

# URBAN CAPITAL MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2014 | VOL 4

## Design for the People

The Lost Art  
of Watercolour  
Renderings

Frozen in Time

**+** UC IN 2014  
RC3 IN LEGO  
EAST VS WEST

BMW Toronto



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# URBAN CAPITAL MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2014 | VOL 4



Another year, another UC Magazine. In what's becoming something of a ritual, we spent the past two months scrambling to put into words and pictures the experiences we've had (and the article ideas that have popped into our heads) over the last twelve months.

This year we had the added benefit of having some magazine industry friends cast a critical eye on our editions past. So some of the changes you might notice are: a more consistent typography and magazine style; more magazine-like elements (such as this very masthead); and real third party ads.

Of course in 2014 we did more than just hone our corporate annual. We completed two new projects – **Central Phase 2** and **Nicholas**, bringing the total number of completed Urban Capital units to over 2,900. We also close-to-completed **Hideaway** (Central Phase 3) and **River City Phase 2** – another 400+ units that will make it into next year's count. And we got construction underway with **Smart House** in Toronto, **Glasshouse** in Winnipeg, and **Southport** in Halifax.

Looking ahead to 2015, we start construction of **RC3**, likely complete construction of **Tableau**, and launch two new developments in Toronto: **Futura** and **Ravine**.

And to kick off the new year, Urban Capital will be the feature exhibitor at this year's **Interior Design Show**. For a preview of what we'll have to show, see the piece on Page 5.

Happy reading and see you next year.

David Wex

Mark Reeve



**COVER** A close up of the intense shoring system used to form and then temporarily support (until it cures) the fifth floor "table" at Urban Capital's Tableau development in downtown Toronto. The three metre thick structural slab in turn holds up the 35 floors of residential units above it.

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David Wex

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51 Trolley Crescent  
(King East at Lower River)  
Toronto, ON M5A 1V2  
(416) 862.0505  
rivercitytoronto.com  
tableaucondos.com

**SMART HOUSE**  
227 Queen St West  
Toronto, ON M5V 1Z4  
(416) 292.0219  
smarthousetoronto.com

**HIDEAWAY and SMART HOUSE OTTAWA**  
455 Bank Street, Unit 2  
Ottawa, ON K2P 1Y9  
(613) 789.5475  
hideawayatcentral.com  
smarthouseottawa.com

**GLASSHOUSE**  
Winnipeg Square  
360 Main Street  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3Z3  
(204) 282.9658  
glasshousewinnipeg.com

**SOUTHPORT**  
1065 Barrington Street  
Halifax, NS B3H 2R1  
(902) 429.0077  
southporthalifax.com

“The story so far of River City ... has not quite prepared us for the most vivid surprise of all: Phase 3. Saucier + Perrotte’s building will be amongst the most artistically exciting high rises constructed in Toronto since the onset of the condo boom.”

– John Bentley Mays, THE GLOBE AND MAIL

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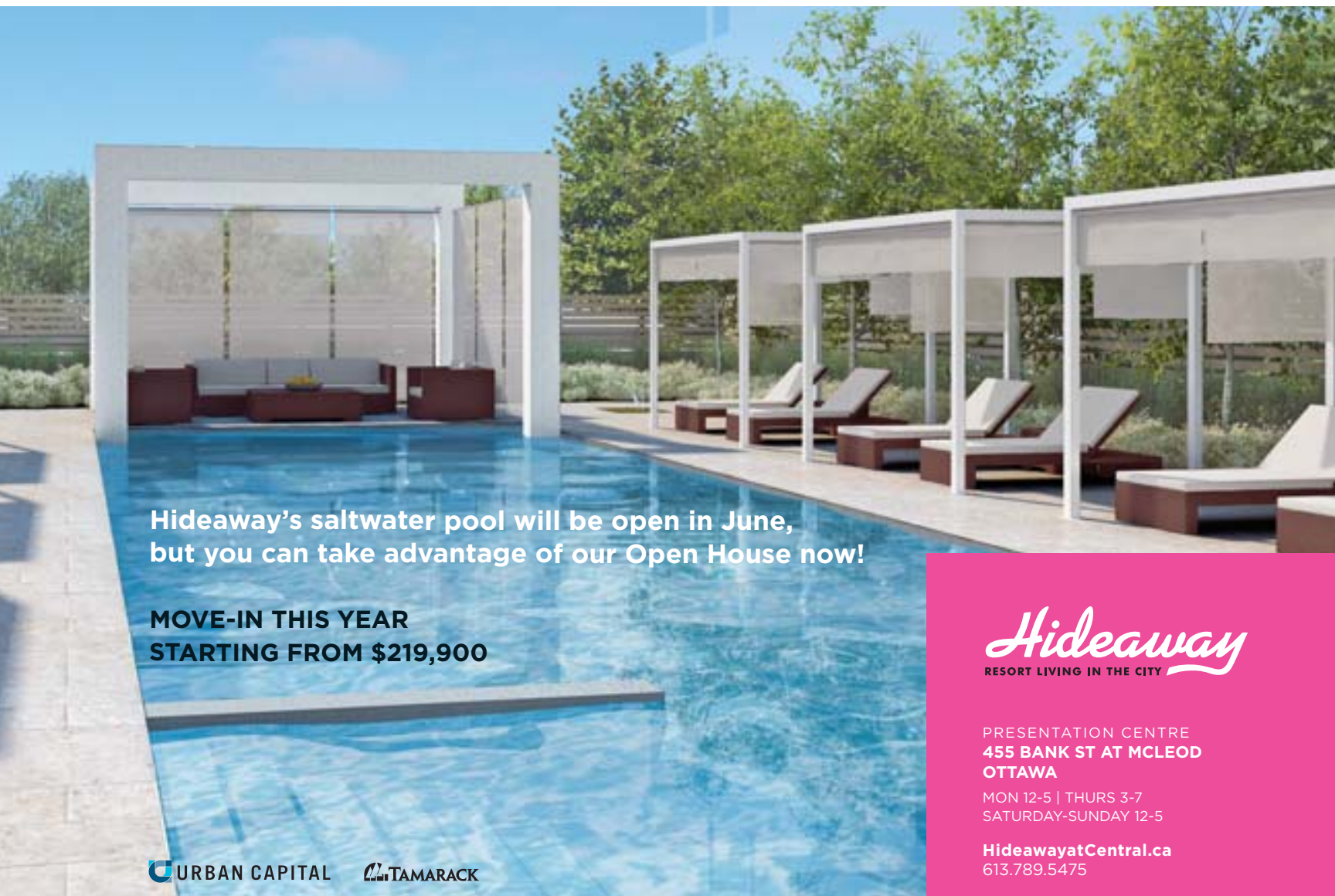




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**Cubitat**

## COMING JANUARY 22 URBAN CAPITAL AND NICHETTO STUDIO AT IDS

Toronto's Interior Design Show is Canada's premier showcase of new products, innovative designers and avant-garde concepts from around the world. For four days in January every year, IDS packs Toronto with industry superstars, cutting-edge emerging names, design-savvy consumers and international press.

For 2015's edition, IDS asked Urban Capital and Italy's Nichetto Studio to collaborate on the show's main feature. The result: Cubitat, a "plug and play", customizable and conceptually transportable cube that contains everything you need in a condominium: kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, entertaining area and storage.

Picking up from where Urban Capital left off with Smart House and RC3's Graham Hill cube, Cubitat features the best in architecture, interior design and product design, all rolled up into one exquisite Nichetto Studio-designed object.

Check out Cubitat at 2015's Interior Design Show, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre January 22-25.

Or you can check back with UC Magazine next year, we'll have the blow-by-blow account.



### Nichetto Studio

Nichetto Studio is an internationally renowned design studio based out of Stockholm, Sweden and Venice Italy. With a broad range of competencies including industrial, product and interior design as well as architecture, Nichetto Studio epitomizes the concept of multi-disciplinary design. Known for their extreme attention to detail and deep knowledge of production processes, the studio has designed products and pieces for some of the most high profile manufacturers in Europe and around the world.

