


John C. Parkin, Archives, and Photography

REFLECTIONS ON THE PRACTICE AND PRESENTATION OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE



Linda Fraser, Michael McMordie, and Geoffrey Simmins



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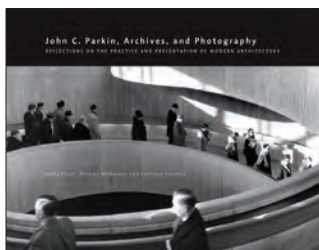
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**JOHN C. PARKIN, ARCHIVES AND PHOTOGRAPHY:
REFLECTIONS ON THE PRACTICE AND
PRESENTATION OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE** by
Linda Fraser, Michael McMordie and Geoffrey Simmins

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John C. Parkin, Archives, and Photography



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John C. Parkin, Archives, and Photography

REFLECTIONS ON THE PRACTICE AND PRESENTATION OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE

Linda Fraser, Michael McMordie, and Geoffrey Simmins



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Introduction

The 1950s to 1970s were exciting years for Canadian architecture. This book seeks to convey some of that excitement by examining aspects of the work of a leading architectural practice of the time and the ideas of its partner in charge of design. At its heart is a transcribed interview with that designer, John Cresswell Parkin, supported by essays discussing the firm, the production of the work, and the photography that was the characteristic expression of that work in print. As well, in this introduction and elsewhere, we consider the wider national context that created the conditions for the production of the work and its supportive reception.

A brief comment about what the book is *not* might also seem in order here. We are not presenting a comprehensive overview and monograph of John C. Parkin's work; rather, we concentrate on a particular moment in that architect's career, when the architect had already achieved considerable critical and professional success. Around this moment, we construct a contextual study that focuses more broadly on the way that architectural

meaning is conveyed, through photography that contributed to the self-construction of Parkin's identity. We also take some time to discuss the ways in which Parkin's work has been documented and is now preserved, through an archival collection.

The period was that of the "postwar consensus" in the U.K., the U.S., and Canada.¹ The label has been contested, and perhaps agreement was not as deep or as uniform as it suggests, but there certainly appeared to be in Canada broad acceptance of social-democratic views and policies. These were supported by sustained economic growth and a young, expanding and, with a flood of immigrants from previously less-represented parts of the globe, increasingly diverse population. A representative figure referred to in one interview by John C. was the prime minister to be, Pierre Elliot Trudeau, who succeeded Lester B. Pearson in 1968.

The mood was strongly internationalist. Canada had participated actively in the founding in 1945 of the United Nations and its agencies and expected to play a

significant role in international affairs. The arts and artists, painters, writers, musicians, and architects drew on and aligned themselves with international movements in the arts, looking particularly to New York, but also to European centres as places to study and work, and to exhibit their products. This was particularly so for ambitious architects, with the Harvard Graduate School of Design, under the direction of Walter Gropius, a magnet for further study. Other figures and other varieties of architectural modernism also drew Canadians: Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin Fellowship (Roger D'Astous, Harold Hanen), Louis Kahn at Philadelphia, the Architectural Association School in London, England, and Alvar Aalto in Helsinki were among the attractions.

While some of these drew on local traditions and referred to local settings (notably Wright's "organic" buildings), Gropius at the GSD represented 'international' modernism, buildings whose form and appearance made few concessions to place and tradition. Instead, the model was the design and production of such emblematic modern products as automobiles and airplanes, understood to be based on scientific and engineering principles with universal application. This approach inspired the work of the Parkin firm.

The photographic presentation of that work by Hugh Robertson embodied similar principles. Black-and-white images, taken with large-format view cameras, have a formality, precision of detail, and austere character that seem to embody abstract principles, independent of place and time. However illusory and constrained this approach to design and its presentation now seems, it had a powerful directness and simplicity. It gave us the ideas, buildings, and images presented here.

This book came about as the result of collaboration between three scholars with different training and orientation. Different methodologies ranging from archival studies to architectural history to architectural practice resulted in a book that addresses the work and times of John C. Parkin in a multi-sided study.

As suggested above, the book's structure is deliberately diverse, drawing on insights provided from archival science, architectural history, and popular culture. In Chapter 1, Simmins argues that Parkin created for himself an image of the architect as an avatar of modernism and progressive attitudes. The firm was very conscious of the importance of presenting a consistent image of the firm and sought to do this both personally and professionally. The image was of a particular variety of modern

designer – suave, cosmopolitan, self-assured, sophisticated, yet with a machine-like efficiency. The firm went to the extent of discouraging beards in the office, as a means of reinforcing the image of the architect as a creation as polished as their brogues, and crisp and clean as their immaculate white shirts and ties.

In Chapter 2, Simmins argues that Parkin developed a problem-solving approach to architecture, one in which architecture was demystified and presented as essentially functionalist, collaborative, and team-based. Drawing on detailed analysis of architectural periodicals from the 1950s and '60s, as well as promotional brochures produced by the firm itself, Simmins shows in this chapter that Parkin developed a strong interest in collaborating with artists and sculptors and frequently called on them as collaborators – provided that the architect was the impresario in this process.

In Chapter 3, McMordie examines the structure of the firm in more detail, looking particularly at the ways in which the Parkin firm may be compared with the American firm of Albert Kahn. Pursuing a remark of John C. Parkin's in the interview included in this volume, McMordie seeks to understand the style of practice created by the Parkins. The organization and conduct of a

comprehensive practice in a deliberately industrially flavoured environment (i.e., the firm's offices at 1500 Don Mills Road) provides more evidence of the presentation of the firm in a way that is inseparable from the actual day-to-day management of the practice.

In Chapter 4, Simmins and Fraser look at how photography contributed to the ways that the firm constructed its self-image, particularly through the work of Panda Associates. Demonstrating how centrally important a tool architectural photography was to creating an image of the Parkin firm, Simmins and Fraser argue that photography assumed a new role: to promote architecture as a lifestyle and to sell it to a generation enjoying unprecedented prosperity. Architectural photographer Hugh Robertson, the Parkin firm's favoured photographer, emerges as a major contributor to the success of the Parkin firm.

Fraser demonstrates in Chapter 5 the importance of archival collections and shows that architecture, as a significant human endeavour, produces records that are essential documentary evidence, not only of the building and design process, but of the activities of society as a whole. As more and more modern architecture disappears from the Canadian landscape, it will be archives

that hold materials that are critical to future study, and, as in the case of John C. Parkin, it may be only through the archives that his life and work can be fully recovered.

Chapter 6 is devoted to John C. Parkin himself, in conversation with Michael McMordie. For readers not familiar in detail with the period, the authors have provided additional biographical details concerning the many architects that Parkin mentions. Documentary adjuncts complete the volume in the form of a selected bibliography that combines bibliographies on Parkin and architectural photography. A contextual study such as this accords with recent trends in architectural history that stress the value of interdisciplinarity.

Scholarship on Parkin is limited and spotty. This book does not attempt to address that lack in all aspects, but it does intend to introduce the subject in a manner that includes elements that are critical to any future study of his work and the milieu in which his work took place. It does this by exploring the practice of a very modern architectural firm that employed modern techniques and philosophies as integral components of their practice. The principals in the firm also engaged in the very modern adoption of a new form of architectural photography and used that as a tool that became a

significant factor in their success. But in some ways, it is the introduction of the Canadian Architectural Archives as an important resource that makes this book unique. As much of Parkin's work has disappeared from the landscape and in many cases the buildings are no longer left to study, it is the surviving architectural records that will provide the basis for future research.

The John B. Parkin Associates fonds is the Canadian Architectural Archives' largest collection. As exemplar of its practice, the modern firm stripped away all but the essential ingredients and only the working drawings remain. All preliminary drawings were destroyed by the firm. Fortunately, the textual records, which include correspondence with clients, contractors, and associate trades, design notes, meeting minutes, office files, memos, and much more evidence of the firm's activities and the building process still exist. In addition, the Panda Associates fonds provides rich evidence of the post-World War II period, as well as the work of Parkin. Beyond that, the archives holds the record of conversations of people involved in the events of the time, largely untapped. One major example is the interview with Parkin. These materials provide layers of meaning,

content, and context so that history can be written and interpreted and re-written and re-interpreted.

We are also mindful that these events played out in the context of significant changes in the larger pattern of world architecture. Even before the close of the period documented here, the world of design appeared to move in a radically different direction. Robert Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966) specifically rejected the single-mindedness of much modernist architecture. He argued for design that recognized the diversity of functions that most buildings serve and that acknowledged the different ways in which it might be approached and occupied. While Venturi saw his work as a contribution to an enriched modernism, it was quickly recruited into the broader movement called "postmodernism." Other deviations appeared: Thomas Gordon Smith in California employed themes from ancient Greek buildings and vase painting; Peter Eisenman in New York developed complex systems of interacting grids in order to "deconstruct" a building's program; Michael Graves and others on both sides of the Atlantic sought to reintroduce themes and details from historic buildings and traditions that modernism had eliminated. Ricardo Bofil in Spain and France pursued

somewhat grotesque renderings of traditional forms in contemporary materials, while Rob and Léon Krier in Germany and England used earlier traditions for both new buildings and town planning and urban design. A notable Canadian example is Jones and Kirkland's Mississauga City Hall (1987). The designers drew on forms and images from rural Ontario for different elements of the building, while its disposition and orientation to Lake Ontario recalls the siting of many early farmhouses in the area.

A new emphasis on the specifics of time and place appeared in architectural photography as well with the immediacy of colour 35-mm images, often hand-held, preferred for a less abstract presentation: buildings as they really are. Both approaches co-existed, depending on the designer, the client and the subject until the onset of digital photography, with a nearly infinite capacity for manipulation and even synthesis of images. A parallel in design, seen for instance in the work of Frank Gehry, was a new complexity of forms and structures made possible by computer-aided design techniques.

Some of the postmodern confusion was resolved when it became apparent that twentieth century needs and building technologies could not be summarily

abandoned. These were at the heart of modernist thinking; their continued requirements and the opportunities they presented demanded expression in building forms and materials. At the same time, modernism proved sufficiently open and flexible to absorb and benefit from much of the new thinking (and rediscovered older traditions) about building form and its relation to use and context. This persistence of the modern suggests that it is more firmly grounded than the postmodern reaction would suggest. For this reason alone, the accomplishments of the Parkin firm and its design leader, John C. Parkin, deserve this re-examination. They stand near the beginning of a design movement that continues to evolve, as it continues to inform most current architecture.

NOTE

- 1 See Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (London: Penguin, 2006) [first published 2005]. Chapter XI, "The Social Democratic Moment," discusses the complexity of the "general post-war European consensus," p. 363. For discussion of the idea, see Anthony Butler, "The end of post-war consensus: Reflections on the scholarly use of political rhetoric," *Political Quarterly* 64, no. 4 (October 1993): pp. 435, 446 [first published online: 24 Aug. 2005].

John C. Parkin: The Image of a Modern Architect

1

By Geoffrey Simmins

In 1964, Roloff Beny (1924–1984) took a revealing photograph of John C. Parkin (1922–1988) (fig. 1.1). Parkin stands sideways, presenting an aura of poised confidence emphasized by his perfectly coifed hair and impeccably crisp, light-grey suit, replete with a pocket square. His expression cannot be interpreted with certainty, but borders between impatience and arrogance. This photograph testifies to confidence, control, and innate ability. Parkin stands at the entrance to the drafting room of 1500 Don Mills Drive, the heart of the largest, most complex multi-purpose architectural office in Canada. White-shirted architects, anonymous in their sameness, labour over their desks.

Who was this supremely confident man? Parkin might be compared with other confident, masculine avatars of the period, such as Sean Connery. By a telling coincidence, Connery's James Bond in *Goldfinger* appeared

in the same year that this photograph was taken. As Toronto critic Christopher Hume noted many years later, "In his heyday during the '50s and '60s Parkin was the architect who seemed to have it all – enormous talent, creativity, sophistication, charm and endless commitment."¹ Remarking on Parkin's influence, Hume observed: "More than just about anyone else, it was Parkin who dragged Toronto, and Canada, kicking and screaming into the modern age. It was also Parkin who brought a bigger perspective to architectural issues." Writing in another context, the *Globe and Mail's* then-art and architecture critic, John Bentley Mays, remarked that Parkin was "one of Canada's architectural pioneers, hacking out of Toronto's intricate thicket of late-Victorian Englishry a secure niche for the bold, utopian design of the international movement – and a pioneer whose rigorous (and sometimes reckless) modernist work has always been

- 1.1. Roloff Beny,
Drafting Room,
John C. Parkin,
Toronto, 1964,
gelatin silver
print, 39.3 ×
29.3 cm; image:
39.2 × 29.3
cm, purchased
1966, Canadian
Museum of
Contemporary
Photography
(no. 66-5618),
National
Gallery of
Canada,
Ottawa.



more hated than deeply understood.”² Parkin was more than a success in architecture. He was an artist as well as an architect (as ten years as president of the Royal Canadian Academy, from 1970 to 1980, attests).

Born to Canadian parents in Sheffield, England, on 24 March 1922, John Cresswell Parkin studied architecture at the University of Manitoba, followed by graduate studies at Harvard with Walter Gropius.³ Parkin joined the firm of John B. Parkin (no relation) in 1947 and eventually became a senior partner as well as partner-in-charge of design. In this role, Parkin oversaw the creation of a large number of uncompromisingly modern works. When John B. Parkin moved to Los Angeles in the early 1960s to found a U.S. practice, John C. Parkin became CEO of the holding corporation that owned both the Canadian and U.S. architectural firms. As Michael McMordie has summarized later developments,

In 1970 John C. Parkin established the Parkin Partnership when other partners of the John B. Parkin firm continued that practice as Neish, Owen Roland and Roy. The partnership won the competition for the design of a new National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa, 1976), though that

design was not built, and also that for the additions to the Art Gallery of Ontario. Through his career, Parkin was an energetic and influential advocate for modern design, not just in architecture but also in industrial and urban design as well, and a mentor for the architects under his supervision. In 1987 a new firm, Parkin Architects Ltd., was formed and J. C. Parkin retired from active practice.⁴

In terms of honours and recognition for his contribution, in 1972 Parkin was appointed a Companion of the Order of Canada for his services to architecture, urban planning, industrial design and the arts.⁵ In 1979, the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) awarded Parkin its Gold Medal.⁶ Parkin died at Toronto, 22 November 1988.⁷

During the course of his long and varied career, Parkin not only managed to awaken public interest in modern architecture in Canada, he and his partner John B. Parkin made modern architecture into a success story. He cultivated the image of the architect-businessman, something like a latter-day Daniel Burnham, or a successful industrial-scaled architect like an Albert Kahn.

