office enjoys working through a collaborative process in designing progressive, future-oriented buildings, bringing together architectonic notions with social, cultural, and topographic juxtapositions.

Since its inception, Saucier + Perrotte has integrally linked its architecture to the landscape—to the evolving topography of each site it addresses. Every commission stresses the specific physical and symbolic importance of each project's site and is a reflection of the firm's understanding of architecture's role in shaping the contemporary city and the rural landscape. Saucier + Perrotte seeks out creative design solutions, bringing together notions of discovery and learning, providing users and visitors with a new perspective of what architecture can be and introducing new ways of perceiving the world

around them.

S+P believes in architecture's inherent potential to play a positive role as an instrument of progress within an institution and its community. To the firm, an architectural design concept must play an important role in expressing the positive cultural values represented by a client, institution, or community. The work undertaken by the firm is done with the goal of providing a design that brings to fruition the goals of clients while producing architecture that contributes to a better world.

Promoting exchange and encouraging discourse are underlying principles that are found in the designs of the recently completed cultural and educational projects including the Communication, Culture and Technology Building for the University of Toronto at Mississauga (2008), recipient of the Governor General's Medal in Architecture, and likewise at the new state-of-the-art building for the School of Music at McGill University, considered to be one of the world's pre-eminent facilities for sound technology and recording. These projects are based on the creation of an environment of open communication amongst all the building's users—professors, researchers, students and visitors alike.

The design for the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics in Waterloo, Ontario (2008), recipient of an International Architecture Award and the 2006 winner of the Governor General's Medal in Architecture, is planned around the idea of users creating meeting spaces that generate informal discourse. The Taylor Family Digital Library for the University of Calgary campus is

also a key project for Saucier + Perrotte in which the firm pushed the boundaries of what libraries can be, incorporating the latest in digital technologies as well as an art museum. Other projects featuring museum and gallery design include the renowned Cinémathèque Québécoise (a film and media museum in Montreal), the widely acclaimed Canadian Museum for Human Rights proposal for Winnipeg, the National Mountain Centre in Alberta, the Faculty of Design and Planning for the Université de Montréal, and the First Nations Garden Pavilion.

Saucier + Perrotte is excited by each challenge it faces, whether dealing with master planning or a redevelopment of both industrial and historic settings. The firm is currently engaged in a 1,000-unit sustainable housing development in the West Don Lands of Toronto, a waterfront area with a long industrial past. This is an extremely engaging design exercise as it brings new life to an area that was empty for many years. Moreover, interventions such as this one by Saucier + Perrotte have often been met with critical and client acclaim, even in competitions. Some of these include a new master plan proposal for the University of Toronto Faculty of Law Precinct; the master plan competition for the campus of the African Institute for Science and Technology (AIST) in Abuja, Nigeria; the Khandama Development in Mecca, Saudi Arabia; and the Silo #5 industrial redevelopment along Montreal's Old Port.

While Saucier + Perrotte is committed to sustainable design, it is also committed to architectural creativity and innovation. Often, design that is so focused on achieving green design innovation neglects the creative process that leads to great architecture. The S+P team shares the understanding that the best solutions are developed through creativity and design innovation. The design-oriented team works to define new synergistic relationships between sustainability and architectural excellence to the extent where they become integrated and indistinguishable from one another.

Jury Comments

The quality of the work of Saucier + Perrotte architectes and their commitment to excellence were the major determinants in our choice of the firm as award recipients. Their work explores many different themes—light and material, landscape and architecture, abstraction and occupation. The firm has pursued and achieved poetics of space in architecture, and as a result, has represented Canada abroad in publications and exhibitions like the Venice Biennale.