# RIVER CITY









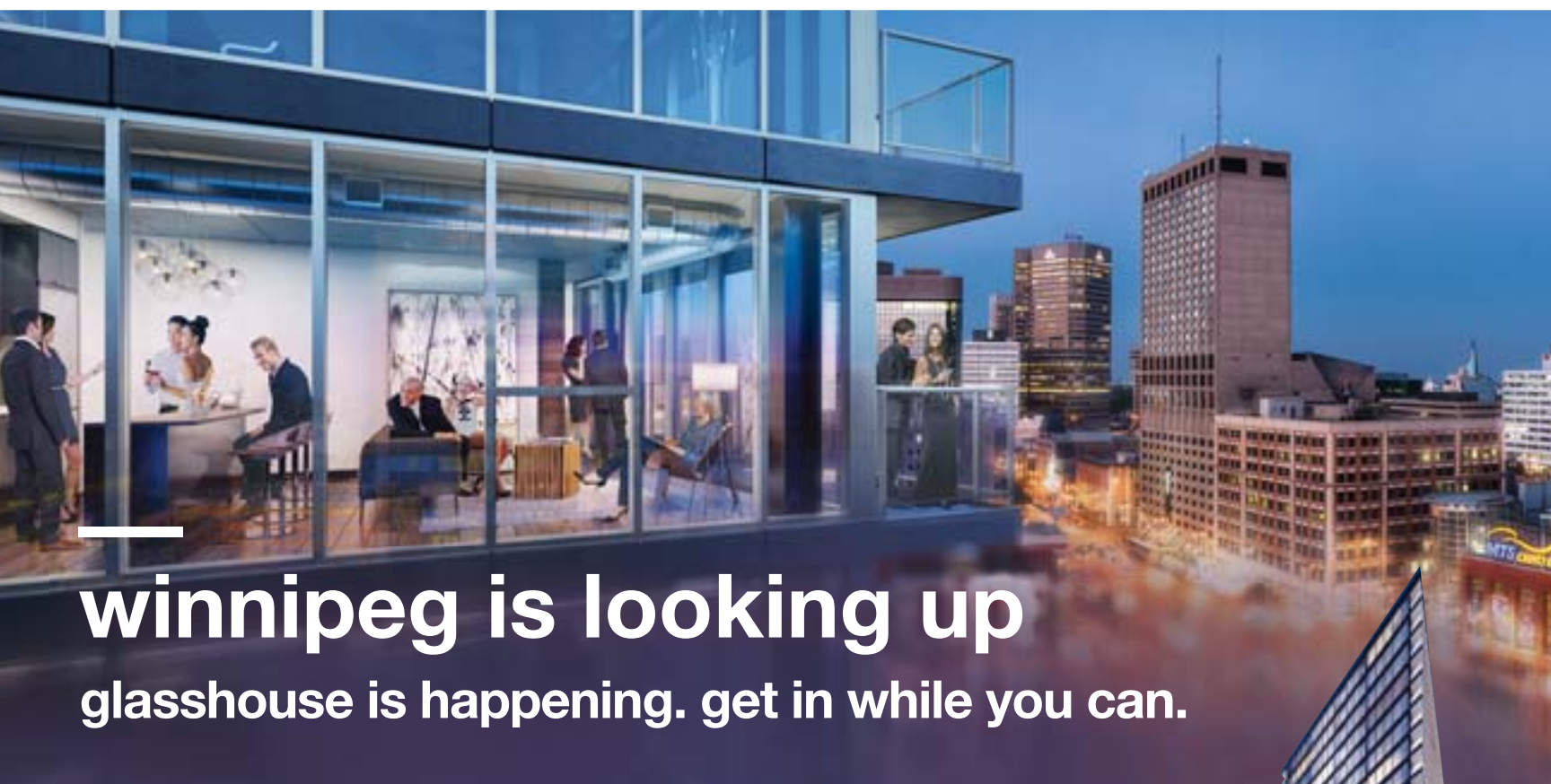
**Toronto-based Spencer Wynn captures River City's hard angles and jet black cladding.**

Architecture: Saucier + Perrotte, Montreal  
ZAS Architects, Toronto  
Photography: Spencer Wynn, Toronto



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 SPECIAL FINANCE



# A YEAR IN URBAN CAPITAL'S LIFE

**12**  
**MONTHS**

**10**  
**PROJECTS**

**4**  
**CITIES**

DECEMBER 12TH, 2013

### Naughty or Nice 3

Lets be honest, office holiday parties are not an event that most people get excited about. So how do we keep our 250+ closest friends entertained for some holiday cheer? We invite the who's-who of the development design world and then pack them into our office. We pump the space with awesome indie music, add hot bartenders, throw some go-go dancers on our desks and then encourage everyone to let loose. Age old problem... solved.



FEBRUARY 20TH, 2014

### Nicholas tops offs

From the 36th storey, Toronto near Yonge and Bloor can be a thing of beauty. And that's exactly what we reminded ourselves of as we took a shaky hoist up to the roof in the middle of February for a group topping off photo. As the final concrete was poured, the project's bankers, project managers, designers, engineers and even lawyers were there to forever capture the momentous occasion.

PS if you ever wonderd, the desire to write your name in concrete doesn't go away with age.



DECEMBER

JANUARY

FEBURARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

DECEMBER 14TH, 2013

### River City 1 welcomes Toronto's 350 newest home owners

In condominium development all the years of sweat and tears pay off on one momentous day... the final closing date. By the time you're ready to set the date, most people are on their way to being settled in to their home, and for the first time the developer actually gets paid! So congrats to our 350 newest home owners at River City 1. You took a chance on an upcoming neighbourhood, saw the vision in Saucier + Perrotte's cutting edge design and now officially have your own homes to show for it. It's a big day all around.



APRIL 7TH-12TH, 2014

### UC takes on Milan Design Week

Design Exchange sponsorship has its advantages. One is getting to go on a DX executive board trip to Milan Design Week, led by the indomitable Shauna Levy, the DX prez. Other than having a helluva lot of fun, we got to be inspired by the world's leading interior designers and manufacturers, each with their own booth in this massive world design exhibition. Highlights: Tsuyoshi Tane's ethereal suspended watch installation "Light is Time" at the Design Museum, the Boffi party, Vitra's eclectic design booth, and getting to see the Pirelli building, a 1960s modernist icon, in person.



MAY 2ND, 2014

### River City 2 tops off

The 'jewel' of River City takes shape. A major milestone was reached for the team at River City Phase 2 when on a cold day in May we topped off the building. Celebrating with the delights of all construction sites (meats, breads and brews), the team could now turn its attention to the next steps - the glass and metal panels that will make the jewel shine.



MAY 16TH, 2014

## David and Mark are profiled in Condo Guide. A little PR never hurts



JUNE 18TH, 2014

## River City 1 wins the Pug Awards

For its last year, the Pug Award's People's Choice Award is won by River City Phase 1, proving that the people know what they're talking about.

For more on the Pug Awards, see page 52.



JUNE

MAY 29TH, 2014

## River City 3 (RC3) launches at new River City sales office

We needed a location that was big. Like really big. Like 5,500 sf of double height, sun filled, exposed concrete awesomeness that would fit a full size "pod", big. RC3 is not a regular building, and it couldn't have a regular launch. There was only one place fitting - the up-the-street predecessor to RC3, River City 1. With tons of media, past purchasers, and agents on hand, we revealed the third phase of our iconic West Don Lands development, our most exciting yet.



JUNE 24TH, 2014

## Central 2 is "turned over"

A turnover meeting is to developers what a child getting married is to parents. Years of love, work and investment have all lead to this day, and as you officially give up your building and hand it over to the new condo board, you have to step back and hope that your baby will be well taken care of. You can't make big decisions anymore or drop by unannounced. And forget about trying to tell them what to wear or how to act. But at the end of the day, if they need you (or Tarion comes knocking...), you'll still be there for them in years to come.



JUNE 25TH, 2014

### Glasshouse Winnipeg breaks ground, launching our "it's happening" campaign

With our partners, purchasers and local media looking on, we broke ground on our Glasshouse development in Winnipeg and also launched our "Glasshouse is happening" campaign, conveying that Glasshouse is the place you want to be and that a new condominium is actually being built in downtown Winnipeg (gasp!).

SEPTEMBER 23TH, 2014

### Smart House wins 3 Awards at OHBA

We added more hardware to our office, as we hauled home three Ontario Home Builder Awards from Ottawa. The awards for best website, best ad campaign and best promotional video prove that the marketing team behind Smart House is pretty clever after all.

SEPT 18TH, 2014

### Smart House Ottawa VIP Launch

With the success of Smart House Toronto at our heels, we headed east for the VIP launch of Smart House Ottawa. Urban Capital's new concept in compact living was brought to Bank & Flora with an exclusive event for our past purchasers - showing that an ultra smart collaboration of location, space and good design travels well.

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

AUGUST 19TH, 2014

### Central 1 achieves LEED Gold

Under promise, over deliver. It's not a typical mantra for a developer, but for our first LEED building we played it safe and promised that Central Phase 1 (Ottawa) would be a LEED Silver building. Achieving Silver is no small feat and only happens after years of hefty consultants fees, extensive monitoring and careful execution, but as our points racked up, we were able to surpass our own expectations and achieve LEED Gold. As is only appropriate, we celebrated with a golden champagne party for our very green purchasers.



SEPTEMBER 22TH, 2014

### First occupancies at Nicholas

Over 300 new residents prepare to move in to Nicholas (Toronto). The 35 story CORE-designed building offers residents unsurpassed views of the city, along with Cecconi Simone designed interiors and all the best of Bloor Bay Living. Lucky bunch.





NOVEMBER 5TH, 2014

## A groundbreaking day on Queen St West

In front of a large crowd of purchasers, consultants and curious Queen Street shoppers, we broke ground on Smart House, our much talked about micro-condo development. After a quick set of speeches and the celebratory dig, we took the party across the street to celebrate at Note Bene, one of the best restaurants in the city.



OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

NOVEMBER 12TH, 2014

## East vs West

Ever attempted to tell someone from Parkdale why living in the Beach is the best? Or tried to explain to someone from Leslieville how Dundas West really is family friendly. If you're from Toronto, you know the debate. It's in your blood. Is there any question that your side is better? Of course not. But we wanted to end the debate once and for all, so we held a very Torontonians event, complete with local celebrities, food trucks, ample craft beer and heated (but polite) discussion. Read about it on Page 46.