- 1.2. Toronto
City Hall,
Toronto, Panda
Associates
fonds, Canadian
Architectural
Archives (PAN
61881-207).





1.3. Toronto-Dominion Centre, Toronto, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 64603-68).

- 1.4. Toronto International Airport Aeroquay, Malton, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 64040-75).



He was a collaborator, working with some of the most gifted (yet also quite different) architects of the twentieth century. For example, he helped realize Viljo Revell's vision for the Toronto City Hall (fig. 1.2), and Mies van der Rohe's for the Toronto Dominion Centre (fig. 1.3). His clients ranged from the Salvation Army to the Canadian government, for which he designed the Toronto Airport – likely his most famous and surely also his own personal favourite building (fig. 1.4).⁸ The firm became well-regarded among those who awarded prizes, receiving, among many other honours, multiple awards in the Massey Medals for Architecture from 1961 and 1964.

Parkin in Recent History

In an assessment of the architect published shortly after his death in 1988, *Globe and Mail's* then-architecture critic Adele Freedman stated that “for architects ambitious to practice modern architecture in Canada after the Second World War, there were only two offices to consider: John B. Parkin Associates, where John C. Parkin was in charge of design.”⁹ His was a life, she concludes, “dedicated to urbanity and urbanism.” The architectural

and artistic communities were not long in paying an appropriate tribute to Parkin, with an exhibition held at the Royal Canadian Academy's Academy House in 1991 entitled “Remembering John Cresswell Parkin.”¹⁰ Curator Detlef Mertins, writing in February 1991, sought to reinsert Parkin's work into the context of the “massive social, economic and cultural transformations of the post-War period in Canada.” Parkin's work, Mertins wrote, “demonstrates the potential of architecture as a social art – at once symbol and instrument of a society re-forming itself.” Both the scale and the optimism of Parkin's vision impressed Mertins, who wrote, “the precision and generosity of vision that his best projects demonstrate put current architecture – and current social imagination – to shame.”¹¹

And yet, such are the vagaries of fortune, and the quickness with which even the most monumental scale of a twentieth-century city can change, that many of his other buildings, even the most critically celebrated, are now either demolished or under threat. His massive Pearson International Airport's Terminal One (1957–1964) is no more. The Pitney-Bowes office building was levelled in 1997.¹² The Parkin addition to the Art Gallery of Ontario has been subsumed into, not one, but two later additions (the latest, by Frank Gehry, opened

- 1.5. Bata Building
(Toronto) being
demolished, fall
2008. Photos by
Debra Jane
Seltzer,
used with
permission,
www.Roadside-Architecture.com



in 2008). The iconic Bata International Centre, designed in 1964, was rendered obsolete when it became part of the eighteen-acre Wynford Park, owned by the Aga Khan Development Network; it was demolished in the fall of 2008 (fig. 1.5). It is high time, therefore, to reassess Parkin, to offer him an opportunity to speak with his own voice, and through the images of his preferred architectural photographers, Hugh Robertson's Panda Associates. Thus was born the critical impetus for this publication. But the seeds for it were sown many years earlier.

Parkin's archives now comprise a key component of the Canadian Architectural Archives at the University of Calgary. Envisaging a comprehensive architectural archive when this archives was first developed back in the mid-1970s, Michael McMordie, a professor in the University of Calgary's Faculty of Environmental Design (EVDS), interviewed Parkin at the offices of Parkin Architects Planners, 147 Front Street West, Toronto.¹³ Our goal in this publication is two-fold: first, to invite John C. Parkin to speak to a generation that did not know him, or his work, first-hand; and second, to showcase some of the photographs of buildings that Parkin designed, photographs that are now housed in

the Canadian Architectural Archives at the University of Calgary.

The chapters in the book, both co-authored and individual, assess Parkin's contributions from different points of view so as to offer new insights on Parkin's work from different methodological perspectives.¹⁴ We hope that readers will thus be engaged in an architectural dialogue about modernism in Canadian architecture – and its reassessment.

This publication has as its subject John C. Parkin. Yet without John B. Parkin (fig. 1.6), John C. could never have enjoyed the professional success that he did. As the interview with John C. makes clear, theirs was an unusual, if not unique, relationship. Operating a large and multi-sided business on the basis of a handshake agreement was remarkable enough. So too was the extent that the elder Parkin presciently anticipated that Canada's post-World War II economy would favour those with international training and expertise. The two men made a pragmatic decision: John C. would attend Harvard and obtain precisely this kind of expertise. In effect, John B. signed off on a mortgage on his younger partner, reckoning that the expenses of having John C. study at Harvard would be amply recompensed by what he learned there,

1.6 John B. Parkin in front of Toronto-Dominion Centre, Toronto, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 68169-6).



and by the connections he made with like-minded professionals. And so one might well dedicate this publication to John B. Parkin, who was open to his younger associate and partner's skills and felt sufficiently secure in his own gifts that he did all he could to foster John C. Parkin's gifts, to their mutual benefit, and to the benefit of Canadian architecture.

NOTES

- 1 Christopher Hume, "Parkin modernism was more than functional," *Toronto Star*. [FIN Edition] 1 Mar. 1991, p. D.1.
- 2 See John Bentley Mays, "Material World: City swallows architect's work: postwar construction: little remains of John C. Parkin's ground-breaking Toronto buildings," *Globe and Mail*, 19 February 1997, p. C-1.
- 3 This biographical summary depends on information contained in Michael McMordie's *Canadian Encyclopedia* entry on John C. Parkin, cited at: <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0006093>.
- 4 Michael McMordie, "John C. Parkin," *Canadian Encyclopedia*.
- 5 The Governor-General's office has the following information on record: "John C. Parkin, C.C., M.Arch., D.Eng., F.R.A.I.C. C.C., Toronto, Ontario, Companion of the Order of Canada, Appointed on June 23, 1972; invested on October 25, 1972. Citation: For his services to architecture, urban planning, industrial design and the arts."
- 6 http://www.raic.org/honours_and_awards/honours_gold_medal/recipients_e.htm.
- 7 According to Parkin Architects' Limited website, consulted in the fall of 2008, important dates in the history of the firm are as follows: John B. Parkin Associates, 1947–68; John C. Parkin, 1968–71; John C. Parkin Architects Engineers Planners, 1972–76; Parkin Partnership Architects Planners, 1976–86; Parkin Architects Limited, 1986–present, Parkin Consultants Limited, 1986–present.
- 8 Parkin presented a photograph of the Toronto Airport's Terminal One as his diploma picture for admission to the Royal Canadian Academy; see: *Toronto International Airport, 1964* ?, gelatin silver print, 51.1 × 60.7 cm, Royal Canadian Academy of Arts diploma work, deposited by the architect, Toronto, 1965, National Gallery of Canada (no. 14826).
- 9 Adele Freedman, "John C. Parkin," *Sight Lines: Looking at Architecture and Design in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990): 92–96, quote on p.92. (The other progressive firm Freedman lauds was Page & Steele, particularly after Peter Dickinson became chief designer.)
- 10 *Remembering John Cresswell Parkin: An Exhibition at Academy House, February 28 to April 4, 1991* (Toronto: Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, 1991).
- 11 Detlef Mertins, "Parkin: A Benchmark for Critical Vision," *Remembering John Cresswell Parkin*, n.p.
- 12 John Bentley Mays, "Material World: city swallows architect's work: Postwar construction: little remains of John C. Parkin's ground-breaking Toronto buildings," *Globe and Mail*, 19 February 1997, p. C-1.
- 13 The interview was conducted 27 and 28 February 1975. The interview was later transcribed and a typescript was prepared. Parkin then reviewed this typescript and heavily annotated and corrected it. Matters rested there for some years while other projects intervened. In September 2008, Julie Sribney, herself a graduate of the EVDS Architecture program, transcribed the annotated typescript.
- 14 Two of the chapters in the present book are based on conference presentations. Michael McMordie presented "An Industrial Vision of Architectural Practice: John C. Parkin and Albert Kahn" to the Fiftieth Annual Meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians Baltimore, Maryland, 16–20 April 1997. Linda Fraser and Geoffrey Simmins's chapter is based on a presentation delivered in 2007 to the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada's annual meeting in Montreal.

The Design of an Architect – Collaborative and Corporatist in Practice, Artistic in Orientation

2

By Geoffrey Simmins

In a 1956 article published in *Perspective* entitled “The Design of An Architect,” John C. Parkin addressed the topic of what “an architect would expect of a graduate joining his office.”¹ Ostensibly oriented towards potential students, the article seems in retrospect to be directed more towards Parkin’s professional colleagues, in that it offers an explanation and a justification of his own firm’s particular qualities. Firmly dismissing as “arrant nonsense” the idea of the architect as someone with “unique importance,” who would solve all the problems of humankind if he [or she] “were only to assert his rightful and so-called historic dominance of the whole field of design,” Parkin suggested instead that “the architect’s role in the future will require the closest cooperation with all the other specialists participating in the building process – engineers, builders, and economists.”² Later in this volume, Michael McMordie explores in detail the ways that the

Parkins modelled their firm after the giant of American industrial architecture, Albert Kahn (1869–1942). Yet perhaps an equally important influence on John C. Parkin was Walter Gropius – in particular, The Architects’ Collaborative (TAC), founded 1945, and responsible for a number of large-scale projects in the United States, starting with the Smith College dormitories and dining facilities (1945–47), followed by the Harvard Graduate Center (1949–50), among many other projects from the 1940s through the 1960s.³

Parkin refers to Gropius in this article as “the master teacher” and relates that Gropius had taught him something unexpected with respect to cooperative group work. This term, “master teacher,” provides shades of Bauhaus rhetoric of the medieval guild. Gropius, Parkin writes, “regarded all of us as colleagues rather than competitors [emphasis added], and his most startling bit of advice

was that it was not only ethical but advisable for us to ‘borrow’ what was good from the boards of the others, leaving, out of courtesy, an idea or two in return. This attitude is diametrically opposed to the usually prevailing Beaux-Arts concept of teaching, which stresses competition rather than cooperation.”⁴ Parkin states that the process of architecture depends on linear progression; “repetition of old experiments is fruitless.” Instead, the modern age had developed a general philosophical basis for expression; “it is the task of our generation to develop and refine these important principles.”⁵

Some years ago, Andrew Saint published a useful book entitled *The Image of the Architect*.⁶ Saint demonstrated during the twentieth century, architects developed new models of practice and self-identification – the collaborative and anti-individualistic TAC model being perhaps the most original among them. Architects developed a problem-solving approach, one in which architecture was demystified and presented as essentially functionalist, collaborative, and team-based (insofar as it ever has been). Is this model in keeping with the image of the architect that we referenced in the introduction – John C. Parkin, dressed in his impeccable grey suit, impatiently staring down photographer Rolof Beny?

It may well be, provided that one understands the role of the design architect in this essentially functionalist model as serving as consul, the first-among-many. A photograph accompanies Parkin’s article “The Design of an Architect.” It shows the senior administrative team of John B. Parkin Associates, Architects and Engineers, grouped around a small-scale model of an unidentified building complex. The individual responsibilities described in the photograph’s caption are revealing. One partner was described as “associate-in-charge of hospital design”; another as “associate-in-charge of industrial engineering”; another as “associate-in-charge of schools”; still another as “associate-in-charge of mechanical engineering”; yet one more as “associate-in-charge of working drawing production.” John C., by the way, was described as “partner, in charge of design,” while John B. was designated “partner, in charge of administration.” In other words, each of the partners and associates was designated according to their *functional role* within the firm. John C. was good at design; he was the partner-in-charge of it.

From the TAC model, Parkin learned to look not to his own ego but to think instead of collaborative roles that emphasized function rather than individual skills. Even if Parkin *was* the partner in charge of design, he

made it clear that the architect needed to collaborate – with engineers, with city planners, with artists. In Parkin’s own words, the architect had never been “the shaper of all things”; this was, he wrote, “an anachronistic and arrogant view.”⁷ Was he perhaps referring to the aged giant of American architecture, Frank Lloyd Wright, who still practised a model of architecture based on individual genius and unique responses to site and to clients? Parkin writes: “The over-publicity of a few senior eccentrics has tended to make architecture attractive to younger ones of the same disposition. And so we have a kind of apostolic succession of eccentricity in architecture which is to the general public bewildering, sometimes amusing, but more often annoying.”⁸ Whether in fact Parkin was referring directly to Wright is immaterial; Gropius and TAC, and Parkin after them, proposed a quite different model of architectural practice, based on corporate identity and corporate sharing of responsibilities. Gropius helped instill a collaborative approach in Parkin, and such were the values by which Parkin developed a highly successful practice. Did this approach result in good architecture? The jury is still out. It is generally accepted that a major TAC project, the Pan-American World Airways Building (1958–63), resulted in a better process than a product.⁹

Parkin goes on to compare young architects and engineers and remarks that the latter has “learned to cooperate with his fellows; he has learned to resolve his personality in a way compatible both to himself and to his peers. The young architect often graduates believing that his total view will quickly prevail in the shaping of things.” Some firms practising legally as engineers, he writes, are “producing better architecture than those architects who decry their inroads into what they regard as a closed shop or private game preserve. This, of course, has been going on since Joseph Paxton and the Crystal Palace [in 1851]. And, as in the case of that notable building, if the building is sufficiently removed in space and time we grudgingly claim it as our own, as ‘architecture.’”

