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winner of 7 awards



atelier
bow-wow
bite-sized architecture

jerszy seymour's scum life
muf's pantomime horses
the porcelain revolution
the real-life design of dunne & raby
thomas heatherwick's glass-bead extravaganza

plus furniture fairs in paris and cologne, and new work by front, mansilla & tuison, saucier & perrotte and sybarite

the perimeter centre for research is

Canada's primary institution for the study of theoretical physics. The building, in Waterloo, Ontario, was designed by Canadian firm Saucier + Perrotte Architects. Its stark aluminium facade overlooks a park and defines the limits of the city.

The building consists of two very different wings, connected by an atrium and bridges, and incorporates a research centre, offices, a library, a lecture hall, a

cafeteria and a sports centre. These are arranged around two main spaces: a hall on the ground floor and a garden on the first.

The architects chose to use a limited palette of materials – grey zinc, exposed concrete and glass – to create a sense of calm conducive to work. However, this is punctuated by the use of wood in the communal parts, such as the restaurant and the six thinking areas. "We wanted to add a bit of colour to our black and white universe – to stimulate the scientists' ideas and make them feel good," says Saucier.

The formidable black aluminium facade, which is punctuated by a seemingly random configuration of windows, is based on a simple mathematical pattern: each office's outer wall is divided into a nine-square grid, three panels of which are windows. "It's really an assemblage of the personalities of the office," says Gilles Saucier.

Several of the facade's windows have mirrors in their reveals, which creates a play of light across the front of the building.

The centre has tried to involve the public in what is otherwise a very closed-off world by holding concerts every two weeks. "It's really becoming the place to be," says Saucier. Eleanor Cochrane