NOVEMBER 18TH-20TH, 2014

## Southport and Halifax have an historic night

Or so we're told. Getting zoning approval in Halifax is notoriously difficult. So when we decided to do a condominium on the peninsula, red flags started popping up. Launching a project without full approvals in this city is frankly unheard of, but we damned the torpedoes. After a year of planning work (and with the building almost completely sold out), our application passed council unanimously on November 18th. We sighed a collective sigh of relief, and proceeded with a celebratory groundbreaking party we had (very optimistically) scheduled for two days later.



stone tile  
changes your perspective



## SMART HOUSE

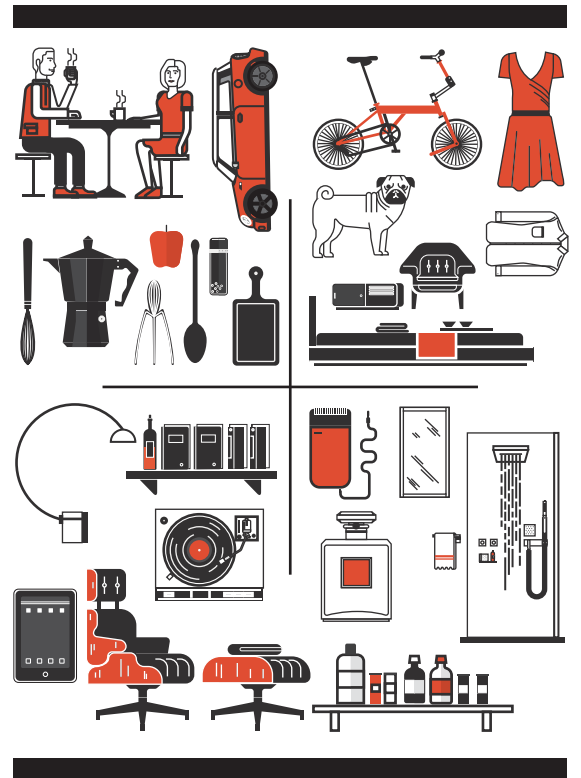
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**OUR PORTFOLIO**

**2014**

# NICHOLAS



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOSE URIBE

COMPLETED 2014

## NICHOLAS

Nicholas Residences is set on charming 19th century cobblestoned St Nicholas Street, immediately south of Bay, Bloor and Yorkville, steps from one of North America's premier retail neighbourhoods.

By carefully incorporating the Planing Mill Building as a design element in its base, and by adding a series of contemporary brick faced townhouses, Nicholas stays true to the street's beauty and heritage. And with its elegantly simple modern glass tower above, Nicholas truly creates a classic new address.

### NICHOLAS, TORONTO

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Residential glass tower located on cobblestoned St. Nicholas Street, just south of Toronto's premier shopping district, and incorporating the heritage Planing Mill Building at its base
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	35 storey tower containing 308 units
<b>LOCATION</b>	75 St. Nicholas Street
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture: Core Architects Interior Design: Cecconi Simone
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Alit Developments, Tel Aviv
<b>COMPLETED</b>	2014
<b>WEBSITE</b>	nicholasresidences.com

# CENTRAL





PHOTOGRAPHY: GORDON KING

COMPLETED 2014

## CENTRAL 2

Central 2 is the second phase of Urban Capital's three phase, 540 unit LEED Gold "Central" development in Ottawa's Centretown. The 9 storey building continues the mid-rise form and loft-style interior design of Central Phase 1, completed in 2012. The project is also home to the first LCBO ever to be located in a residential condominium development.

### CENTRAL 2, OTTAWA

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Phase 2 of Urban Capital's three phase 540 unit Central development
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	9 storey mid-rise building containing 141 units and a 4,500 sf LCBO
<b>LOCATION</b>	Centretown, Ottawa
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture and Interior Design: Core Architects
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Taggart Group, Ottawa
<b>COMPLETED</b>	2014
<b>WEBSITE</b>	centralcondominiums.com

# RC3

## PRE-CONSTRUCTION // TORONTO

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	The third phase of Urban Capital's 1,100 unit LEED Gold River City development, RC3 is a 29 storey architectural icon described by John Bentley Mays as "among the most artistically exciting high-rises [to be] constructed in Toronto since the onset of the condo boom."
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	29 storey tower containing 333 loft-style units, extensive amenities and ground floor townhouses and retail
<b>LOCATION</b>	West Don Lands, Toronto
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture: Saucier + Perrotte Architectes with ZAS Architects Interior Design: Saucier + Perrotte Architectes
<b>ESTIMATED COMPLETION</b>	2018
<b>WEBSITE</b>	extremearchitecture.ca



# SMARTHOUSE OTTAWA

## PRE-CONSTRUCTION // OTTAWA

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Ottawa's version of Smart House Toronto, bringing Urban Capital's micro condo concept to the nation's capital
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	9 storey mid-rise building containing 151 micro-condos and 5,000 square feet of ground floor retail space.
<b>LOCATION</b>	Centretown, Ottawa
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture and Interior Design: Rod Lahey Architects
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Taggart Group, Ottawa
<b>ESTIMATED COMPLETION</b>	2017
<b>WEBSITE</b>	smarthouseottawa.com



# SMARTHOUSE

## UNDER CONSTRUCTION // TORONTO

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Toronto's first purposely-designed "micro-condo" development, focusing on "smart" design to deliver highly functional space at an affordable price
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	25 storey tower containing 251 micro-condos and 25,000 square feet of retail and office space
<b>LOCATION</b>	Queen and University, Toronto
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture: architects Alliance Interior Design: II BY IV Design
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Malibu Investments, Toronto
<b>ESTIMATED COMPLETION</b>	2017
<b>WEBSITE</b>	smarhousetoronto.com







# SOUTHPORT

## UNDER CONSTRUCTION // HALIFAX

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Urban Capital's first development on the east coast, designed as an architectural nod to the shipping containers located in the adjacent port area
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	6 storey mid-rise building containing 142 loft-style units
<b>LOCATION</b>	South End, Halifax
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture and Interior Design: RAW Design
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Killam Properties, Halifax
<b>ESTIMATED COMPLETION</b>	2016
<b>WEBSITE</b>	<a href="http://southporthalifax.com">southporthalifax.com</a>



# GLASSHOUSE

## UNDER CONSTRUCTION // WINNIPEG

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	A component of the Centrepoint development (also containing an Alt Hotel, office space and 2 restaurants), and the first glass condominium tower in downtown Winnipeg
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	21 storey tower containing 195 loft-style condominiums
<b>LOCATION</b>	Downtown SHED District, Winnipeg
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture and Interior Design: Stantec
<b>ESTIMATED COMPLETION</b>	2016
<b>WEBSITE</b>	<a href="http://glasshousewinnipeg.com">glasshousewinnipeg.com</a>



# TABLEAU

## UNDER CONSTRUCTION // TORONTO

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Mixed-use development centred around a 3 metre structural "table" at the fifth level, with residential suites "above the table"; condominium amenities "on the table"; and commercial and retail space, plus a public plaza featuring a 30 m high art piece "below the table"
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	36 storey tower containing 410 units and 25,000 sf of commercial space
<b>LOCATION</b>	Entertainment District, Toronto
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture: Rudy Wallman Architects Interior Design: Cecconi Simone Landscape Architect: Claude Cormier Artist: Shayne Dark
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS</b>	Malibu Investments, Toronto Alit Developments, Tel Aviv
<b>ESTIMATED COMPLETION</b>	2016
<b>WEBSITE</b>	<a href="http://tableaucondos.com">tableaucondos.com</a>

# RIVER CITY 2

## UNDER CONSTRUCTION // TORONTO

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Consisting of three “mini-towers” connected by glass bridges, the second phase of Urban Capital’s 1,100 unit LEED Gold River City development is a glossy white counterpoint to the matte black of Phase 1
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	Three 12-storey mini-towers containing 249 units
<b>LOCATION</b>	West Don Lands, Toronto
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture: Saucier + Perrotte Architectes with ZAS Architects Interior Design: Saucier + Perrotte Architectes
<b>ESTIMATED COMPLETION</b>	2015
<b>WEBSITE</b>	rivercitytoronto.com



# HIDEAWAY

## UNDER-CONSTRUCTION // OTTAWA

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Phase 3 of Urban Capital’s 540 unit mixed-use LEED Gold “Central” development, Hideaway continues Urban Capital’s portfolio of high-design urban living buildings in the nation’s capital
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	9 storey mixed use building containing 162 units and extensive indoor and outdoor amenities
<b>LOCATION</b>	Centretown, Ottawa
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture and Interior Design: CORE Architects
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Taggart Group, Ottawa
<b>ESTIMATED COMPLETION</b>	2015
<b>WEBSITE</b>	hideawayatcentral.com



# RIVER CITY 1

## COMPLETED // TORONTO

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	First phase of the 1,100 unit, Saucier + Perrotte designed LEED Gold and carbon neutral River City development
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	16 storey and 7 storey buildings, connected by a four storey bridge, containing a total of 349 units, plus approximately 4,500 square feet of retail
<b>LOCATION</b>	West Don Lands, Toronto
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture: Saucier + Perrotte Architectes with ZAS Architects Interior Design: Saucier + Perrotte Architectes
<b>COMPLETED</b>	2013
<b>WEBSITE</b>	rivercitytoronto.com