What, then, does contemporary architecture demand? “Perfection of workmanship and detail.” Architectural design is a rational field, one in which a better design should emerge by its own merits and through teamwork. The alternative, he writes, is for “the young graduate to cling tenaciously to a design scheme he has arrived at, sometimes prematurely, refusing to give way to a better solution advanced by someone with a fresh, unbiased viewpoint. In a larger context, this attitude often prevents, architects, when presented with the

2.1. Salvation Army Building, Toronto, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 561456-2).



problem of designing buildings side by side, from reaching agreement on such fundamentals as harmonizing materials, alignments, and setbacks. It is not surprising, therefore, that our city streets look unnecessarily chaotic as a result of this kind of rugged individualism.”¹⁰

Parkin’s interest in collaborating with others definitely extended to the visual arts. Gropius likely influenced Parkin in this respect as well, emphasizing the need to work in multi-disciplinary teams, and the benefits resulting from such an approach. In an article published in *The Structurist*, a Saskatoon-based publication edited by the noted neo-Constructivist artist Eli Bornstein of the University of Saskatchewan, Parkin discussed in some detail the topic of “Relations: Art in Architecture.”¹¹ Observing that there would doubtless be much new architecture built in the coming decade in Canada, Parkin wondered whether its quality would match its quantity. To achieve quality, he wrote, would require a true synthesis between art, architecture, and sculpture. Curiously, he came down against the idea that all buildings required sculpture or painting consistent in style to complete them. “We would prefer to leave the obvious places empty,” he wrote, “in the hope of a more enlightened or sensitive generation completing the voids

and blanks with works of a fully professional standard.”¹² What Parkin argued for instead was that each discipline pursue its own higher standards and that eventually the mutual excellence would lead to a truer synthesis than if a forced marriage were to take place. In this view, he echoed (and quoted favourably) Le Corbusier, who demanded that an architect be both an “unerring plastician and an intense connoisseur of the arts.”¹³ In the rest of the article, he quoted learnedly from contemporary art and architectural examples (Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and Henri Matisse’s noted Chapelle du Rosaire de Vence [Chapel of the Rosary] in France, realized between 1949 and 1951), making it clear that his own interests in the arts were highly developed. A true synthesis between the arts and architecture, he wrote, “involves a certain polarity between the building and the work of art.”¹⁴ Simple harmony, he suggested – as in the work of de Stijl architects – could result in too close an identity. He then pointed somewhat modestly to his own firm’s efforts to integrate art and sculpture into architecture – Jack Nicols’ mural at the Salvation Army Headquarters in Toronto (fig. 2.1); Louis Archambault’s bronze interior sculpture, *Sunburst*, in the Sun Life Assurance Building in Toronto; and the several examples of art at

the Toronto International Airport. The goal, he hoped, would “result in an artistic synthesis richly varied and inventive in spirit.”¹⁵

Once again, we return to Gropius and to the Bauhaus for the source of these values. As Parkin’s statements show, Parkin took seriously the challenges of working in teams, and this process enriched his architecture – from conception to artistic and sculptural complement. When assessing Parkin’s work and his contribution, it is important to keep in mind his theoretical underpinnings that link him with the powerful tradition of the twentieth-century art reformers working at the Bauhaus, notably Walter Gropius, whose lessons Parkin strove assiduously to integrate into his own work.

When professional articles appeared on the Parkin firm – and it received favourable and lengthy articles in a number of leading architectural journals – the Parkins typically emphasized the diversity and the problem-solving nature of the firm’s work. For example, the title of a lengthy article published in the December 1959 issue of *Architectural Record* was “Complete Professional Service for Diverse Industries.”¹⁶ The Parkin partnership had “decided that the realities of the postwar world required a re-evaluation of the role of the architect,” the article

related. One result of the discussion that followed was the basic decision to expand the professional services of the firm to enable it to handle building types not ordinarily worked on in the past, and to handle all of its work in a more efficient and complete manner. In practical terms, Parkin strove to centralize operations so that the need for external consultants was minimized. Seen in retrospect, it is easy to see how well this approach accorded with the general “expertism” of the period. Advertising the firm as capable of rendering “complex processes simplified,” Parkin argued for the collaborative, integrated basis for design – and suggested that his firm was perhaps uniquely suited to provide such services.¹⁷

Just as at the Bauhaus artists used print media creatively and effectively, Parkin utilized contemporary media to good effect. For example, in 1968 the firm prepared an ambitious, well-laid-out, substantial, promotional brochure given the library title of *John B. Parkin Associates, Architects and Engineers*, which documents the firm’s projects by means of excellent Panda photographs and accompanying texts.¹⁸ Although not really a *book* per se, the brochure has the heft of one, and conveys an aura of authenticity while tacitly asserting that the firm was a “big player.” This brochure, which



2.2. Ontario Association of Architects Headquarters Building, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 57885-1).

2.3. Ontario
Association
of Architects
Building, Panda
Associates
fonds,
Canadian
Architectural
Archives (PAN
54809-1).





2.4. Ontario Association of Architects Headquarters Building, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 57885-2).

documents projects realized from 1954 to 1968, starts with photographs of many of the different buildings the firm designed for the Toronto Airport Building (illustrated exhaustively over many pages), while also photographing the Toronto City Hall, Imperial Oil's Ontario Regional Headquarters Building in Toronto, the Ontario Association of Architects headquarters in Toronto (figs. 2.2–4), McKinnon Industries' Divisional Administration Building in St. Catharines, IBM's Canadian Headquarters Building in Toronto, the Toronto-Dominion Bank Building in Toronto (identifying Mies van der Rohe as an architectural consultant), the International Nickel Company of Canada's J. Roy Gordon Research Laboratory in the Township of Toronto, Thomas J. Lipton's Plant and offices in Bramalea, Ontario, Ortho Pharmaceutical (Canada's) Plant and Offices, in North York, the Don Mills Shopping Centre, in North York (figs. 2.5–9), Don Mills Collegiate Institute and Junior High School, in North York (fig. 2.10), the master plan for York University, also in North York, phase one of Brock University in St. Catharines, the Sidney Smith Building on the downtown University of Toronto campus, Central Collegiate, in Oshawa, the George Kennedy Public School in Georgetown, Ontario,

the Greater Niagara General Hospital, in Niagara Falls, Ontario, and the Thorvaldson Building at the University of Saskatchewan, in Saskatoon. A number of these buildings were identified as having won Massey Medals for Architecture. In each case, excellent photographs, usually by Panda Associates (often enriched by plans, sections and site plans) complemented a description conveying information about the owner, the general contractor, the date of completion, area of site, and area of building. The cumulative effect conveys the inescapable impression that here was a highly professional firm that could take on any kind of project – the larger the better.

In a much later article, published to complement a sixteen-page spread in the May 1978 issue of *Canadian Interiors*, John C. Parkin strove once again to impress on the reader the importance of process as opposed to design, or as Parkin put it, “A concept for the *practice* [his emphasis] of architecture is of even greater importance than the concepts which that practice might produce, for without a clear concept for professional practice the art of architecture is impossible.”¹⁹ Immediately after making this point, as if to drive home his argument even more strongly, Parkin writes: “This review of the work of the two Parkin partnerships will seek to comment



2.5. Don Mills Convenience Centre, Don Mills, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 55943-1).

- 2.6. Don Mills Convenience Centre, Don Mills, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 55943-9).





2.7. Don Mills Convenience Centre, Don Mills, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 55943-10).

2.8. Don Mills
Convenience
Centre, Don
Mills, Panda
Associates
fonds, Canadian
Architectural
Archives (PAN
55943-14).





2.9. Don Mills Convenience Centre, Don Mills, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 55943-19).

2.10. Don Mills Collegiate Institute and Junior High School, Don Mills, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 64812c).



on the ‘design’ of structures and the arrangement of plans, rather than upon the *science and systematization of knowledge within the building process*” [emphasis added]. A clearer statement of this firm’s approach to design – a phrase that Parkin would have likely changed to practice of architecture – could not be imagined. Also telling in this article is a statement from Parkin to the effect that he believed in the ameliorative powers of architecture – architecture as transformative. He writes: “Like all those others who were there at the beginning of contemporary architecture in Canada, we were possessed with a quite extraordinary idealism. We really felt that buildings *could* enrich the lives of those using them.” To enrich the lives of others demanded an architecture based on flexible but still clear principles. He chose not to be identified too closely with the term “Modern Movement,” which he recognized had become (by 1978) “a pejorative for some.” He even stated that he “cannot recall our ever having used that particular term. For one thing, the concept of something being ‘modern’ I had always thought naïve; for another, the notion of being part of ‘a movement’ I thought presumptuous.” Instead of being branded by stylistic designations, he sought refuge in more general principles, such as “avoidance of

the ephemeral.” He then offered a measured defence of the firm’s philosophy. “We have never used the arbitrary, what is unreasonable, illogical, or irrational. We have sought clarity of plan, clarity of structure, clarity in the use of materials and clarity of form.”

It is perhaps fitting that Parkin employs here such measured language, appealing to the reader’s intellectual senses rather than to some looser argument based on emotions. Yet Parkin *did* understand and respond to the (for lack of a better term) artistic vision, and sought to incorporate that into his architecture. Thus one needs to be very careful in simply asserting that Parkin was a “modernist”: as we have seen, he eschewed such simplistic designations as unworthy of the complexities of architectural practice. Central to his vision was *an architecture that transformed human beings by its appeal both to their rational side and to their artistic responses*: the role of the architect was to stand as mediator between these conflicting yet reconcilable and complementary worldviews. Thus it is perhaps most appropriate to present Parkin as the worthy inheritor of the mantle of architect-visionary of the twentieth century set out by Gropius – as much as Parkin himself might have protested the designation as not in keeping with his rational principles.

NOTES

- 1 John C. Parkin, "The Design of an Architect," *Perspective* (1956): 13–17. The universal masculine pronoun is found throughout the article and has not been changed here.
- 2 Parkin, "Design of an Architect," 13.
- 3 See Ise Gropius, John C. Harkness, Leonard J. Currie, and Virginia M. Currie, "The Architects Collaborative: The Heritage of Walter Gropius," *Process: Architecture* 19 (1980): [1]–163, and John C. Harkness, ed., *Walter Gropius Archive 1945–1969: The Work of The Architects Collaborative* (New York: Garland Architectural Archives, 1991).
- 4 Parkin, "Design of an Architect," 15.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Andrew Saint, *The Image of the Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1983).
- 7 Parkin, "Design of an Architect," 13.
- 8 Ibid., 14.
- 9 See: Carol Burns, Review of Bauhaus in America, by Judith Pearlman, in *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 55, no. 2 (Jun. 1996): 182–85, who observes (p. 183): "It is generally (and gently) stated by all those who discuss the Pan Am Building that it was a mistake. Benjamin Thompson, one of the founding members of Gropius's Cambridge, Massachusetts, office, The Architects Collaborative (TAC), concedes, 'Ultimately the process was a lot better than the quality of the work.'"
- 10 Parkin, "Design of an Architect," 15.
- 11 John C. Parkin, "Relations: Art in Architecture," *The Structurist* 2 (1961–62): 34–40. It is telling that Parkin placed an epigraph from Le Corbusier at the head of his article – "The man [sic] who comes to architecture owes it to himself to be an unerring and an intense connoisseur of the arts" (p. 34).
- 12 Parkin, "Relations: Art in Architecture," 34.
- 13 Ibid., 35.
- 14 Ibid., 36.
- 15 Ibid., 38.
- 16 "Complete Professional Service for Diverse Industries: John B. Parkin Associates, Architects and Engineers." *Architectural Record* (December 1959): 117–22. The following quotation is on p. 117.
- 17 "Complete Professional Service for Diverse Industries," *Architectural Record* (December 1959): 118.
- 18 The copy I consulted is housed in the library of Harvard's Graduate School of Design (GSD). Perhaps John C. donated the copy personally. Oriented in a landscape format, with a three-ring binding held together by a screw and ribbons on the long left end, and covered in thick, black card stock, the untitled brochure has a card glued on the lower right cover, reading, "John B. Parkin Associates, Architects and Engineers, Toronto, Los Angeles, Montreal, and Sault Ste. Marie." The date is conjectural and corresponds with the latest completion date of projects illustrated within.
- 19 John C. Parkin, "The Parkin Years," *Canadian Interiors* (May 1978): 15. The following quotations also come from the same page.

John B. Parkin Associates and Albert Kahn Inc.: An Industrial View of Architecture

3

By Michael J. McMordie

The Toronto-based Parkin practice, as it grew from the late 1940s to the 1970s, pursued the perfection of building. The underlying themes were classical, the inspiration came from the towering giants of modernism, Gropius and Mies. Parkin, Gropius, Mies all had roots in the classical tradition, either nineteenth-century German neo-classicism, or the Beaux-Arts classicism of the North American schools. Perfection of design and execution demanded complete control over the process from inception to completion; the vehicle which was to give this control was a comprehensive practice which commanded all necessary skills and knowledge. The model to which the Parkins looked was Albert Kahn's Detroit practice, the inspiration advanced early twentieth century North American industry.¹

The alternative model of practice followed craft precedents: one person, or a small group followed through a project from its inception to completion. In this model the architect in his own person commanded all requisite knowledge and many of the necessary skills. As an example, the nineteenth English Arts and Crafts architect Philip Webb was described by his biographer W. R. Lethaby as able to take the tools from the workman's hand and do the job as well as or better.² The rapid advance of building technology in the later nineteenth century soon made such a comprehensive grasp of the building process impossible for one person. Specialized engineering knowledge – structural, mechanical, electrical – became necessary to the design of more ambitious structures in the twentieth century.

3.1. John C. Parkin: "A crisp, military efficiency to serve the clients," *The Globe Magazine*, July 5, 1969, p.7; Parkin/NORR fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives). Reprinted with permission of *The Globe and Mail*.



The architect contracted for advice on these matters, jealously guarding the role of prime consultant and of architecture as the primary, integrative, art. One cost of this approach could be the loss of work or control by architects to others, including engineering firms and building contractors, who could claim they were better able to manage costs and building schedules, while still able to incorporate the necessary architectural skills, the architect now demoted to employee or hired consultant. Nonetheless, the craft model – architect as creative generalist – continued (and continues) to appeal to many, for its flexibility and for the view of practice it offers as the work of creative individuals. Parkin chose a different direction.

Asked in 1975 about models for the Parkin practice, at its peak in the 1960s the largest and most influential in Canada, John C. Parkin (fig. 3.1) dismissed the powerful and distinguished U.S. contemporary Skidmore, Owings and Merrill as a source of inspiration. Rather, he said, Albert Kahn's was the formative influence. A copy of George Nelson's 1939 monograph *The Industrial Architecture of Albert Kahn*, among the books on his office shelves, he identified as a key inspiration.³

The conception of architectural practice proposed by Kahn (fig. 3.2) answered the demand for service to its major group of clients, large-scale technologically advanced manufacturing industries. It was, itself, inspired by and to a degree modelled on those industries, particularly the pioneering operations of the Ford Motor Company. Those operations, as embedded in and shaping twentieth-century North American society, have given their name to the 'Fordist' stage of capitalist development. The Parkin firm of the 1960s and '70s may be seen as attempting to implement Fordism in architectural practice, their buildings the closest architectural expression of Fordist capitalism. This is neither to argue that the Parkin firm was unique, or that it was typical. Its partners did, however, pursue their objectives with a single-mindedness and success that makes their enterprise an unusually suitable case for examination.⁴

The most interesting questions about architectural practice go beyond an analysis of the organization and management of the practice to the implications and consequences of these for design. Did the conception of the practice itself give a shape and limits to what the practice might achieve in its buildings? Do the buildings themselves reveal a larger social vision, whether intended



3.2. Albert Kahn (photo: Hedrich-Blessing, from Nelson (1939) p. 15). Reprinted with permission of the Chicago History Museum.

- 3.3. Lady Esther, exterior (photo: Hedrich-Blessing, from *The Architectural Forum*, August 1938, p. 100; Parkin/NORR fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives). Reprinted with permission of the Chicago History Museum.



or not? What were the ethical and aesthetic results of Fordist practice? Does the architecture reveal the aesthetic and ethical consequences of Fordism? The Parkin firm offers a test case.

In a 1975 interview, John C. Parkin gave this account of the development of the firm:

Most importantly, we became integrated. The idea for that came from a book I had read in 1944. On one occasion since I have reminded the author, George Nelson of New York, of just how important his book was to our practice. The book was, in fact, as George readily admits, a kind of promotional brochure on behalf of Albert Kahn Associated Architects and Engineers of Detroit. However, when I was 21 or 22 years old, it was the first organizational chart of an architectural firm I had seen.⁵

He noted what he considered to be the uneven quality of Kahn's design, the modern work in the factories compromised by the retrospective style of the administrative and public buildings (fig. 3.3) (but was reassured by the work of SOM which demonstrated "that there was

nothing mutually exclusive between good design and good organization").⁶

The connection to Kahn's industry-based Detroit practice, particularly as it was presented in the late 1930s by Nelson, carries us to the heart of the conception of architectural practice exemplified in the Parkin firm at the peak of its activity in the later 1960s and early '70s. John B. had entered practice in the late 1930s, but it was his meeting with John C. Parkin in 1944, and John C.'s return from Harvard to join John B. in practice in 1947, that set the firm on a clear path. Through the following two decades, the two Parkins and their associates built the largest and most distinguished Canadian firm of the period. The '70s saw John B. Parkin's move to Los Angeles, the merger with Smith Carter Searle, John B. Parkin's death in 1975, and the break between John C. Parkin and the emergence of a successor firm, Neish Owen Rowland and Roy. The Kahn conception of a unified and comprehensive design service, offered a model clarified and refined by the Parkin practice as it grew through these decades.

Albert Kahn's approach was shaped in response to the demands of the automobile industry, and particularly the leading innovator, the Ford Motor Company.

Henry Ford and his associates directed the full flowering of a Taylorist enterprise centred on production line manufacturing, but gave their name not just to “a new model of production and accumulation [but also to] a new system of social and political regulation ... and a new form of international division of labour.”⁷ That larger social and political system is as relevant to architectural design and practice as the more limited question of office organization.

Through the years immediately following World War I, Henry Ford’s company grew into an industrial giant, realizing a comprehensive vision of a modern corporation, before steady growth was interrupted by the stock market crash of 1929, the Great Depression, and World War II. The system it implemented was called “mass production.” A key element was the assembly line, first seen in the Chicago meat-packing plants, then introduced to the automobile industry by Ford at his Highland Park plant in 1913–14.⁸ The full vision included, not just the technical details of mass production, but the selection, shaping, and supervision of the workforce, including its housing, and some oversight over the workers’ personal life. High pay and steady work bound the workers to the company in a relation of mutual obligation

and dependence. The Ford Motor Company’s Sociology Department was the precursor of the post-World War II personnel departments, their subject matter now identified in a telling phrase as “Human Resources.” Taylor’s Scientific Management was realized through the rational control of *all* resources and processes, including human, and extended to the creation and manipulation of a market for the products of mass production.

While any such comprehensive system was beyond the scope of an architectural firm, Kahn learned from Ford and his management systems, as he designed the factories to house the Ford company’s operations.

The outstanding fact about the organization of Albert Kahn, Inc. is its completeness. The departments of the Technical Division design the entire construction, including mechanical trades.... All departments start work simultaneously instead of working in successive stages ... plans and specifications for all trades can be submitted for bids at one time ... [the] drawings for a large factory can be completed in a week or ten day’s time ... a brief outline of the completeness of the Kahn organization....

[because the work is so varied and so extensive] its departmental chiefs must be well versed in their respective activities ... its efforts must be systematic ... a standardized procedure must be strictly followed, so that the work in its various stages can flow through the office as smoothly as a product flows through a well-designed factory. Not only have Albert Kahn, Inc. brought architecture to industry, they have also brought industry to architecture.⁹

In his 1974 book on Kahn, Grant Hildebrand quotes a 1918 description of the new offices occupied by Kahn that year, which includes a note on the way in which actual daily progress was charted against estimated progress. Hildebrand comments that the “entire organization of the work process ... recalls the automobile industry’s [system]. Kahn was drawing organizational lessons from the industry he served.”¹⁰

There was no part of the work for which provision had not been made in the office organization – this staff was capable of dealing with data and determinants for all aspects of building design and seeing it through

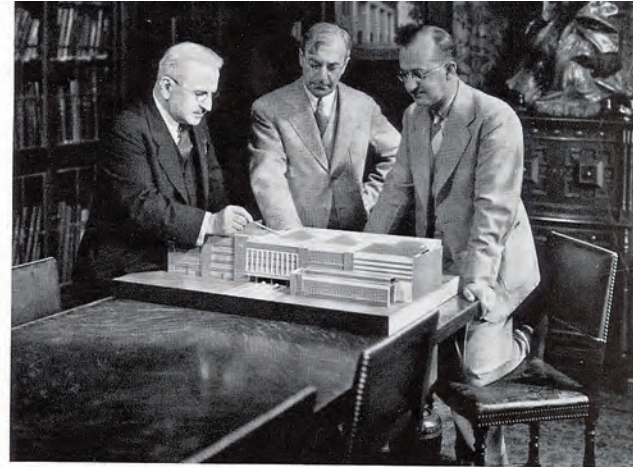
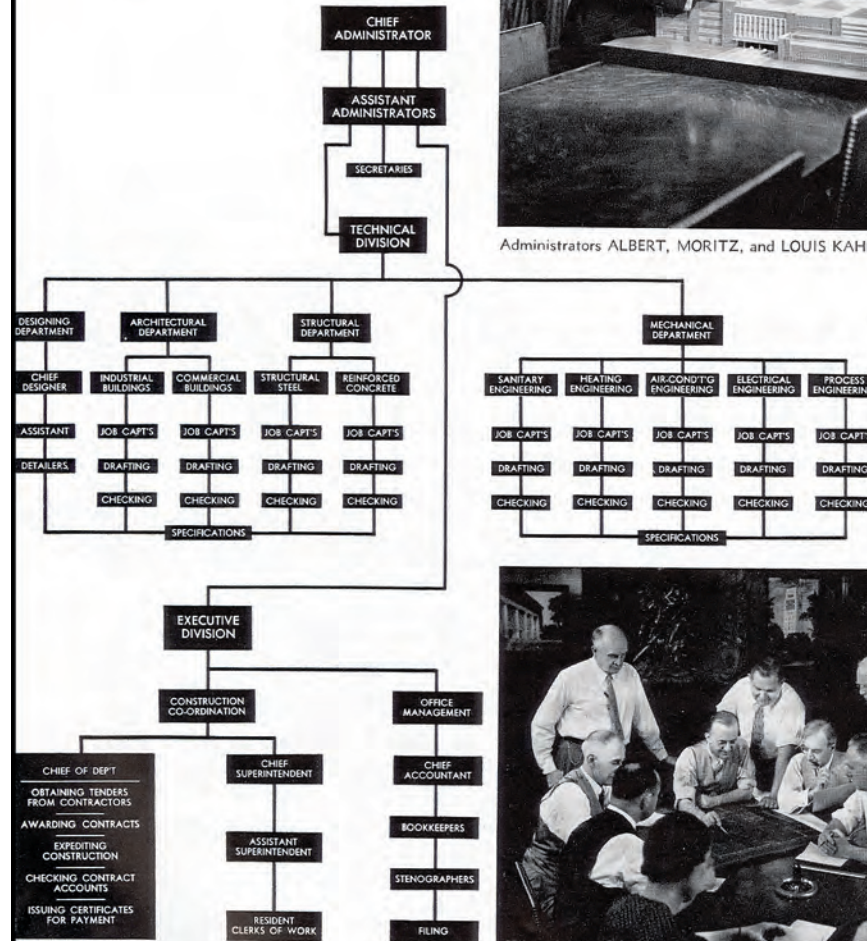
construction to time of occupancy without the aid of any consultants.¹¹

While John C. Parkin noted the Kahn model as having come to their attention in the mid-forties, a copy of the original *Architectural Forum* article of August 1938 with the organizational chart (fig. 3.4) suggests that John B. Parkin may earlier have been impressed by the Kahn model.¹² However, they first learned of the model, it proposed an approach to practice which appeared to support their ambition for design of the highest quality, as well as efficiency and economy of production. The key appears to have been the incorporation into the firm of all the requisite design skills. These included notably the engineering professions: structural, mechanical, and electrical, but also landscape design (under John B. Parkin’s brother Edmund), interior design and graphic design, and even industrial design. Specification writing, cost estimating, and site supervision were more routine activities to be carried on in-house, but there was a notable emphasis on specialization, and the division of labour, in place of the traditional architectural generalist, who would routinely be responsible for all these.

Despite this elaboration of the Kahn precedent, there was some resistance to charting the firm’s structure

- 3.4. Kahn organization chart (from *The Architectural Forum*, August 1938, v. 69 n. 2, p. 92; Parkin/NORR fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives)

ORGANIZATION



Administrators ALBERT, MORITZ, and LOUIS KAHN

Hedrich-Blessing Photos



LOUIS KAHN, chief executive, conducts weekly conference of department heads

- 3.6. Diagram from advertisement for “Univac Total Management Information System”, Univac Division of Sperry Rand Corporation, page from *Fortune*, March 1966, reverse of p. 92 (Parkin/NORR fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives; PAR 88A/80.23). Credit: Unisys Corporation.



in the traditional way. In a 1961 letter to the editor of the *Canadian Builder*, John C. wrote that until then they had not “thought it desirable to proceed as far as an organizational chart.” A tension between the industrial model and the tradition of the architect as a highly creative individualist seems to lie behind the circular chart they did produce for a *Canadian Builder* article on the firm (fig. 3.5). Parkin noted further: “This avoids the usual stratified concept inherent in all vertical organization charts, and which we are most anxious to avoid.”¹³ It perhaps also reflects a desire to be associated with the sophisticated technology of the day; adjacent in the file is an ad for the Univac Division of Sperry Rand clipped from *Fortune* magazine (fig. 3.6) with the following text selected:

Management is no longer the remote apex of a pyramid but the hub of a wheel. Lines of communication are direct. Every area of activity is monitored on an absolutely current basis. And centralized control of decentralized operations becomes a reality.¹⁴

Both were acknowledged in an article by Roy Marshall, partner in charge of production, in one of a series of articles by Parkin staff for the *Canadian Builder*. He predicted the future importance of the computer and the tension between artist and manager. “The impact of the computer ... will before long invade the domain of the architect. However, the techniques of creating a building design ... have changed little over the years. The process is complicated by the fact that many highly creative people are of independent mind.” The article’s title – “The creative-managerial function of the modern architect”¹⁵ – identifies the issue: how to turn architects from independent creative artists into corporate managers.

Contradictory views of the Parkin practice followed from this tension between a managerial view of the architect’s role and the tradition of the creative individualist. The Parkin office at 1500 Don Mills Road was a manifesto for the Parkin design principles (fig. 3.7). In John C.’s words: “Beauty is built in – by proportion. An extension of function is beauty. We are not fine artists but social artists.”

Architecture is a hard, hard process of analysis.
It isn’t something that comes full-blown in some

incredible spiritual insight, but is only the product of a lot of rejection. That is why I come with such hope to the computer. With it we will have a hand, a much more substantial body of knowledge from the behavioral scientists, the cultural anthropologists, the ecologists – the people who should really be doing the pure theory which we should be applying. These are the people who really know about how people should live – not architects.¹⁶

This scientific view belonged to a period when war-time “operational research” and other attempts to apply scientific knowledge and analysis to complex human situations encouraged the belief that architecture could (and should) become an applied science. It’s difficult now to know how seriously John C. held this view, which seems contradicted by his strongly held aesthetic preferences, nowhere more evident than in his own house.

The Parkin office in Don Mills was known familiarly as “the factory” (in the Spicer article quoted above, the “brain factory”); as the illustrations reveal it looked back to Kahn’s long-span, one floor, glazed industrial sheds for the *parti* (whether from Manitoba or Harvard,

3-7. John B. Parkin Associates, 1500 Don Mills Road. Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 55149).



Beaux-Arts terms enriched the Parkin lexicon) (fig. 3.8). The treatment was Miesian: deceptively simple detail, elegant proportion, and a restricted palette of materials and colours (black) enclosed an orthogonally planned set of offices, the north half of the building given over to a vast “draughting room” with parallel ranks of draughting tables. The arrangement was both industrial and unexceptionable, although ironically it spoke of hierarchy (the Parkin’s offices sequestered at the south-east corner in an administrative enclave), despite John C.’s emphasis on democracy, teamwork, and collaboration.¹⁷

Social and political issues appear to have been sensitive matters. Commenting on a draft article in a letter to the editor of the *Canadian Builder*, he questioned a reference to the senior Parkin’s views on appropriate dress.