# TRINITY BELLWOODS

## COMPLETED // TORONTO

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Contemporary designed freehold townhouse development
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	45 townhomes ranging in size from 1,900 to 2,650 square feet
<b>LOCATION</b>	Little Italy, Toronto
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture: Richard Wengle Architects Interior Design: Cecconi Simone
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Shram Homes, Toronto
<b>COMPLETED</b>	2013



# CENTRAL 1

## COMPLETED // OTTAWA

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	The first phase of Urban Capital's 540 unit LEED Gold "Central" development, located in a formerly vacant strip of Bank Street between downtown and the Glebe
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	10 storey building containing 239 units and approximately 20,000 square feet of retail space
<b>LOCATION</b>	Centretown, Ottawa
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture and Interior Design: CORE Architects
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Taggart Group, Ottawa
<b>COMPLETED</b>	2012



# BOUTIQUE

## COMPLETED // TORONTO

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Two phase urban condominium development at the nexus of the Entertainment and Financial Districts, offering a combination of condominium features and boutique hotel-style amenities
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	35 storey tower and 16 storey mid-rise building containing a total of 637 units
<b>LOCATION</b>	Entertainment District, Toronto
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture: CORE Architects Interior Design: Cecconi Simone
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS</b>	Malibu Investments, Toronto Alit Developments, Tel Aviv
<b>COMPLETED</b>	2011

# MONDRIAN

## COMPLETED // OTTAWA

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Glass tower with red glass panels interspersed among the linear window system, as an homage to Dutch painter Piet Mondrian
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	23 storey building containing 249 units, sitting atop a five storey public parking podium enclosed in a glass screen
<b>LOCATION</b>	Downtown Ottawa
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture and Interior Design: Core Architects
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Taggart Group, Ottawa
<b>COMPLETED</b>	2011



# McGILL OUEST

## COMPLETED // MONTREAL

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Two phase glass and brick building, Urban Capital's Montreal development
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	9 storey midrise building containing 244 units
<b>LOCATION</b>	West of Old Montreal
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture and Interior Design: Core Architects
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Metropolitan Parking, Montreal
<b>COMPLETED</b>	2008



# EAST MARKET

## COMPLETED // OTTAWA

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Urban Capital's first foray outside of Toronto, introducing the company's signature architecture, interior design and affordable loft-style units to the Ottawa market and becoming the catalyst for the city's subsequent condo boom
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	420 residential units over three phases
<b>LOCATION</b>	Byward Market, Ottawa
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture and Interior Design: Core Architects
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Taggart Group, Ottawa
<b>COMPLETED</b>	2008





# ST. ANDREW ON THE GREEN

## COMPLETED // TORONTO

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Finely proportioned terraced building overlooking the Islington Golf Club
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	9 storey building containing 108 units
<b>LOCATION</b>	Etobicoke, Toronto
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture: Turner Fleischer Architects Interior Design: Bryon Patton
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS</b>	Malibu Investments, Toronto Alit Developments, Tel Aviv
<b>COMPLETED</b>	2006



# CHARLOTTE LOFTS

## COMPLETED // TORONTO

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	Urban Capital's second development in the King-Spadina area, designed with a brick base and a lighter stepped back upper portion in order to relate to its historic warehouse neighbours while remaining true to its modern design
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	13 storey building containing 66 units
<b>LOCATION</b>	King-Spadina, Toronto
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture and Interior Design: Core Architects
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Chard Developments, Vancouver
<b>COMPLETED</b>	2002



# CAMDEN LOFTS

## COMPLETED // TORONTO

<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	This is the building that started it all. Launched when residential development was not actually permitted in the area (the project required special city council approval), this seminal development created a precedent for the subsequent residential projects that ultimately redefined the neighbourhood
<b>SIZE/PROGRAM</b>	9 storey building containing 48 units
<b>LOCATION</b>	King-Spadina, Toronto
<b>DESIGN TEAM</b>	Architecture: Core Architects and Oleson Worland Architects Interior Design: Cecconi Simone
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNER</b>	Dundee Realty, Toronto
<b>COMPLETED</b>	1999



# DESIGN FOR THE PEOPLE

BY AUSTIN MACDONALD



**Since taking over Toronto's Design Exchange in 2012, Shauna Levy, with the support of Urban Capital, has reenergized this 25 year old institution, making it relevant to the general public and the design industry alike.**

**B**y reviving Toronto's Design Exchange, President Shauna Levy leads a populist uprising in Canadian design.

Hussein Chalayan's "After Words" (see page 32) is the centerpiece of the Design Exchange's latest show, **Politics of Fashion | Fashion of Politics**, guest curated by Canadian fashionista Jeanne Beker. Initially, the simple five-piece living room seems oddball. Then, an explanatory video shows five models transforming the furniture into clothes. Once dressed, they vanish with the living room on their backs.

Designed as a commentary on war and displacement, Chalayan's wearable décor items are the artifacts from a performance piece that was the finale of his Autumn/Winter 2000-2001 fashion show. It's a real showstopper. At second glance, with the knowledge that furniture was intended for those unexpectedly on the go, the lounge space looks decidedly less comfortable. Indeed: "Do not sit."

Politics of Fashion is the Design Exchange's second original exhibition and emblematic of President Shauna Levy's bold new direction. Appointed in March 2012, Levy has revived the venue with an exciting approach, emphasizing robust programming and community outreach. She's adamant about making the Design Exchange "fun," "entertaining" and "democratic."

"We made a very conscientious decision as a board three years ago to depart from the old Design Exchange that maybe people knew about but perhaps didn't pay much attention to," Levy offers.

"I think in the last two and a half years we have earned a lot of credibility. Our attendance has never been higher, sponsorship is growing and media coverage is increasing," she explains. "Politics of Fashion is unprecedented and will be another strong moment for us in terms of our building and growing the institution."

These early victories have been a result of Levy's innovative approach. "You have to engage people about design in the way that they can relate and are interested," Levy says. "We're unique in how we use design as a 'viewfinder' to look at society and events. It's almost anthropological."

"We'd never just do an exhibition on chairs, there would always be other layers," she adds. For example, **This Is Not A Toy** (guest curated by Pharell Williams) was an intersection of art, fashion, industrial design, graphic design and music."

In a sense, Levy is being pragmatic. "Today, design culture is very much entrenched in every aspect of life. Just going to a restaurant can be an amazing design experience," she says. "So at the museum we have to be able to compete with that."

Among Canadians, Levy is perhaps uniquely qualified for this role. Prior to the DX, she co-founded and ran Toronto's Interior Design Show for over a decade. "IDS was really about democratizing design," she says. "What excited me most at the DX was the coming together of all kinds of design—from basic human needs all the way to luxury—and nurturing this very broad conversation."

Going forward, Levy envisions nothing less than transforming Design Exchange into Canada's leading voice in design innovation at home, and an ambassador for Made-In-Canada creativity on the world stage.

"We are pushing the institution forward at breakneck speed, and our aspirations are pretty big. The next five years will be a very exciting time for Design Exchange."



**Appointed in March 2012, Design Exchange President Shauna Levy quickly strung together a quartet of shows which provided an early glimpse of her big ambitions for Toronto's design museum.**



# THE HAPPY SHOW

JANUARY 9  
TO MARCH 3, 2013



STEFAN SAGMEISTER



Design Exchange's first exhibition with Shauna Levy as its President was the Canadian premier of Stefan Sagmeister's *The Happy Show*, originally exhibited by Philadelphia's Institute of Contemporary Art. It showed the veteran New York graphic designer's playful meditation on individuals' happiness in modern society.

"It was really a breath of fresh air in January. A burst of energy during Toronto's coldest and darkest months," Levy recalls.

Sagmeister designed the exhibition as a rousing visual assault, using gigantic bright yellow panels as oversized infographics. The large surfaces were riddled with jarring eye candy: graphs, statistics and easily digestible and provocative blurbs and factoids about the human condition. Other panels included Sagmeister's designy maxims from his journal.

The Happy Show's mid-winter promise of exhilaration lured hibernating Torontonians out of their dens and into the DX. Once there, Sagmeister enticed them to interact. At the entrance, he set up a bubblegum poll, asking people to score their moods by taking a yellow gumball from one of ten numbered machines. The poll's results appeared as the gumball machines' glass cylinders emptied.

Elsewhere, a visitor's physical exertion on a stationary bicycle illuminated large neon lights with different inspirational messages.

"What I loved about this show is that it was interactive, which is really important to us," Levy says. "At the end of the day culture should be fun."

PHOTOGRAPHY: EUGEN SAKHENKO







# CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN

JUNE 21 TO  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2013



CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN

"I like the idea of doing something fashion-related at least once a year," Levy said. "When you look at all the different aspects of design, one that seems among the easiest to communicate to a broader audience is fashion."

With this in mind, Levy booked Christian Louboutin, another travelling exhibition, to show at the DX. It was a tour de force with pieces gathered from the designer's personal archive and curated to reveal all his pizzazz and creativity.

The show had already been a hit during its first run at London's Design Museum. "It made sense to bring in a traveling show that had a proven track record coming from an internationally acclaimed

museum," she said. At this early stage in the DX's revitalization, she hoped the fanfare from across the pond would translate into strong attendance here.