Too much emphasis has been given in the text to a concern, suggested by others, that we might have to do with the appearance of human beings and their personal habits than we do, in fact, maintain. Our men [*sic*] are, in fact, trained to conduct themselves as professional men with a continuing bias towards the art of architecture. In other ages architects wore monk’s robes or the

trappings of rich dilettantes. What Mr. Parkin is suggesting is that the appearance of the individual architect is often a manifestation of his attitude towards his professional practice.¹⁸

The Spicer article refers to an unnamed “senior officer” who “confirmed that a man of eccentric dress ‘might not get to meet a client,’ noting with disdain that in one well-know Toronto architect’s office ‘they tend to wear wool ties.’”¹⁹ It appears that while there may not have been a formal dress code there were clear expectations, particularly for employees who hoped to rise to positions of greater responsibility. All this is unsurprising, although it reinforces the distinction between different traditions of practice and the self-presentation of architects from those traditions.²⁰

The experiences of younger architects working for the Parkin firm confirmed the contrasting views and traditions. For one young architect: “you won’t learn anything creative, but you’ll learn to be a good technician ... it’s so big and rigid they can’t keep up with the latest in design.... What hits you is the hierarchy ... every one is expected to conform completely – a beard is immediately regarded with suspicion”; for others, the experience

3.8. "Parkin in the Don Mills Brain Factory" (from *The Globe Magazine*, July 5, 1969, p. 6; Parkin/NORR fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives). Reprinted with permission of *The Globe and Mail*.



was “terrific ... a very stimulating one.... In five years you cover what some architects spend a lifetime doing ... the diversity of work, the magnitude of the projects and the people themselves.”²¹ The views reveal contrasting expectations of architectural practice, and the degree to which employees were prepared to enter into the opportunities and constraints of corporate practice on the Parkin scale.

It seems inescapable that, at the Parkin scale of practice (200 or more employees), the desire to maintain consistency of design together with a high level of technical quality (including control over budgets and schedules) required a strong hierarchy and firm central design control. Other firms pursued high quality while accepting, indeed encouraging, diverse approaches to design. The British firm of Arup Associates, for example, combined advanced engineering and architectural skills, and produced more innovative design, but felt no need for the rigorous consistency Parkin sought. The contemporary Canadian firm, Thompson, Berwick and Pratt, also tackled large-scale work to international acclaim but accepted and capitalized on the individual talents of its designers, rather than conforming to a corporate design ideal (fig. 3.9). Even the Parkin firm’s

work did evolve, and strong design personalities found opportunities to extend the limits of acceptable forms and materials, but such individuality was resisted. The Salvation Army headquarters building (fig. 3.10), Sifto Salt, and the Simpson’s office tower all contrast with such classic works as Ortho Pharmaceutical (fig. 3.11), the Don Mills Shopping Centre as well as the Parkin office at 1500 Don Mills Road (fig. 3.7), or John C. Parkin’s own house (fig. 3.12), most characteristic of the firm’s work.

Design perfected through rigorous control remained an important goal. An earlier critic, John Ruskin, found the same aim in classicism. He rejected it in favour of the accidents and eccentricities of Gothic, which allowed the stone-carver to contribute his own creativity to the work²² Ruskin, as economist and social critic, saw the nature of the work and the quality of life as inseparable. The individual worker’s experience should not be sacrificed to the pursuit of abstract perfection. Some of Parkin’s employees clearly had similar feelings about their experience in a practice based on the industrial model, and dedicated to a kind of modern classicism.

In summary, it seems that Parkin was right to associate the firm’s conception of practice with Albert Kahn,

3.9. Hebb building,
University
of British
Columbia,
Vancouver,
Thompson
Berwick Pratt
& Partners,
(photo:
McMordie
fonds, Canadian
Architectural
Archives).





3.10. Salvation Army Headquarters, Toronto. John B. Parkin Associates (photo: McMordie fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives).

3.11. Ortho
Pharmaceutical,
Don Mills,
Ontario. Panda
Associates
fonds, Canadian
Architectural
Archives (PAN
56360).





3.12. Residence of Mr. and Mrs. John C. Parkin, Toronto, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 581100-1)

despite his misgivings about some of the Kahn firm's design. Kahn, in serving Ford and other industrialists of the early twentieth century, implemented what we identify as Fordism in the practice of building design in the first half of the century, as did Parkin in the second half. They created impersonal, ostensibly objective, technocratic designs for an impersonal, objective, technocratic society. Taylor's scientific management, Ford's paternalistic mass production and the production line, provided models for social organization and control; their buildings offered images of functional efficiency that domesticated the European *avant garde* and made it the emblem of expanding prosperity on the North American model.

Those images embody a vision of life and society that has been repeatedly questioned, from the turbulent sixties to the disillusioned nineties. No longer do many see life as perfectible. The Parkin ideal – classical perfection – was the ideal exemplified by the products of modern industry for many pioneers of modern architecture.

The airplanes, motorcars, and ships that illustrated Le Corbusier's *Vers une architecture* of 1923, appeared along with the Parthenon, and Michelangelo's St. Peter's as touchstones of design. Gropius, Le Corbusier, Mies, and Parkin, however much they differed in other respects, all sought images of perfection in their buildings. For all, modern industry and its products was an inspiration. The Parkins also found inspiration in its organization and processes. We can celebrate their successes, while we recognize the failures, in their attempt to build more satisfactory places to work and live. The question remains, how better to express our view of the human world, now more often seen as deeply flawed, and impossible to perfect.

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NOTES

- 1 In discussion at the session at which this paper was presented (SAH, Baltimore, April 1997), it was suggested that an important precedent for the work of Kahn for Ford was the Central Manufacturing District in Chicago. “[T]he first planned industrial district” in the United States, it was inaugurated in 1905 on land north of the Union Stock Yard. Abraham Epstein began under S. Scott Joy, succeeded him as staff architect and engineer, later founding A. Epstein, Structural Engineer, later A. Epstein & Sons, International. While both Ford’s innovations and the CMD had their origins in the Chicago stock yards and meat packing industry, Kahn had already in 1903 tackled the architecture of the factory for the Packard Motor Car Company. (Alice Sinkevitch, ed., *AIA Guide to Chicago*, 1993, pp. 388, 390f.); Art Institute of Chicago: Chicago Architects Oral History Project / Sidney Epstein (www.artic.edu/aic/collections/dept_architecture/epstein.htm); “The Central Manufacturing District” (www.uic.edu/orgs/LockZero/cmd_sketch.htm).
- 2 W. R. Lethaby, *Philip Webb and His Work* (London, 1935).
- 3 Interview with John C. Parkin at Parkin Architects Planners, 147 Front Street, Toronto, 27, 28 February 1975. Tape and transcript (with handwritten additions and alterations by J. C. Parkin and an associate) in the Canadian Architectural Archives at the University of Calgary (CAA). George Nelson, *The Industrial Architecture of Albert Kahn*, New York: Architectural Book Publishing, 1939.
- 4 This fits closely the view that “The world heyday of Fordism, its prolonged phase of prosperity, began with the end of World War II, under the hegemony of the United States.” Tilla Siegel, ed., “Fordism and Fascism” (*International Journal of Political Economy* 18 no. 1 [1988]: 4), quoting Joachim Hirsch and Roland Roth, *Das neue Gesicht des Kapitalismus* (Hamburg, 1986). Siegel takes issue with the narrow limitation of Fordism to the post-World War II decades, and to the industrialized world.
- 5 Interview with John C. Parkin, transcript, p. 15.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Tilla Siegel, “Introduction,” T. Siegel, ed., *Fordism and Fascism*, *International Journal of Political Economy* 18, no. 1 (1988): 4.
- 8 Allan Nevins and Frank Ernest Hill, *Ford: Expansion and Challenge, 1915–1933* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1957), p. 6.
- 9 George Nelson, *Industrial Architecture of Albert Kahn, Inc.* (New York: Architectural Book Publishing, 1939), pp. 119–20. The firm’s organization chart is illustrated on p. 21.
- 10 Grant Hildebrand, *Designing for Industry: The Architecture of Albert Kahn*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1974), p. 60.
- 11 Ibid., p.154, commenting on Nelson’s description of the firm in 1938.
- 12 The George Nelson book expanded material that had appeared as a long article in the August, 1938, number of *The Architectural Forum* 69, no. 2: 87–142. Part of this article (pp. 87–96) evidently extracted from a copy of the August, 1938, *Architectural Forum* survives in the Parkin office files in association with other material from the late 1930s to mid-1940s. It may be that John B. Parkin had earlier been attracted by the description of the Kahn firm and brought it to John C. Parkin’s attention, despite his account in the interview. (CAA, Parkin/Norr Collection, accession 1A/75.01 boxes C and D.)
- 13 Letter from John C. Parkin to Eugene O’Keefe, Toronto editor, *Canadian Builder*, April 6, 1961 (Canadian Architectural Archives, Parkin/NORR Collection, Accession 88A/80.23.)
- 14 Reverse of p. 92, *Fortune*, March 1966. A similar chart appears in one of the articles from the *Architectural Record* published as *Techniques of Successful Practice*, (New York: Architectural Record, [n.d., c.1965]), p. [21], but with project teams radiating from a central core of principals and centralized services.

- This chart, developed for the New York architects Eggers and Higgins, appears to date from the later 1950s.
- 15 *Canadian Builder*, October, 1966, p. 56.
 - 16 Quoted in Keith Spicer, "Parkin's Big and Beautiful," *The Globe Magazine*, July 5, 1969, p. 7.
 - 17 See, for example, the letter and attached answers to a questionnaire from John C. Parkin to Reginald Isaacs, 1964.04.08.
 - 18 John C. Parkin to O'Keefe, March 15, 1961.
 - 19 *Ibid.*, p. [5].
 - 20 The issues are discussed more broadly in Judith R. Blau, *Architects and Firms/A Sociological Perspective on Architectural Practice* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987). In chapter 5, she considers "the links joining convictions and agendas, the material base and organization of practice, and design quality" (p. 89).
 - 21 Spicer, p. [5].
 - 22 John Ruskin, "The nature of gothic architecture," II, chap. VI, *The Stones of Venice*, III vols. (London, 1851–3). Ruskin's analysis of architecture turns on this issue. Greek architecture and its descendants belong to the first system of architectural ornament, "Servile ornament, in which the execution or power of the inferior workman is entirely subjected to the intellect of the higher." Gothic belongs to the third, "Revolutionary ornament, in which no executive inferiority is admitted at all." (pp. 188–89) Further, commenting on the modern economic system and the division of labour, he says that it "is not, truly speaking, the labour that is divided; but the men." (p. 196). His most eloquent passages on this topic can be found in §13 of this chapter. The page references are to volume X of E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, eds., *The Works of John Ruskin* (London: George Allen, 1903).

Mid-Century Icons: Architectural Photography from the Panda Collection

4

By Linda Fraser and Geoffrey Simmins

The Evolution of Architectural Photography: An Abbreviated Overview

As Robert Sobieszek has observed, “With the exception of the human visage, there have been more photographs made of architectural subjects than of any other single category.”¹ Architectural photography originally developed for two interlocking reasons: (1) to record buildings for posterity, and (2) to respond to the demands of armchair tourism. Early architectural photographs documented the built form using conventional techniques that aspired to be true to life. This changed significantly in the aftermath of the Second World War, when architectural photography assumed a new role: to promote architecture as a lifestyle and to sell it to a generation enjoying unprecedented prosperity. Post-war modernist architecture was ideally

suited to the medium of black-and-white photography, which was readily disseminated through both professional and general-interest architecture magazines. A close relationship developed between architects and architectural photographers, as “the new sort of architects had their buildings taken by the new sort of photographers.”² A transformation in the techniques and effectiveness of architectural photography resulted. As Robert Elwall remarked:

Once architects realized that the photographers could choose to use their cameras not only to record, but to interpret, flatter or even deceive, and that their pictures were likely to be widely reproduced, they wanted to ensure that they were part of that choice.³

Photography became “as essential in an architect’s office as drafting tables, tracing paper, or soft pencils.”⁴ It became a fundamental tool for publicity and promotion, for disseminating the architects’ work to a broader audience and for obtaining new clients.

Hugh Robertson and Panda Associates

Hugh Robertson (1917–2004) was born and raised in Toronto. In a 2003 interview published in the *Globe and Mail*, he remembered the first photograph he ever took was a “stream running through his grandparent’s farm that he dressed up with rocks to look ‘a little more exciting.’”⁵ In the early 1930s, while attending Upper Canada College, he discovered a passion for photography, and by the mid-1930s he had some of his freelance photographs published in the *Globe* and the *Empire* newspapers. Then, working for his father, the president of E. L. Ruddy Electric/Claude Neon, he was hired to document their neon signs and billboards. During the Second World War, Robertson joined the 39th Reconnaissance Wing in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and worked processing aerial reconnaissance photographs.⁶

After the war, he returned to Canada and, with two other RCAF photographers, Paul Rocket and Lockwood Haight, founded a commercial photography firm, which they whimsically called Panda Associates, relating their black-and-white photography to the panda bear. As LeBlanc noted in the *Globe and Mail*: “They were all young, bright and eager to embrace the new modernist ideals that had begun taking root before the war, as were the new generation of architects who were desperately trying to bring the new modern architecture to our conservative northern shores.”⁷ And so began a remarkable career spanning five decades documenting the built environment of Canada (figs. 4.1–9).

The company quickly grew to a staff of twelve and as a result of the post-war building boom was soon doing 1,500 jobs per year. In the early days of the firm, Robertson recalls shooting “buildings under construction, any kind of building, even rooms, bridges, houses, anything. That was a busy time.”⁸ Within a decade, Robertson became the sole owner of Panda Associates; now specializing in architectural photography, he quickly became one of the top photographers in North America. In the view of at least one later assessor, “Robertson practically invented architectural photography in Canada, and elevated it to



4.1. B.S. Bronskill Residence, Toronto. Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 52326-5).

4.2. Regent Gas Station, Toronto. Panda Associates fonds. Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 49759-1).





4.3. Georgetown Public School, Georgetown. Panda Associates fonds. Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 53783-14).

4.4. Benvenuto Apartments, Toronto. Panda Associates fonds. Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 55897-10).





4.5. Benvenuto Apartments, Toronto. Panda Associates fonds. Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 55460-5).

- 4.6. Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), Brockville. Panda Associates fonds. Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 55539-6).