In the end, it did. The show attracted people from all walks of life, including a large number of Sex And The City faithful. "The people who came to the show, yes, were those who wear Louboutins, but also those who aspire to wear them. And most of all, for most people it was just a fun and magical experience."

PHOTOGRAPHY: EUGEN SAKHLENKO





# THIS IS NOT A TOY

FEBRUARY 7 TO  
MAY 19, 2014



For the DX's third show, a Toronto collector approached Levy with an idea for an exhibition on urban vinyl and designer art toys. Next, he recruited singer Pharrell Williams to be the guest curator. Williams did so gladly—he's an urban vinyl collector too. In addition to curating pro-bono, Williams helped bring in some of the artists and lent some pieces from his own collection for the show. After a large collective effort, **This Is Not A Toy** was Design Exchange's first original show and the world's first full-scale exhibition of designer toys.

This Is Not A Toy became a world-class opportunity for collectors and the uninitiated alike to discover the vast, intricate and colourful universe of designer toys. These limited edition sculptures in ABS plastic or vinyl have become highly collectible since the 90s.

For DX, the show was a big success, attracting record attendance. Levy also received several requests to tour the show internationally.

"Pharrell Williams personifies where we are hoping to go as a cultural institution—an understanding of the interrelationships between design disciplines and all creativity, for that matter. I heard Pharrell talk in a panel at Design Miami and I was immediately impacted by how he effortlessly segued between fashion, architecture and hip-hop, and very clearly drew the relationships between them," Levy says. "We later discussed bringing him to DX for a number of programs but he was most excited about this."

PHOTOGRAPHY: EUGEN SAKHENKO





# POLITICS OF FASHION

SEPTEMBER 18, 2014  
TO JANUARY 25, 2015



"Jeanne Beker has been very inspiring to many of us," says Levy of Design Exchange's latest guest curator. "She is a fashion icon and through her 25 years as host of Fashion Television, has played a prominent role in the democratization of design in Canada."

So far in the lead up, Levy says the response from media, RSVPs to the opening and ticket sales have been through the roof. "I hope it will be another seminal moment in the growing up of Canada's Design Museum, and the appreciation of design in Canada, at large." **UC**



In early 2014, Levy approached Beker to discuss ideas for collaborating on a show. Beker outlined the beginnings of what a very short time later would become Politics Of Fashion | Fashion Of Politics. Beker and Design Exchange curator Sara Nicholson put the show together in just six months.

"I think it's unprecedented. It's not a traditional show for a Canadian museum," Levy explains on the eve of the vernissage. "The content and exhibition design could be more easily found in Paris' Palais de Tokyo than on Bay Street in Toronto." It has a strong subversive counterculture approach. From an aesthetic perspective my best comparison would be Dover Street market."



PHOTOGRAPHY: EUGEN SAKHNEKO

Urban Capital has been a major corporate sponsor of the DX since 2012.

A watercolor architectural rendering of a modern building with stone accents and a rocky landscape. The building features multiple levels with balconies and large windows. The foreground is dominated by a rocky, landscaped area with a small waterfall and patches of greenery. The background shows trees with autumn foliage in shades of orange, red, and purple. The overall style is soft and painterly, characteristic of watercolor art.

# THE LOST ART OF WATERCOLOUR RENDERINGS

BY STEVEN BARR

Michael McCann is one of the few remaining architectural renderers who works in watercolour. He's also a world renowned artist who insists on being at the design table from Day 1. And that's just what Urban Capital wanted for its multi-phase Ravine development in Toronto's York Mills neighbourhood.



**Watercolour is dead.  
It didn't stand a chance.**

**A**t a certain point architectural renderings, like all things on planet earth, entered the digital age. And for all the logical reasons. Computer generated images are cheaper, easier, and faster to produce, and way more flexible for client revisions, changes to building plans, and so on. Digital opened the door for a whole new set of rendering artists, and with it increased competition and ever decreasing prices.



One quick Google search illustrates the point: search “cheapest architectural renderings” and about halfway down the first page you can get a 3D computer image for \$150. They are terrible renderings. However, keep scrolling because there’s a company doing them for \$250 – and they’re not completely awful. They’re somewhat photorealistic, and although they may lack depth, lighting, composition, and mood, they are efficient representations of proposed projects. Are they bland and boring? Yes, but who cares, they serve their purpose and you move on.

But for developments that need to tell a story or express something beyond the basic massing of a building, the architectural rendering takes on a different role. It becomes about emotion. And while there are very talented, experienced digital renderers fit for the task, often there is no match for the romance of the hand-drawn watercolour.

### THE ROMANCER

World-renowned architectural renderer Michael McCann will tell you that watercolours aren’t dead; it’s the cold, lifeless computer generated renderings that are the dead ones.

McCann explains: “watercolour is an exercise of pure design, whereas the computer gives you details where you don’t necessarily want to see them yet.” The impressionist qualities of watercolour force the viewer’s imagination to complete the image, thereby creating an active relationship between image and viewer.

Digital imaging, by virtue of its unwavering precision, is about objectivity of materials, and struggles to create that same active relationship. McCann argues that architectural renderings, as vehicles for storytelling, are stunted by the new technology. In his view, regardless of your personal preference, categorically one medium is better at activating audiences.

### DESIGN BY WATERCOLOUR

For McCann the core issue isn’t just that one is better than the other. His bigger point is that digital technology has killed the most valuable part of design – the concept stage.

In the olden days the concept stage was a chance for architects, designers and rendering artists to sit together in a room, sketch ideas and solve design problems. McCann and others before him have argued in the digital age people don’t actually know how to draw anymore, and use computers to jump right into the finished product. In a 2012 New York Times piece, architect Michael Graves concurs: “Architecture cannot divorce itself from drawing, no matter how impressive the technology gets. Drawings are not just end products, they are part of the thought process of architectural design.”

With over 40 years of working with top names in architecture and urban planning, Michael McCann’s strength is his ability to come to the table in early concept stage to help clarify and stimulate the design process. In a sense, his watercolour

paintings are a bi-product of this. His portfolio includes commissions for New York’s East River Master Plan, Euro Disney, Harvard Law School, Washington DC’s 100 Year Master Plan, Chicago’s Millennium Park, the World Trade Centre Master Plan, the Palace of Prince Satam of Saudi Arabia, and Pearson International Airport. He’s worked alongside globally renowned architects including James Sterling, Robert Stern, Michael Graves, and Philip Johnson.

McCann’s watercolour style (not to mention the associated cost) is not necessarily suited for every condo project. Nor does every little infill project need its own laborious concept stage.

But sites of a particular scale or unique location can offer a canvas befitting only a watercolour painting and the conceptual strength that McCann brings.

### A PERFECT MATCH

Urban Capital has worked with McCann on a number of past projects, including the recently completed Nicholas tower (see page 18) and a proposed 16 acre mixed-use development in downtown Mississauga (profiled in 2012’s Urban Capital Magazine).

The latest collaboration is a new master-planned community called The Ravine, a joint development between Urban Capital and Alit Developments. A 14 acre site at the intersection of York Mills and Valley Woods Roads, adjacent to the Don Valley Parkway, The Ravine cradles the north and west boundaries of Brookbanks Park and



Michael McCann's watercolour renderings for Urban Capital's multi-phase Ravine development

ravine. The development consists of eight buildings carefully placed around the natural parklands. It represents a new, modern vision for a community initially developed in the 1960s as part of the Don Mills Master Plan.

Work on The Ravine began with McCann painting the initial rendering seen above (first at left). This is what the actual river running through Brookbanks Park looks like. And that painting became the beginning of The Ravine's story. It informed how integral the ravine would be to the development, and how the architecture – and the overall approach – would fit within the ravine setting.

McCann continued working closely with the design team to develop the whole concept, from the building exterior to the lobby and the outdoor amenity spaces. His involvement continues today with input on the marketing and communications program.

Michael McCann's paintings will be centre stage in the sales pavilion when the Ravine's launch takes place in early 2015. And will establish that watercolour rendering is indeed alive and well. **UC**



Other McCann renderings of Urban Capital developments (L to R clockwise):  
 . Burnamthorpe Tower, Mississauga  
 . Lobby, Nicholas  
 . Planing Mill Building, Nicholas

# FROZEN IN TIME

BY SHERRIL MATTHES,  
WITH EXCERPTS FROM 'CITY BEAUTIFUL'  
BY RANDY TURNER, WINNIPEG FREE PRESS  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEIF NORMAN

**Winnipeg's collection of early 20th Century buildings is unrivalled in this country, a national treasure frozen in time by a series of unfortunate circumstances.**

In the centre of Canada sits an architectural time machine of a distinct period in history, an era of unparalleled promise that fell victim to its time and circumstance.

That time machine is the Exchange District in downtown Winnipeg, which remains largely as it was in 1918. And in 1918 it was fantastic.









BANNATYNE



GRAIN EXCHANGE BUILDINGS I & II



THE KELLY BUILDING



THE ELECTRIC RAILWAY CHAMBERS



IMPERIAL BANK



THE MARRIAGI HOTEL



THE HAMILTON BANK BUILDING



THE ROYAL BANK OF CANADA BUILDING

"It was a city of tremendous bustle. Real bare-knuckle capitalism", says Dr. Frank Albo, art historian and author. "The most economically aggressive city in North America, it was a place for risk-takers, tycoons and gamblers. And if you really wanted to make your mark as an ambitious builder, Winnipeg would be a great place to make a start."