4.7. Shell Oil Tower, Toronto. Panda Associates fonds. Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 55910-1).

4.8. Ontario
Juvenile
Family Court,
Toronto. Panda
Associates
fonds. Canadian
Architectural
Archives (PAN
57544-4).





4.9. Canadian Dominion Sugar Redpath Sugar Plant. Panda Associates fonds. Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 59510-5).

a high art form.... He was a gentleman: modest, kind, with a great heart and tremendously good natured and good humoured.”⁹

Robertson was not trained as an architect, as were some of his contemporaries, although he credited architects with teaching him to photograph buildings to represent the iconic images they desired. In this case, “Robertson studied under John B. and John C. Parkin: he offered to take photographs, bring his prints for criticism, and redo the shots if requested. The Parkins were obliged to pay only for what they liked. “John C. Parkin was the critical one,” related Robertson many years later. “He taught me the most. He lent me all the magazines.... He wanted stark and clean” (figs. 4.10–11).¹⁰ Robertson realized that as “a professional, the architectural photographer’s first obligation must be to his client even if the resultant images outstrip reality.”¹¹ Robertson also remarked: “I was thinking more about if it pleased me. I had a whole bunch of little rules, there were a lot of little details that I would work on just to satisfy myself.”¹²

Robertson worked closely with architectural firms, especially the Parkins, to convey a specific image of modernity. If “modern architecture was the rising star of lifestyle, and architectural photography was its medium,”

then Robertson was one of the strongest proponents and he used all his technical and artistic expertise to document the Parkins’ work. A striking example of this is provided by Robertson’s photographs of Don Mills, a suburb of Toronto (figs. 4.12–13), an icon of modernism.¹³ As Robertson remarked later,

We did Don Mills frontwards, sideways and backwards.... We did an awful lot of work up there: street scenes and houses by themselves and so on. I thought it was great. It seemed to me to be the way of the future: it was so clean and different from the typical houses that were being built in downtown Toronto. It was a delight, really, to photograph them.¹⁴

Internationally, architectural photographers such as Julius Shulman (1910–2009), William C. (Bill) Hedrich (1912–2001) of the Chicago firm of Hedrich Blessing, Ezra Stoller (1915–2004), and Eric de Maré (1910–2002) pursued similar goals, both documenting and interpreting the work of modern architects. Like these contemporaries in other countries, Robertson, “played an essential role in the visual construction of modern architecture ... not to



4.10. Kenmore-Simpson-Sears Industrial Development, Etobicoke. Panda Associates fonds. Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 55544-6)

4.11. Beth Tzedec
Synagogue,
Toronto. Panda
Associates
fonds. Canadian
Architectural
Archives (PAN
62102-5).





4.12. Don Mills Residential Development, Don Mills. Panda Associates fonds. Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 59963-45).

4.13. Harrison
Public School,
Georgetown.
Panda
Associates
fonds. Canadian
Architectural
Archives (PAN
571376-7).



mention the professionalization of commercial architectural photography as a business. They kept the negatives, and produced reprints when needed for the architects or magazines, and owned the rights to their photographs.”¹⁵

The artistry of “new” architectural photography played a significant role in developing modern architecture and selling it to a public. Architectural photographers employed a diverse battery of techniques to sell modern architecture as an ideal. In many cases, their photographs created iconic architecture from designs that would seem to “typify the sterile glass box.”¹⁶ In some cases, the use of furniture and models and their placement evoked a feeling of a desired lifestyle and made modern dwellings appear a “livable, not barren or austere, space.”¹⁷ The photographers employed models for a variety of purposes, such as “defining the building’s scale and proportion, illustrating the function of the space, humanizing an otherwise austere atmosphere, selling a way of life, and marketing an architectural style.”¹⁸

Robertson’s work for popular magazines, including *Canadian Homes and Gardens* and *Chatelaine*, also documented the new post-war suburbia by showing the possibilities for furnishing the houses of the 1950s and 1960s. Wishing to control lighting and effects, the Panda firm

sometimes created extensive sets in their own studios. As the *Globe and Mail* article on Robertson related, “Often, Mr. Robertson and his associates would reproduce entire living rooms or kitchens at Panda’s studios at 321 Church St. because they had the space and it was easier to light under controlled conditions. It was some of their most rewarding work, he says, since ‘you were starting from scratch and had to build the whole photograph up ... and get all the junk required for taking the picture. It was fun.’”¹⁹

The techniques of recording the built form became more sophisticated after the Second World War, placing less emphasis on recording true-life form and more on the creation of an iconic image. These images were intended for, and successful in, selling both the architect and the architecture to people interested in attaining the unprecedented quality of life that these images promised. But if the intention of the photographer and his clients had changed, does this mean that these images are any less of a record of the society and culture they document? It seems that, as much as architectural photographers in the post-war period strove to interpret and sell modernism, they never lost sight entirely of their role as documenters. As Johansen has observed: “We will

know and remember buildings through images. Surely the buildings which have had impact upon us and are memorable to us, are so, because some skilled and sensitive photographer made a patient and dedicated search for this essential quality in these buildings; and in doing so has fulfilled a rather large historical responsibility to the architectural profession and to society as a whole.”²⁰

Photographs represent a major resource for exploring the past and understanding history. Photographs, as records, “wield power over the shape and direction of historical scholarship, collective memory, and national identity.”²¹ In key ways, “[a]rchitectural photography archaeologizes the past and validates the present.”²² While this is fundamental to an understanding of society and its history as a whole, the inclusive nature of the content of architectural photographs also provides a record of material culture.

Panda Associates Fonds in the Canadian Architectural Archives

Inspired by a similarly broad view of material culture, the Canadian Architectural Archives (CAA) was established at the University of Calgary in 1974 as a joint

initiative between the University Library and the Faculty of Environmental Design. Concentrating primarily on the work of prominent twentieth-century Canadian architects of regional, national, and international significance, the Canadian Architectural Archives has become the largest and most comprehensive collection of Canadian architecture in the country. Inspired by the view that architecture transcends its professional practice and permeates every layer of culture and society, this archives has achieved national and international recognition and is used by architects, students, scholars, and the community for a wide variety of purposes. The architectural record, like photography of the built landscape, “documents its construction, plots its mutations and records its decay in the present, preserving its presence.”²³

The Panda Associates fonds in the Canadian Architectural Archives contains photographs taken between 1946 and 1992. In addition to serving as the Parkin firm’s main photographers, Hugh Robertson and Panda Associates photographed the work of prominent Canadian architects such as Arthur Erickson and Raymond Moriyama. The collection also contains images of Canadian buildings designed by internationally acclaimed architects, such as I. M. Pei, Mies van der

Rohe, Viljo Revell, and Skidmore Owings & Merrill. Panda Associates, as one of the few Canadian commercial photography firms devoted to architecture, played a major role in photographing the built environment of Canada while the country and its architecture developed its own voice. Their work documents the beginning and growth of modern architecture in Canada, and beyond, and provides a visual record of a more traditional architectural heritage. The scope of this collection is enhanced because the firm included interior and exterior views, construction photographs, competition drawings and models, as well as diverse projects by a wide variety of architects. The collection provides a visual record of five decades of Canadian architectural and cultural heritage, including such noteworthy events as Expo 67.

The images selected for this book are representative of the many building types contained in this collection. They reflect Canadian society after the Second World War – the modern Canadian city with its soaring high-rises, airports, office and apartment buildings, factories, and department stores, as well as suburbs with single-family houses, religious buildings, shopping malls, and schools. The selected images compare the built urban and suburban environment in Canada and provide

evidence of how Canadians defined themselves through architectural form, particularly the way that modern architecture was marketed as the new Canadian dream.

Hugh Robertson and Panda Associates created a remarkable body of work that adds considerable dimension to the record of Canadian history. Timothy Samuelson has described the body of work left behind by contemporary Hedrich Blessing of Chicago as “a rich resource documenting the evolution of modern architecture, a wide range of styles and buildings by the famous as well as the obscure, providing a diverse mosaic of the evolving urban environment.... The collection is as versatile in its potential uses as it is diverse in its content.”²⁴ The work of Panda Associates could similarly be described: despite being not yet widely known by the general public, Robertson has nonetheless left Canada a significant legacy. This book and accompanying documentation represent early stages in what we hope will be a more comprehensive analysis of Canadian architectural photography and its relationship to larger social questions.

NOTES

- 1 Robert A. Sobieszek, *Architectural Photography of Hedrich Blessing* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984), 2.
- 2 Cervin Robinson and Joel Herschmann, *Architecture Transformed: A History of the Photography of Buildings from 1839 to the Present* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987), 118.
- 3 Robert Elwall, "The Specialist Eye," in *Site Work: Architecture in Photography Since Early Modernism*, ed. Martin Caiger-Smith and David Chandler (London: Photographers' Gallery, 1991), 63–67, citation on p. 66.
- 4 Joseph W. Molitor, *Architectural Photography* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1976), 131.
- 5 Dave LeBlanc, "An Eye for Architecture: Hugh Robertson Exhibit Celebrates Leading Chronicler of Urban Design in Canada," *Globe and Mail*, 7 November 2003, G-10. The following biographical information on Robertson derives principally from this article.
- 6 An obituary of Hugh Robertson contains biographical information; see the *Globe and Mail*, 22 December 2004.
- 7 LeBlanc, "An Eye for Architecture."
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 John Martins-Manteiga, *Mean City: From Architecture to Design: How Toronto Went Boom* (Toronto: Dominion Modern, 2005), acknowledgments.
- 10 Adele Freedman, "Introduction: West Coast Modernism and Points East," in Rhodri Windsor-Liscombe, *The New Spirit: Modern Architecture in Vancouver, 1938–1963* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre; Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1997), 10–21, citation on p. 17.
- 11 Elwall, "The Specialist Eye," 67.
- 12 Dave LeBlanc, unpublished notes for "An Eye for Architecture."
- 13 Rolf Sachsse, "Architectural Photography," in *The Encyclopedia of Twentieth-Century Photography*, I, ed. Lynne Warren (New York: Routledge, 2006), 56–62, citation on p. 59.
- 14 LeBlanc, "An Eye for Architecture."
- 15 Joseph Rosa, *A Constructed View: The Architectural Photography of Julius Shulman* (New York: Rizzoli International, 1994), 103.
- 16 Lisa A. Goodgame, "Reinterpretations of Modernism, Shulman Style," in *L.A. Obscura: The Architectural Photography of Julius Shulman* (Los Angeles: Fisher Gallery, University of Southern California, 1998), 18–25, citation on p. 20.
- 17 Giselle Arteaga-Johnson, "Narrating Modern Space: The Interior View," in *L.A. Obscura*, 26–33, citation on p. 26.
- 18 Oriel L. Lucero, "Selling Los Angeles: The Use of Models in Julius Shulman's Architectural Photography," in *L.A. Obscura*, 34–41, citation on p. 34.
- 19 LeBlanc, "An Eye for Architecture."
- 20 John M. Johansen, "Introduction," in John Veltri, *Architectural Photography* (New York: American Book Publishing, 1974), 7–8, citation on p. 8.
- 21 Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," *Archival Science* 2, nos. 1–2 (March 2002): 1–19, citation on p. 2.
- 22 Sobieszek, *The Architectural Photography of Hedrich Blessing*, 3.
- 23 Martin Caiger-Smith and David Chandler, *Site Work* (London: Photographer's Gallery, 1991), 10.
- 24 Timothy Samuelson, "Introduction," in *Building Images: Seventy Years of Photography at Hedrich Blessing* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books 2000), 12–13, citation on p. 13.

John B. Parkin Associates Archive at the Canadian Architectural Archives

5

By Linda Fraser

Archival collections, in their many formats and media, constitute a cultural and heritage resource that enables people to reach into the past and find relevant information concerning what has transpired over the course of time. Architectural records form an important part of that resource and yet few institutions collect them in any significant numbers. The loss of these records can only be measured by the passing of time but what remains will doubtless be invaluable in weaving together Canada's rich historical tapestry. The John B. Parkin Associates fonds at the Canadian Architectural Archives is such a resource. Researchers of all kinds will find it rich in detail critical to understanding and chronicling an important period in Canadian history.

John B. Parkin Associates

Post-World War II Canada was an exciting time to practice architecture. The philosophical foundations of modern architecture were laid by the teachings of architects such as Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, and Mies van der Rohe, and in Canada championed by noted architect, educator, critic and scholar, Eric Arthur and others who had, even before the 1940s, embraced modernism. It resulted in a large number of young architects who embraced modernist ideals and began to practice in Canada with the idea that architecture could improve the quality of life. A building boom made it possible to realize those ideals on a large scale and modernism became the dominant architectural style particularly for government and corporate buildings.

- 5.1. Ottawa Union Station,
Ottawa, Panda
Associates
fonds,
Canadian
Architectural
Archives (PAN
67261-22).





5.2. Ottawa Union Station, Ottawa, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 67261-113).

In particular, the leadership of John B. Parkin Associates felt that architecture played an integral role in society and the affairs of government and in merging culture with government and industry. John B. and John C. were both public advocates of design. John B., “a resourceful and aggressive businessman,” served as head of the Board of Trade.¹ John C. was chairman of the Canadian Conference of the Arts and of the National Design Council and the president of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. As partner in charge of design, John C. won five Massey medals by the time he was twenty-eight and his unflinching belief in modernist ideals made him view “the new architecture as an environmental art form” and architects not as “fine artists but social artists.”² He was quoted as saying, “The architect-urbanist must have political instincts, the sense of survival, the will to prevail.”³ By all accounts, John B. Parkin and Associates exemplified those words.

By 1960, John B. Parkin Associates was the largest firm in the country and was designing distinctive modernist buildings for a wide variety of government and corporate clients. Their architecture became influential in the business community and played an important role in the merging of culture with the cityscape – universities,

office buildings, and housing. Buildings for the Ontario Association of Architects, Ortho Pharmaceutical, the Don Mills development, Terminal 1 at the Lester B. Pearson International Airport, Ottawa Union Station (figs. 5.1–2), and the Bata Building (figs. 5.3–5) were among their many designs. They were also chosen as associates by internationally prominent architects such as Mies van der Rohe and Viljo Revell for Toronto Dominion Square and Toronto City Hall. Exemplifying the role architects play in the affairs of the city, their work became monuments to government and business.

The decline of the popularity of modern architecture in subsequent years has led to the demolition of a significant amount of Parkin architecture. What remains as a testament to their importance in Canadian history are their archives preserved at the Canadian Architectural Archives. Today, the archival collection of John B. Parkin remains the largest ever received by the Canadian Architectural Archives. The first accession, acquired in 1975, comprised a multitude of drawings and 550 boxes of textual records. The drawings themselves are a remarkable legacy of a rich and varied practice. Although few perspectives and fewer sketches remain, every drawing, mostly done on large sheets of



5.3. Bata Shoe Stores Ltd. Office Building, Don Mills, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 65018-1).

5.4. Exterior columns at Bata Shoe, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 65973-1).





5.5. Interior columns at Bata Shoe, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 65973-3).

Mylar, shows the completed project work in remarkable detail. The textual records, unfortunately rare in most architectural collections, provide an uncommon glimpse of the actual workings of the Parkin firm and how it contributed to every aspect of the society in which it practised. Rich in detail, these records provide evidence of how architecture and the principles associated with its practice can define the society and culture of a particular generation.

Additional acquisitions from its successor firm NORR, enriched by a series of interviews conducted by Michael McMordie with John C. Parkin and the addition of the Panda Associates collection of architectural photography, one of the premier architectural photography firms in its day, makes the Parkin collection an immensely rich resource for study.

The Importance of Archival Collections, including Architectural Records

Some stories deserve to be told. The telling of such stories relies on the word and image and in archives the foundations for those stories are found. What are archives?

Archives are: “1. Materials created or received by a person, family, or organization, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs and preserved because of the enduring value contained in the information they contain or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator, especially those materials maintained using the principles of provenance, original order, and collective control; permanent records.”⁴ Archives contain a vast amount of documentary evidence in a variety of forms including diaries, manuscripts, letters, official documents, music scores, maps, plans, photographs, sound recordings, moving images, transcripts, e-mails, and other digital content. Records are produced by individuals, organizations, and businesses in the course of their daily activities and they contain evidence of those activities. As Terry Cook and Joan M. Schwartz remark, “They emerge from organizational cultures and personal psychologies of great complexity, multiple relationships, and many identities.”⁵

Archival records become fundamental to our understanding of the past. Providing essential information about society, they are intimately connected with the processes of life that produce them, making them “alive with human nature in all its diversity.”⁶ They become part of the collective memory. They give society the

chance to examine and re-examine what has gone before with the knowledge that memory is “made and continually re-made.”⁷

Archives in memory institutions are collected for a wide variety of purposes with the knowledge that their preservation is critical to our public identity. Many archival collections are theme-based and are derived from particular institutional mandates. Literary papers, political papers, art, music, theatre, and architectural records may contain personal papers, diaries, business records, letters, oral histories, manuscripts, scores, and plans that are representative of the records that reflect human endeavours and are dispersed across collections in every nation. “Recorded information, therefore, derives from a variety of sources and is collected and saved for a complex of reasons.”⁸ The preservation and public availability of these records ensure the continuing research into past events and accomplishments or failures. Though the initial use of these records often serves an immediate purpose, “as time passes, however, new uses for recorded information emerge.”⁹ The use of archives is not limited to academics and scholars. A broad number of people use archives in search of archival records for relevant information from the past. Students of all ages,

local historians, biographers, genealogists, film makers and the general public use archives because they provide a door to the past of all elements that constitute society. In the words of archivist Verne Harris, “the archives ... is a crucible of human experience. A battleground for meaning and significance. A babel of stories.”¹⁰

Architectural records constitute an important branch of archival collections, documenting a variety of complex interactions: the building, the architect, the architectural firm, organizational context, and other factors and communities that may influence how and why certain decisions are made and the context in which the work takes place. “The function of architecture is, in short, complex and wide-ranging; the records creators are numerous and varied, and the records of this function are deeply interrelated and are generated by many recording media.”¹¹

Architectural records are retained in architectural offices and archives as evidence of how buildings were designed, how they were constructed, what materials were used, who designed them, and who commissioned them. They can be used to examine the careers of architects and trace the uses of particular buildings over time. They can be used for restoration and preservation,

for additions and renovations to existing structures, to study precedents for future design, and to determine fault in litigation. In short, they can be used by a wide variety of people for the purpose for which they were created. "Much of this contextual information is available in the most complete and reliable form through the preservation of the records of architects and architectural firms."¹²

It may appear that architecture is adequately documented by sources other than archival records. "The building itself carries a wealth of information for as long as it stands or can be reconstructed, and visual representations in the form of photographs, films, paintings and drawings of completed buildings and streetscapes are often available as well; published sources include professional and trade periodicals, product information, stock plans and pattern books."¹³ While these sources add to a rich documentary heritage, they can in no way replace the information often found in architectural archives and "where architectural records are concerned, one generally can accept no substitutions."¹⁴

And if the building no longer exists as an object for study? Large numbers of buildings do not survive in their original form or, in fact, in any form. As Terry

Cook says: "In studying the history and traditions of architecture, it may not be possible to look around and see the architect's physical monument: very often it no longer exists, or has been restored, refaced, reconstructed several times, reused for radically different purposes; or may be located far away in another city or country. Therefore, the monument of the architect's work may not be the actual building, but archival documents that give evidence of the building's plan, design, construction, use, and subsequent alterations and possible demolition."¹⁵

But architectural records, in fact, contain more than evidence of the design and construction process "because the construction process is linked to the social, political, and financial systems of the society in which the building activity takes place, the records also inevitably give evidence of these systems."¹⁶ Like other archival records, they can, therefore, be used by a wide variety of people for a wide variety of purposes and these uses may change over time.

Architectural archives contain a vast amount of information that relates to the fabric of social and cultural history. A comprehensive collection may contain the entire output of a particular architectural firm, their drawings, and office files, models, and the like for

projects, built and unbuilt, iconic or little known. These documents – design notes, letters and memoranda to clients and contractors, minutes of meetings, site studies, design and construction drawings – all provide evidence of motivations, actual events, and the people involved in most aspects of the process, and this evidence provides an unprecedented view of society as a whole. “The study of architecture therefore reveals much more than the history of design, and the records associated with the design and construction of buildings can be put to a variety of uses.”¹⁷

In her 1998 thesis, Laura Elizabeth Cheadle examined the existence of architectural records in Canadian public institutions and concluded that, considering the importance of architectural endeavour, they are vastly under-represented in archival repositories. This gap in the documentary evidence remains today. The importance of architectural records as critical to any study

of society and culture cannot be under-estimated, and it has been shown that “the primary users of architectural archives are not architects looking for design ideas, but those conducting historical research.”¹⁸ The loss of those records “poses a considerable obstacle to the architectural-historical enterprise.”¹⁹ Although, as previously stated, other sources may still exist to perform research – published material in many forms, photographs, paintings, etc. – they cannot, in fact, substitute for the rich content held in architectural collections. The loss of architectural documents “would hence not reduce a redundancy in the historical record but rather scar it irreparably.”²⁰ Architectural records are indispensable to the historical record, crossing multiple disciplines, and their collection and preservation is necessary to the provision of a complete and accurate picture of society as a whole.

NOTES

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- 3 Sisler, *Passionate Spirits*, 223–24.
- 4 Definition of archives from Association of American Archivists' "A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology" by Richard Pearce-Mose, at: <http://www.archivists.org/glossary/> (retrieved 6 January 2012).
- 5 Terry Cook and Joan M. Schwartz, "Archives, Records, and Power: From Postmodern Theory to (Archival) Performance," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 171–85, citation on p. 178.
- 6 James M. O'Toole and Richard Cox, *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2006), xvii.
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- 8 O'Toole and Cox, *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts*, 43.
- 9 *Ibid.*, xiv
- 10 Quoted in Cook and Schwartz, "Archives, Records, and Power," 183.
- 11 Terry Cook, "Building and Archives: Appraisal Theory for Architectural Records," *American Archivist* 59 (Spring 1996): 136–43, citation on p. 139.
- 12 Cheadle, Laura Elizabeth, "The Archival Appraisal of Architectural Records," University of British Columbia, 1998. Unpublished master of Archival Studies thesis, 13.
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 Alfred Willis, "The Place of Archives in the Universe of Architectural Documentation," *American Archivist* 59 (Spring 1996): 193.
- 15 Cook, "Building and Archives," 137.
- 16 Cheadle, "The Archival Appraisal of Architectural Records," ii.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 1–2.
- 18 Willis, "The Place of Archives," 192.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 196.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 198.

John C. Parkin in Conversation with Michael McMordie

6

Transcribed by Julie Sribney with biographical details provided by Geoffrey Simmins

In the late winter of 1975, Michael McMordie conducted three conversations with John C. Parkin – two at his home on The Bridlepath in the former city of North York, at the northern edge of Toronto, and the other at his Front Street office. The Bridlepath house was designed by Parkin and embodied his most firmly held design principles: classical elegance and quality and a degree of universality – he saw this as reflecting Mies rather than Gropius. Sadly, after his death the property was sold and the house demolished to make way for a much larger and more sumptuous residence completed in 1989.¹ Some topics and themes recur through the interviews as they move through different phases of Parkin’s education and experience.

The first of these, conducted 27 and 28 February at the Front Street office, provides the most information about Parkin’s early life, education and career. This is the interview we chose for the book. Parkin reviewed the transcript and added extensive notes and corrections to it.² We are grateful to Julie Sribney, a graduate architect from the University of Calgary, for having puzzled through the typescripts, Parkin’s amendments, and Michael McMordie’s occasional corrections.

This interview provides insights into John C. Parkin’s personal life and his professional and personal relationship with John B. Parkin (including their steadfast commitment to design only modern buildings) and also presents

valuable details about working on two iconic Toronto buildings – the Toronto City Hall (designed by Viljo Revell [1910–1964] and opened 1965) and the Toronto Dominion Centre (also known as the TD Centre), 66 Wellington Street West, Toronto (designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe [1886–1969] with collaboration from Parkin.)³ The Toronto City Hall (architects Viljo Revell and John B. Parkin Associates, 1965) was the product of a highly successful international competition (1957–58) that attracted 532 entries from around the world and was won by Finnish architect Revell. A minority report suggested that the two-tower arrangement was functionally impractical, but the building has been a great popular success. The curved towers and circular council chamber created instantly recognizable shapes, unlikely to be lost among the rectangular commercial office buildings of the downtown. The elevated walkway around Nathan Phillips Square in front of the building clearly defines this space, at the expense of interrupted views inward and outward. As picturesque in its way as E. J. Lennox’s sandstone

and terracotta old City Hall (1886–99), Revell’s building is a fitting neighbour and successor.

One of the other interviews deals with Parkin’s architectural education at the University of Manitoba and at Harvard with Walter Gropius and others. It also covers his early experiences of practice and his formation of the Toronto practice jointly with John B. Parkin.

The last discusses John B. Parkin’s move from Toronto and the creation of the Los Angeles firm. That decision led in due course to the end of the Toronto John B. Parkin practice, the creation of the successor firm, Neish Owen Rowland and Roy (NORR), and of John C’s independent practice: Parkin Architects and Engineers. It also touches on the founding of the Canada Council and the National Design Council, among other topics.⁴

JCP We had few very large commissions until contemporary architecture in Toronto had been sanctioned by officialdom by the world competition for the design of the City Hall. Our task was a very difficult one. We received some recognition earlier, but certainly things began to fall

into place from 1956 to 1958. We're at about mid-point in my professional life; let's go back to the beginning. Where would you like to start?

McM Well, just for the record and since I don't have it anywhere else, can you tell me what school in Winnipeg, the University of Manitoba?

JCP I happen to have been born in England of Canadian parents. I'm a double Parkin. My mother's name was Parkin and obviously my father's name was Parkin. Their ancestors were related in the eighteenth century. The name itself, which is of the same ultimate origin as Perkins and Peterkin, means son of Peter. Our family originally came from the Derbyshire and Yorkshire border country. We traced the genealogical tree back to the sixteenth century through the College of Arms. My family came to Canada in 1829 and settled under Crown Grant of George IV in what was to become Victoria County (1861–63) on the outskirts of Purdy's Mills, now Lindsay, Ontario, and near the Scugog River.⁵ We know the location of the original log cabin of my great-great-grandfather, Samuel Parkin. My brother has the Crown Grant, which was unearthed quite accidentally in a farmer's attic nearby. Most of us have been buried since in Riverside Cemetery in Lindsay.

Ours is a very cohesive family. My father was a chartered accountant; in fact, he was made a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Great Britain at a very young age. I think he was 30. My grandfather, the son of a clergyman, was also a chartered accountant and a Fellow of the Chartered Accountants Institute of England and Wales. He was admitted as a chartered accountant on July 17, 1886. I have certificates to indicate that he must have been among the first chartered accountants in the world. His certificate was signed by a Mr. Deloitte, subsequently Lord Deloitte and founder of the international firm of Deloitte, Haskins and Sells. The two lines of Parkin, my maternal and paternal sides, came together when my father and mother married in 1914, after a gap of, if I recall, some ten generations. They were very remotely related but with a degree of consanguinity which would not be too dangerous! My background has been entirely a professional one in the paternal line. Parkin & Co. were chartered accountants with offices in England as well as in Canada prior to World War I. The Parkin Lumber Co. in Canada was operated under timber limits Victoria County and Highlands. Log booms were brought through the Kawartha Lakes system when that area was a significant logging country in the mid to

latter part of the last century. I suppose therefore that I have a certain business stream as well as a professional one. My brother, who is a year and a half younger, is the Chief Training Psychoanalyst for Canada. He is a Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto and in private practice.

It is out of this kind of background we came. In one article, some reference is made to a social consciousness or awareness on my part, which I would like to believe gives me some concern for that particular aspect of architectural practice – certainly as I’ve written about it. I consider it to be of equal importance to the formal and visual implications of architecture. If such an awareness exists, I owe it to my staunch Methodist forbearers, who believed that there was a social obligation on the part of anyone who had the opportunity to return some of life’s rewards. In an article in *Macleans Magazine*, I said that such a consciousness was really owed to some influences at the University of Manitoba. If that was so, I would only hasten to now add that it was merely heightened there, for the kind of design training we had was most certainly not one of social advocacy. I think in the more than fifteen years since that particular article was written by Mr. Phillips (a copy of which you now have), I

now think it goes back a great deal earlier than that.⁶ All our family concerns had to do with one’s contribution to life. I don’t want to be pretentious about it, but I do think it’s important that very early on in life I decided that I did not want to become a chartered accountant; I did not want to follow the family business which had been established in the 1880s, or to enter any of the other fields that my family may have had been involved in at one time or another. My brother made his mind up quite independently, and decided to follow a medical career. I entered the University of Manitoba in 1939 and graduated in 1944 with honours. I then came to Toronto and worked for the then firm of Marani & Morris as a kind of “interim or holding action,” but with the clear notion that I would go on to Harvard.⁷ I had already been awarded two, possibly three, Harvard scholarships or fellowships. I came to Toronto with Harry Seidler [1923–2006] – he to work for William Somerville, now the firm of Somerville, McMurrich & Oxley.⁸ Both of us were of one mind – that this was merely a bridging action while arrangements were made so that we could not only enter the United States as students but also work there briefly. It wasn’t easy for Canadians to work in the immediate post-world war period in the United States.