On one day alone in 1912, 3,500 people stepped off trains into Union Station, designed by the architects of Grand Central Station, and the CPR Station, with its "dramatic portico, richly ornamented facades, and grand rotundo."

These are just two of many examples of a design and construction era ruled by the anticipation of massive growth. Winnipeg was the Chicago, the New York, of the north. The city had swelled from 42,000 people in 1901 to 160,000 by 1916. In 1911, there was a push toward a population of one million by 1922.

So Winnipeg was designed and built with no holds barred. Bankers Row included the Bank of Montreal at Portage and Main, with the world's largest vault; the Union Bank, the first and tallest steel-frame skyscraper in Canada; the Bank of Toronto, with neo-classical Corinthian columns; the Royal Bank, with a rare Italian Palazzo style facade; and the Imperial Bank of Canada's neo-classic stone exterior and marble, mahogany and bronze foyer.

Beyond the banks, the Fort Garry Hotel, opened in 1913, was the tallest structure in the city, based on the chateau-form style of New York's Plaza Hotel. The Exchange District was booming with warehouses, office buildings and all manner of entertainment, built of limestone and Kenora granite, with adorned doorways, graceful arches and a symmetry of strength that has since withstood harsh elements and economies.

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SOME OF WINNIPEG'S  
MORE NOTABLE  
TURN-OF-LAST-CENTURY EDIFICES,  
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

**THE KELLY BUILDING AND THE BANNATYNE BLOCK, 1905**  
The Bannatyne Block got its start in the early 1880s, at the time of Winnipeg's initial boom. One of its more colourful elements is the Kelly Building, built in 1905 by Thomas Kelly. In 1912 the Kelly Brothers received their most prestigious contract – the construction of the Manitoba Legislative Building. Almost immediately there was controversy around it, and a Royal Commission later determined over-payments to Kelly in excess of \$800,000. He fled to Chicago, but was later extradited to Winnipeg where he was found guilty of embezzlement and fraud and sentenced to two and a half years in the Stony Mountain Penitentiary.

**GRAIN EXCHANGE BUILDINGS, 1892 & 1898**  
The Grain Exchange was founded in 1887 as a place for buyers and sellers to meet and conduct business, establish rules of trade and create a link with

Residents of the day could see Charlie Chaplin at the Empress Theatre or W.C. Fields at the Orpheum Theatre on Fort Street, in a vaudeville district that attracted the world's most renowned entertainers. Or they could take in Madame Butterfly at the Walker Theatre, with its ivory covered walls and plush red seats.

At nightfall, farmhands and railway workers flooded in to blow their wages in Main Street bars and the plentiful and welcoming whorehouses in Point Douglas, home to Madame Minnie Woods, Queen of Brothels, and some 200 ladies of the evening.

It was glamour, growth, greed and gall combined. And it was about to be challenged by time and circumstance.

In 1914, the Panama Canal opened, providing a short cut for transporting goods to the Pacific Ocean and North America's west coast.

## The most economically aggressive city in North America, it was a place for risk-takers, tycoons and gamblers.

The Winnipeg General Strike of 1919, which stemmed from festering living conditions in a city of two financial solitudes, gave pause to potential entrepreneurs who could now seek their fortunes in Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.

And the outbreak of the First World War completely froze European (mostly British) investment in Winnipeg real estate. The Great Depression followed, leading almost directly into the start of the Second World War.

The Million by 1922 campaign? Well, the *province* finally broke the one-million barrier in 1976. **UC**

international markets. In 1892 the first Grain Exchange Building was completed and in 1898 a second building was added immediately to the south. More buildings were added in 1902, and by 1908 the Grain Exchange relocated to larger quarters on Lombard Avenue.

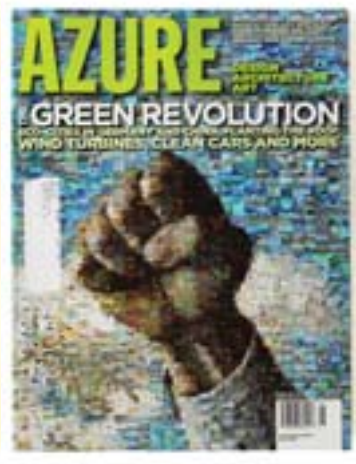
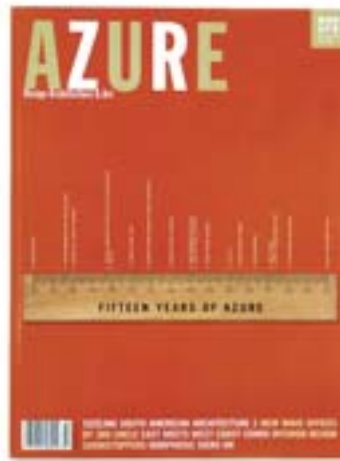
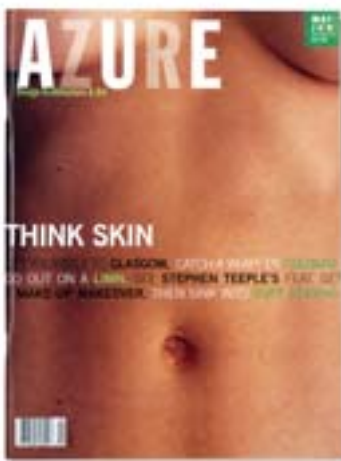
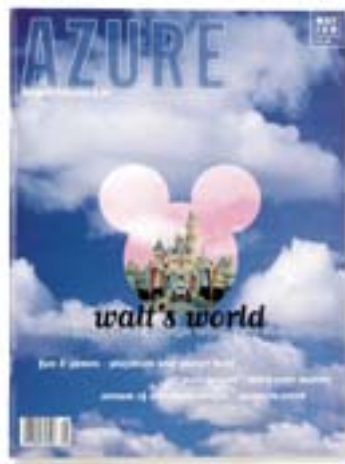
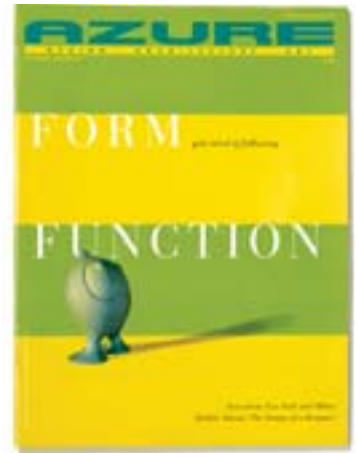
**IMPERIAL BANK, 1906**  
Neo-Classical in style, the Imperial Bank's ornate stone clad exterior was matched by the marble, mahogany and bronze accenting in the foyer, main banking hall and basement vault. The third floor featured living quarters, bathrooms, a dining room and a clubroom for staff.

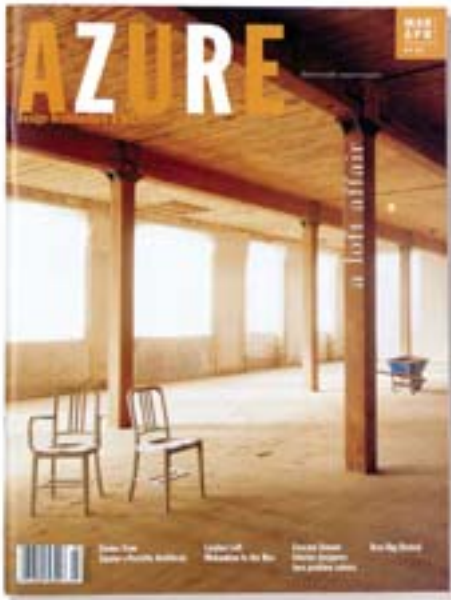
**THE MARIAGGI HOTEL, 1903**  
In 1903 Frank Mariaggi, who had come west with the Red River Expedition in 1871, created a luxurious European-style hotel from what was originally an apartment block. Like no other in Winnipeg, the Mariaggi boasted running water, a passenger elevator, steam heat, electric lights, telephones, brass beds and velvet carpets. For all the luxury on the upper floors, the most impressive part of the building was the basement. Known as "The Grotto," the space had four cave-shaped dining rooms with a waterfall that splashed into a goldfish pond.

**THE ROYAL BANK OF CANADA BUILDING, 1909**  
Italian Palazzo in style, and clad in pink granite, all to convey an image of corporate strength and security, the Royal Bank Building featured bronze doors, oak woodwork, and skylights that illuminated the interior. Marble was used for floors and walls, as well as the staircase, counters (with bronze cages), chequing desks and benches.

**THE HAMILTON BANK BUILDING, 1918**  
Completed in 1918 at a cost of \$400,000, the Hamilton Bank Building was the last major office building built during Winnipeg's early boom. Hamilton Bank later merged with the Bank of Commerce, so this building is today CIBC's contribution to the city's "Banker's Row".

**THE ELECTRIC RAILWAY CHAMBERS, 1912**  
The Winnipeg Electric Railway Company translated its local electricity monopoly into considerable wealth and influence. When a new headquarters was required, the company built one of the city's most spectacular structures. The company lit the exterior with 6000 lights, a feature that continues to light up the night sky today.





# HAND IN HAND

BY AUSTIN MACDONALD

**Azure co-founders Nelda Rodger and Sergio Sgaramella fostered Canada's design culture through its infancy and have recently seen Toronto, their magazine's hometown, flourish into a global capital of design and urban cool.**

In September 2014, *Vogue* magazine released a "Global Street Style Report," the definitive ranking of the world's "coolest neighbourhoods." In second place, behind Shimokitazawa in Tokyo, was Toronto's Queen St. West, chosen by *Vogue's* editors as a smart-yet-matter-of-fact paragon of urban cool. However, *Vogue's* pronouncement was just the latest confirmation of what many locals already knew: Toronto isn't merely the capital of Ontario anymore, it's a bona fide capital of global culture.

Reflecting on nearly three decades in the publishing business, Nelda Rodger, co-founder and Editorial Director of *Azure*, a Toronto-based architecture and design magazine, is sanguine about her city's growing recognition as one of the premier outposts of forward-thinking, grassroots design sensibilities. After all, she remembers, at the magazine's inception the word "designer" was practically unheard of in Canada, except in reference to "designer jeans."

"When we started in 1985, there was no real design consciousness in North America. Most people didn't know what a designer did," Rodger recalls. Over the course of *Azure's* existence, a lot has changed. Yet, she minimizes *Azure's* role in the shift. "I don't think we can take full responsibility for anything. We've been an important source of information for the

design community and have actively tried to bring ideas, images and different points of view from around the world to our readership."

## THE HOMECOMING

Still, it would seem that over the past 30 years, as goes Toronto so goes *Azure*.

And in what's likely to be an apt moment, for its May 2015 thirtieth anniversary issue, *Azure* will celebrate by paying homage to its hometown. "It will be something special on Toronto, that's what we can tell you. Our editors are working on special content about what is happening here," says Sergio Sgaramella, *Azure's* other co-founder and Publisher, "something that we usually don't specifically focus on."

"We talk about Toronto *all the time*," interjects Rodger. "We are very clearly from Toronto, of Toronto, but normally it's not a particular focus for us. But Toronto is a really interesting place right now. You'd be amazed by what's happening here, it's crazy," she says, referring to the rampant growth the city is undergoing.

"People are crazy," Sgaramella jokes, alluding to the reality of living in Toronto – like the rigours of dodging potholes, rollerbladers and even the occasional unicyclist in an increasingly high-stakes and multimodal daily commute.

Despite its shortcomings, in the end, *Azure's* duo agrees that Toronto is an idea whose time has come.

## FROM HOGTOWN TO MANHATTAN

Toronto has experienced a tipping point that has allowed a globalized culture to flourish—fueled by the speed of the digital age and a newfound prosperity. "In the 20th century, Canada was still a young country without a strong and established cultural heritage," Rodger comments. "It had a large immigrant population that was dealing with first-degree problems. Certain things have to be in place before you can begin to create an aesthetic culture."

"Now Toronto is more of a place that people feel a connection to, somewhere where they want to be," she adds, referring to the newest Torontonians' emotional and creative investments in the city, which pay dividends in the form of their contributions.

With a forest of cranes outlined in the skies, Toronto is currently undergoing an intensive Manhattanization.

"That gives you an idea how much things have changed," says Sgaramella, picking up the thread. "There's a mass of people, the younger generation, that is very comfortable with the design fields; they want to become architects or industrial designers, fashion designers, and graphic



designers. Design has become an area of broad interest for this demographic. Previously, architecture and design belonged more to an elite.”

#### THE OTHER FASHION CAPITAL

Similar to Toronto’s coming-of-age, Azure’s growing success has benefited from outside influences. Azure’s spiritual birthplace is Milan, Italy, where Rodger and Sgaramella first met in the 1970s.

Rodger, who studied fashion design in Milan, credits the Lombard city with the awakening of her design sensibilities. “What I found fascinating about it was that everything was designed. You’d look around and things that in North America were just left to chance, there would be given a conscious effort.”

By way of illustration for the uninitiated, Sgaramella, who was born in Milan, adds, “It’s the way in which the bread is displayed in the bakeries, or the way the cold cuts are displayed in a butcher shop. They instinctively express themselves.”

#### PRE-INTERNET

Rodger and Sgaramella launched Azure in the mid-1980s during the heyday of print in North America—before the popularization of the Internet.

Today, they are immersed in the digital world and the rapidly changing media landscape, overseeing two active websites – azuremagazine.com and designlinesmagazine.com. However, their flagship product for the foreseeable future remains an oversized print magazine with eye-popping layout and high production values. Toronto brand strategy firm Concrete Design Communications

designed the current version of the magazine’s look and feel in 2010, followed by a redo of the magazine’s website in 2012.

“We felt the need to make changes, like making the graphics stronger and supplying content that catered to a more mainstream audience, with the goal of making it more inclusive,” Sgaramella says.

#### L’OBJET

The publishers of Azure have differentiated their magazine from the rest of the titles on the rapidly shrinking neighbourhood newsstand by making the publication an object in itself.

“I personally think that print will continue to exist, as long as it’s perceived as having value as an object. Not just a content value, but also a visual value which is more difficult to achieve on a screen,” he suggests. “If there’s going to be print, and that’s a question for the next few years, maybe it becomes a more aesthetic pleasure.”

“In addition to magazines that have unique content, a point of view and something to say, like the *New Yorker* or *The Atlantic*, the possibility exists for a magazine like ours to also have a visual criterion, that will perhaps help us to continue to produce the magazine in print.”

#### SAY SOMETHING. SAY ANYTHING

Another distinguishing feature of today’s Azure is a focus on slower content. “Pretty well anything you write about today is already exposed,” Rodger muses. “Given that everything is consumed so quickly online it’s almost like not consuming at all.”



Instead, she says Azure expresses a point of view. “You have to take a stand on something, flesh it out and turn it into something worth delivering, otherwise there’s no point. All the flavour and nuance of a topic can’t really be transmitted in a short blog post.”

“It’s kind of like reading a film review versus going to see the film. If you read a review you’ve got a basic idea of what happened in the film, but you really haven’t seen it,” says Rodger.

### EH TO ZED

Perhaps contrary to all Canadian print publishing industry outlooks at the time, Azure managed to increase its circulation in 2010. Along with their redesigned magazine, Rodger and Sgaramella accomplished this by launching a new design competition, the AZ Awards.

“The spike in circulation had to do with the redesign but also the fact that we promoted the magazine more, increased the visibility, and announced the AZ Awards for 2011. So all these new initiatives gave us more visibility internationally,” says Sgaramella. “We didn’t really know how it was going to go. I was hoping to get two hundred entries.”

In the end, Azure received over 600 entries for the inaugural edition of the awards. “We were thrilled. It was huge,” Rodger recalls.

Sgaramella continues, “There is an international jury, the entries are from all over the world, from over thirty countries. The awards have been really good for us and they’ve definitely helped us gain more visibility and also respect internationally.”

### SYNCHED TRAJECTORIES

The success of the AZ Awards has capped a long trajectory. “Sergio and I worked very hard for many years developing international relationships for Azure; personal relationships with people in the design world, advertisers and subjects of articles. Perhaps that’s why the awards were successful from the get-go,” says Rodger.

“Maybe with lots of money you could launch something like the AZ Awards and make it successful, but in the absence of lots of money, what you need is goodwill. People participated because we take things seriously and because of the standard of quality we’ve always adhered to.”

Azure’s culmination has also been in synch with Toronto’s. With their base in that city, Rodger and Sgaramella have borne witness and contributed to the rise of the “designer” in Canada, and the increasing appetite for Canadian style and innovation abroad.

Three decades after Azure’s launch, Toronto is looking more stylish than ever, and the world has taken notice. Vogue has pronounced on the city’s street style; come May 2015 Azure will do the same for the city’s the other design fields. **UC**

Urban Capital has been a sponsor of the AZ Awards since 2013.



# EAST vs WEST

Which side of Toronto rules?  
An intelligent discussion on  
a not so important topic.

It's an age-old question for the City of Toronto: which side rules, east or west? To tackle this zealous and passion-infused subject, River City hosted a curated panel of notable east and west end believers to debate on issues ranging from Toronto's infrastructure and liveability to entertainment and culture. The end result: a (somewhat) definitive, (kind of) once-and-for-all answer on which side of the city does it better.



### PRO EAST

Beach resident and host on CityTV's Breakfast Television, **Jennifer Valentyne** injected the east end panel with her energetic personality and animated opinions, coupled with immense knowledge of the ins and outs of Toronto's hotspots.

**Michael Hollett** is the co-founder, co-owner, and Editor/Publisher of NOW Magazine, founder and director of North by Northeast Music Festival and Conference, and a lifelong east ender who now dwells in Riverdale.



### PRO WEST

Parkdale denizen **Roz Weston** entertains a weekly audience of more than two million Canadians with The Roz & Mocha Show on KISS FM coupled with his gig as a host on Entertainment Tonight Canada. He's also no fan of the east end.

Co-founder of Toronto based music label Arts & Crafts, **Jeffrey Remedios** represents his Bellwoods home base. Originally from the east but truly devoted to the west, Remedios knows this city through and through.



## THE EAST

## THE WEST

## THE VERDICT

### CULTURE



"The great thing about the east is liveability. You get the excitement of the big city but with a small community feel. The streets are wider and there are trees everywhere. I think I might have a tree in my living room."



"Have you been to the Distillery district on Friday or Saturday night? They've got restaurants, galleries, cafes, that's the place to be. If you lived here in River City you could walk there."



"When someone says, 'Make me fall in love with Toronto,' when you want to seem like a big shot, you show off the west. That's the postcard Toronto, where Vogue just nominated West Queen West the second coolest neighbourhood in the world. The east has always been a support system for the west, a farm team."

When it comes to cool the west dominates.

**SCOREBOARD**  
EAST 0 WEST 1

### RECREATION



"The parks on the west side are nature-as-zoo, they're tame and contained. If you go to Trinity Bellwoods you get a hacky sack in the head. You come to the Don Valley, it's still wild. Nature intrudes into the east side of the city, the parks are more real and engaged."



"The Scarborough Bluffs are unique, there's nowhere else like them in the world. I made out with every boyfriend I ever had at the Bluffs."



"Okay, our tennis courts at Trinity Bellwoods are pretty crappy. I'm a tennis geek – if someone invites me to play at Kew Gardens I'll go."

The west has mature trees but the east feels greener.

**SCOREBOARD**  
EAST 1 WEST 1

### INFRASTRUCTURE



"The reason I live in the east is highway access: I can get to the Gardiner, the DVP, Kingston Road. I feel like I can get anywhere inside the city in 10 minutes. Travel here is more convenient whether you're driving, walking, taking a cab, riding a bike."



"The west's got the subway. I think the idea of the SmartTrack transit expansion proposal is to make the people in the east feel whole – that they are allowed to take part finally. It's going to be so much easier for east enders to get to the west end."

Say what you will about the subway, it's faster and the west as yet has more of it.

**SCOREBOARD**  
EAST 1 WEST 2

### BANG FOR YOUR BUCK



"East York, Donlands and O'Connor, those are neighbourhoods with affordable housing that are being repopulated and reenergized. South Riverdale east of Pape and south of the Danforth – the deals are still there."



"There's not much left that's untapped in the west. The east has tremendous potential."

You can still get your feet in the door in the east, but in the west those doors have slammed shut.



"In the east you're getting in while you can. I think there are a lot of options."



"I honestly don't know why someone would want to live 20 feet from the Gardiner - I saw a guy take milk out of his condo kitchen fridge as I was driving by and could read the carton."

**SCOREBOARD**  
EAST 2 WEST 2

### TREND LINE



"There's a lot more room for development in the east. And the east side rocks!"



"The only thing I knew about the Junction was that it was hell to get into and out of. Then people started investing emotionally and now it's a very cool place. You hear about somewhere like Ossington that used to be all hardware stores, now it's the coolest place in the city."

The west is kind of there already, the momentum is now with the east.

**FINAL SCORE**  
EAST 3 WEST 2



"The east side is the future, it's evolving all the time. We've got a great African neighbourhood emerging on the Danforth between Donlands and Greenwood. The Brickworks is a world-leading example for greening a former industrial site. Regent Park is one of the prouder enterprises in Toronto today. It's a miraculous redevelopment as is what's happening right here in West Donlands. Because the east has been a little neglected, now we're harvesting. We haven't peaked yet. You guys are kind of a spent force but we're on the way up."



"Queen East is not the new Queen West, it's the old Queen West. So much has changed that what we have now in Queen East is very reminiscent of what Queen West used to be."

## COMING SOON

The shape of things to come at Sheppard and Allen Road.

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# CONDO DEVELOPMENT 101

## How to approach a new market (in 10 easy steps)

From Ottawa back in 2001 to Montreal in 2003 and Winnipeg and Halifax in 2012, Urban Capital has foraged new trails, bringing to new markets the condominium development savvy it has honed in the hyper-competitive Toronto market. Herein, a brief roadmap of the steps UC takes when approaching a new market.

### 1 CANVASS THE FLIGHT OPTIONS.

How do you get there? Is there a direct flight from Toronto, and how frequent is it? Best days are when you can leave in the morning and be back by dinner, without anyone knowing you've been away.

### 2 FIGURE OUT IF THERE'S A MARKET

If you're introducing a new housing option in a new city, a market study may not be the most useful; they tend to look at things retrospectively, not prospectively. Rather, trust your gut feeling – are there enough of your type of consumers, and if you build (or at least offer) it will they come?

### 3 CHECK OUT YOUR COMPETITION (IF ANY)

Has the local development community built anything like what you would propose, and if so, how did they do? In Ottawa, Montreal and, to a lesser extent, Winnipeg and Halifax, we found that there were examples of urban condominiums on the market, but their design and marketing were so unsophisticated that we knew we could easily make a splash.

### 5 KNOW THE LOCAL ECONOMICS

Some markets look good because land is cheap, but construction can turn out to be very expensive (Winnipeg). Little things like the GST rebate not being fully applicable (Montreal and Halifax) can cost you a lot of money. Make sure all line items in your financial projections have been thoroughly "local conditions"-proofed.

### 4 KNOW THE LOCAL CONDITIONS

Beware of "This is the way it's done in Toronto" thinking. Understand the local context. In some cities your project will need council approval, in others just a stamp at a counter. Some markets have no experience with pre-sales; prepare for thorough explanations. No market looks kindly on being told that your way is the only way.

### 6 MEET THE LOCALS

It's always best to have a local ally. Someone to tell you if you're paying too much for a piece of land, or if there's something about your future site you might not know about from a quick flight in. Locals can also help navigate City Hall, and lead you to the right consultants and contractor. Plus it's nice to be taken to the right restaurants.

### 8 TIE UP A SITE

If after all of the above you're still good to go, time to tie up a site. Best to option a site, or enter a conditional purchase, prior to going in whole hog.

### 9 TAKE THE CITY FOR A TEST DRIVE

Once you have a site tied up you should quickly get a basic design and brand in place, and spend a bit of money on advertising and PR. If your website lights up with registrations, you know you're on to something good. If not, you need to proceed with a bit more caution.

### 7 TALK TO A LAWYER

Before you get going on a site, you need to sit down with a local lawyer. Amongst other things, it's good to know if your condo sales agreements will be enforceable, and if you can use deposits in your financing. In Pennsylvania, for example, they're not and you can't, which we learnt from a quick lawyers meeting before deciding not to proceed with a site we were working on.

### 10 JUMP IN.

# CURIO

## RC3 in Lego

What better way to represent the in-and-out design of RC3, the third phase of Urban Capital's River City development, than a scale model made out of Lego. The brainchild of Faulhaber Communications, Urban Capital's go-to PR agency, RC3 in Lego was a smash loot-bag hit at the development's launch party on May 29, 2014.

Each Lego package came with a custom-designed assembly manual and 334 individual Lego pieces, sorted and packaged by hand in UC's boardroom/assembly line by compelled staff and David Wex's 6 year old daughter.

For the kid in all of us.



# WEARABLE ART

## Urban Capital's archives

Small and relatively easy to produce, buttons are typically one of the last items you think about when preparing for a project launch or other event. But since the launch of our Mondrian development in Ottawa in 2006, we've been managing to get them done, and they are often quite nice little accessories to wear on the day or evening of.

But then they get thrown away, or left in jars, or on bedside tables or at the bottom of desk drawers. Never really to be seen (and certainly not worn) again.

So for the 2014 edition of Urban Capital Magazine we went on a treasure hunt to find the ones that we could, and this is what we came up with.

A little visual trip down memory lane.



# REAR VIEW

## The Pug Awards' 10 year adventure

For the last ten years, the Pug Awards have celebrated the best in Toronto architecture and openly chastised the worst. It has been a forum for citizens to hold developers and designers accountable for their work and to boisterously ridicule those not up to snuff. 2014 was the final year of the Pug Awards, sadly, but fittingly for Urban Capital, River City was presented with the People's Choice Award for Best Residential Building. A night-topping accolade that made us realize just how much we're going to miss our little friend.



THE BEST AND WORST RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS OVER THE YEARS, AS VOTED BY THE PUBLIC

### THE BEST

- 2014 River City
- 2013 500 Wellington West
- 2012 83 Redpath
- 2011 Seventy5 Portland
- 2010 60 Richmond East Housing Co-Operative
- 2009 One St. Thomas Residence
- 2008 Argyle Authentic Lofts
- 2007 One King West
- 2006 18 Yorkville
- 2005 Waterclub I

### THE WORST

- 2014 The Avanti
- 2013 Palais at Port Royal
- 2012 Pearl Condominium
- 2011 Eleven Christie
- 2010 Grande Triomphe Phase II
- 2009 Hampton Plaza
- 2008 76 Shuter
- 2007 BE Bloor
- 2006 Glen Lake
- 2005 Wellington Square

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# FORWARD THINKING DEVELOPMENT

TORONTO // OTTAWA // MONTREAL // WINNIPEG // HALIFAX



Urban Capital pioneers residential developments in untapped urban locations, often creating flourishing new neighbourhoods. Forward-thinking in terms of architecture and interior design, it has also led the trend towards modern, clean-looking buildings that complement their urban surroundings. From its first unit in 1996 to the over 4,000 it has since delivered or now has under development, Urban Capital has always pushed the envelope in terms of urban location, high-end yet functional design and green living. Today Urban Capital is continuing to build on that corporate DNA while exploring new markets that extend from Toronto west to Winnipeg and east to Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax.