In the meantime, I had heard of John B. Parkin through one or two buildings he had published somewhat earlier. He has also heard of me as I had been a student at the University of Manitoba. We met in Toronto on, I think, the corner of Bay and Bloor, and were introduced in front of what is now the Manulife Centre. We had lunch subsequently, whereupon he offered me a job. He asked what I was making at Marani & Morris and I said \$35 a week. He then told me that he had his first school project in Oshawa – a twelve-room school – the largest project he had ever done, and he asked if I could come over and help him design it or if I would in fact design it. I said I would be delighted. I think it was a distinct case of the blind leading the blind. In any event, I left Marani & Morris and joined John B. as an employee at \$40 a week, and there began what has become a lifetime association. We have no true legal relationship now but we do have an affiliation. He was in Toronto for three days last week [that is, February 1975]. We are in the process of restructuring an international affiliation in a legal sense, but purely for the exchange of personnel, technical information and that kind of thing – very much the way the international auditing firms work. Both by virtue of our wish that this firm be fully Canadian owned and his

quite similar nationalistic concerns, it's disadvantageous for either of us to have a nominal or minority participation in each other's firms.

To return some thirty years. I went to work for John B. and found, as we had suspected, that our capabilities and aspirations, in architecture at least, were somewhat different. John was an avowed businessman, but a man of extraordinary moral scruples and of the highest ethics. By religious background he is a Christadelphian, which means that he is lay-minister of his church and a biblical fundamentalist. Therefore, his attitude towards the conduct and practice of his professional life is of the highest and similar to the ideals of my own background. We agreed that we would eventually form a partnership. I was only 22 however. I had left Marani & Morris in October 1944 to join John, who was eleven years older. We agreed, I at 22 and he at 33, to form a partnership. Although we had won our first private competition (for the TTC Adelaide Coach Terminal, since torn down for the Board of Trade Building on Adelaide Street), (figs. 6.1–2), it was jointly acknowledged that I needed design training of the highest calibre and that I should take advantage of the Harvard scholarships. This I wanted to do in any event.

- 6.1. Toronto Transit Commission
Bus Terminal,
Bay and
Adelaide,
Toronto. Panda
Associates
fonds,
Canadian
Architectural
Archives (PAN
47645-7k).





6.2. Toronto Transit Commission, Bus Terminal, Toronto, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 4611-1).

I went to Harvard in January 1946. It was a very exciting period of time to be at Harvard. Within the first month or so of my arrival, I. M. Pei [1917–] presented his thesis. He had taken his undergraduate degree at MIT, and was finishing his master's and presenting his thesis. It was a marvellous thing to audit a jury consisting of Marcel Breuer [1902–1981] and Hugh Stubbins [1912–2006] and, above all, Walter Gropius [1883–1969].⁹ Some of us were very young and impressionable. To see so many of the names familiar to us, in one room at one time, was a delightful thing. Breuer declared Pei's thesis the finest one he had ever seen in his eight years at Harvard. Pei's thesis, a Chinese Museum for Shanghai, was beautifully conceived and drawn. He showed then all the promise and prospect of his becoming one of the truly significant architects of our time. Among my classmates, in addition to Harry Seidler, was Paul Rudolph [1918–1997], as well as a number of other architects in other classes, many to become contributors to world architecture and planning. Victor Lundy and Ulrich Franzen, Martin Meyerson and Lloyd Rodwin – the list is very long and perhaps not entirely relevant.¹⁰ Philip Johnson [1906–2005] had just left, Alvar Aalto [1898–1976] was down the Charles River at MIT and we were

able to audit his classes, [William Wilson] Wurster was still at MIT, and Catherine Bauer, his wife, was still alive and we were similarly able to audit her classes, both there and at Harvard.¹¹ There was a constant succession of world figures – Leslie Martin [1908–1999], László Moholy-Nagy [1895–1946], and Georgy Kepes [1906–2002].¹²

One of the most vivid and happy memories for me was a rather clandestine meeting at the Oxford Grill. Le Corbusier [1887–1965] was on the United Nations Site Selection Committee and word came out that he was not only going to visit Boston but that Aalto and Breuer and Kepes were going to have a little dinner party for him with a very small group of students. It was indeed a very small list of students – I was lucky enough to be one of them. One sad aspect was that the one significant figure absent that evening was Gropius himself. Gropius had to leave before the dinner party commenced as he had to attend the funeral of Moholy-Nagy in Chicago.

We all felt we were participating in terribly exciting days. We were filled with fantastic idealism for we naively felt we were about to solve most of the problems of the post-war world. Most of us held an unquestioning loyalty to the Bauhaus ethic, to the idea that there

was a single universally accepted architecture, which, if disseminated, had a general applicability to all kinds of problems we were about to face. We felt the Bauhaus code or ethic was returning, be it to Thailand, Australia, Canada, or wherever. Most of us soon discovered that that kind of universality we had hoped for was not really possible. The idealism we held in the '40's was overcome in the cynicism, of what I regard as the sad decade – both for the world and for architecture – the 1960s (which with certain exceptions, such as Expo, was so destructive and nihilistic).

I had become president of the International Students Club at Harvard and came to know some of the interesting people there. I always enjoyed the company not only of the architects but of those from widely differing disciplines and backgrounds. One of the really interesting people I met, at that time, although I had no inkling of what he was going to do later in life, was Pierre Elliot Trudeau. We spent a great deal of time together. We had lunch and dinner on many occasions. His brother, Charles, was at Harvard as well and in architecture. When he returned to Canada he designed some fine houses for Louis Archambault in St. Lambert, Quebec, and another for Jacques de Tonnancour.¹³ With the late

Vincent Rother, he won the competition for the Ottawa City Hall (fig. 6.3), a landmark building of its time in the history of contemporary Canadian architecture.¹⁴

If I may digress, one of my earliest visits to Montreal was at the specific invitation of Pierre Trudeau. When I met him in the front of my fraternity house, he was wearing a black beret, and riding a motorcycle. We went speeding up the back of the mountain to see the University of Montreal. I thought at the time that there must have been something unusual about this man because he was greeted with a remarkable degree of respect by those several deans and chairmen of the departments to whom he introduced me. This was something that I hadn't initially detected in Pierre Trudeau. I later discovered that he had been prominent in student affairs and government, was a brilliant student, and was regarded by many of the faculty of the University of Montreal as a man of unusual promise. We lost track of each other for another ten or fifteen years until he became minister of justice and then later prime minister.

To return. I think greater detail of those impressionable years might be filled in to better advantage later, if you wish. After Harvard, I came back to Toronto, and John B. Parkin and I opened an office at 96 Bloor West.

6.3. Ottawa City Hall, Ottawa, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 58888-34)



The office was over Gilyana's fruit store, roughly where Lothian Mews is today. There were no exotic boutiques on Bloor Street at that time, needless to say. Mathers and Haldenby were upstairs. They occupied a full bay, being one of the largest firms in the city, along with the Marani firm. We held the lease, but to make ends meet, we sublet space to John Layng (unfortunately now deceased, but I think one of the best of the early architects in this city and long unrecognized for his work), Gordon Adamson, and a structural engineer by the name of Mr. Perrigo.

It was here, with three or four separate firms all crowded into one bay, that John and I commenced practice together. As things prospered, we moved to 648 Church, an old semi-detached house, now demolished for Grace Hospital, and across from what was then the Carleton Club, now the onshore branch of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club. We remodelled the house for drafting offices. About 1951 or so, we built and occupied a one and a half storey office building at 717 Church Street, on a difficult triangular site, so awkward in shape that it was thought incapable of development. We didn't then have the audacity to build the third floor we were subsequently required to add. We soon found we were

growing to such an extent that this space was inadequate and were required to lease further space in an old warehouse building nearby owned by the Canadian Tire Corporation.

What caused all this growth? I think a number of factors. We had agreed that, as an architectural firm, we would try to do a number of things. Firstly, we would never take a commission that was even in the remotest sense traditional. There were at the time a number of firms who, out of lack of conviction, undertook buildings that were either neo-traditional or fully traditional. My namesake, after all, had graduated from the University of Toronto in 1935 and, by his own personal putdown, jokingly had said, "well, after all, I was a product of the Beaux-Arts and out the back door, before you came along, did do mansard roofs and a few things of that nature." When we came together, we said however that we would do only contemporary design even if we had very little to do. Indeed, there were many occasions when we did have very little to do; our incomes were very modest – by that I mean more modest than that which we might have earned had we worked for someone else.

Some very fortunate things happened to intervene. Eric Arthur [1898–1982] became Professional Advisor

for the competition for the Ontario Association of Architects Headquarters Building.¹⁵ As in many projects, I prepared the drawings myself and in 1949 we won the competition. While the competition was won, it was far from built for there were some very senior and very eminent architects in the city who were determined that what they thought a rather vulgar building, with an excess of glass, should not represent the architectural profession in Toronto. Attempts were made to buy an older building – including one of rather questionable Georgian design on St. Thomas Street. But the O.A.A. Building was eventually built through the persistence of an architect who unfortunately has been largely forgotten, but whose memory I hope will someday be revived, Earle Shepherd, not a design architect by any claim, but a man of great organizational capacity and energy. In the intervening time, there were many changes in the building. These resulted not only to modifications in the program but also owed to the fact that my own attitude to design had changed profoundly from an allegiance to the tenets of the work of Gropius and Breuer to an admiration for the work of Mies van der Rohe [1886–1969]. I doubt if a precise date could be placed on this adjustment in attitude. Certainly, I felt much

greater personal sympathy and, much more importantly, philosophic rapport with Mies. For one thing, I felt Mies fit my own belief that there was a degree of universality possible; that there should be a generally accepted design base upon which most architecture could be conceived, and one that would allow buildings built side by side to “fit together” with a sense of harmony. Of course, Mies hadn’t begun to build some of those very large buildings, that more than anything else did injury to Miesian philosophy. When one took a gentle Miesian building, one small in scale, and attenuated it sixty storeys then it became something else. A gentle and reasonable philosophy became a *reductio ad absurdum*. At that time Mies was doing the Farnsworth house and Philip Johnson was completing his own glass house at New Canaan, both of which I greatly admired. In 1955 I came to know Philip Johnson through Joseph Hirshhorn [1899–1981].¹⁶ Joe wanted to build a model town in Ontario. With Francis Jaubin as the geologist, he had found uranium at Lind River and he needed architects for his town and nearby estate. We created a joint venture with Philip Johnson.

Of course, when I say “we,” I mean John B. and me, because we were “as one” and had been, since January 1947 – the commencement of our formal partnership.



6.4. Hirshhorn Residence, Bootlegger's Bay, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives, (PAN 58936-33).

- 6.5. Salvation Army Building, Toronto, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 561456-6).



There was a third partner, I hasten to add, John's younger brother Edmund T. Parkin, a landscape architect who joined us in March 1947, two months later. Edmund's responsibility was Contract Administration.

To come back to Hirshhorn and Johnson. We designed a model community to be called Hirshhorn, Ontario. It was never built because the Hirshhorn mining interests were sold to Rio Tinto, or Rio Algom, as it became subsequently. With Philip Johnson, we did, however, build an estate at Bootleggers Bay, as well as some smaller buildings, for Mr. Hirshhorn (fig. 6.4).

I have digressed greatly. While winning the competition for the Headquarters Building of the Ontario Association of Architects was exceedingly important, nothing was more important to us, than our success in the initial and subsequent competitions for the Medals in Architecture of the Massey Foundation. In association with the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, the Massey Foundation and the Right Honourable Vincent Massey had just established Medals to reward architectural excellence in Canada. In the first competition in 1950, we won five of ten medals. For a relatively unknown firm to win such design recognition in so short

a period of time was worthy of headlines in newspapers otherwise indifferent to architects and to architecture.

Nevertheless, we had no large commission until the Salvation Army National Headquarters was commissioned in 1952 (fig. 6.5). It was built for \$1.4 million on a most difficult site – 100' × 110' – at the corner of Alberta and James Street, Toronto. It was a great departure from the Miesian and designed in a somewhat naïve sort of Corbusian way with all of the elements but none of the holistic approach. Since it was to be built in an entirely brick environment, I felt that Mies had to “give way” to a matter of higher concern – that of the immediate environment itself. Somewhat earlier, in 1950, the George Harvey Vocational School in the then Township of York, now the Borough of York, was designed. It was strictly Miesian, very pure, and with exposed steel. It's been since very badly hurt, by subsequent additions, so much so that one can scarcely recognize it. Photographs of it reveal it to be the first of the larger Miesian buildings in Toronto (figs. 6.6–11).

In 1956, I had a phone call from the then chief architect of the Department of Transport. He asked if we were busy, and then asked if we had adequate staffing for a larger project. I said, yes, we had some staff – by then

6.6. George Harvey School aerial photograph, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives, (PAN 54465-5).





6.7. George Harvey School, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 53753-2).

6.8. George Harvey School, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 53753-19).





6.9. George Harvey School, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 53753-21).

6.10. George Harvey School, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 53753-1).





6.11. George Harvey School, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 53753-5).

we were perhaps seventy people. He called me back later and said that his department would like us to design a new airport. He suggested that the additions proposed were likely to amount to \$12 million. The Master Plan as it evolved would include a terminal building and a control tower (figs. 6.12–15). As a greatly expanded program emerged, so did their recognition of an increased budget. Through the process, we kept the Government completely informed, and, the Government, as a result, was greatly pleased to keep within an adjusted budget of \$34 million. That was the great breakthrough which gave us the resources to create a comprehensive firm.

As I have already said, by 1953, we had run out of space; we occupied three separate floors in one building at 717 Church, and, some space about two or three blocks away in a Canadian Tire Company warehouse. We were badly scattered. One Sunday evening, I received a telephone call from the late Karl Fraser (at the time president of the Don Mills Development Company). He asked if I would drop everything and come out to the old farmhouse on the corner of Lawrence Avenue and Don Mills Road. They wished to talk to me about the development of a town centre for Don Mills. I hadn't met Mr. Fraser but I went to see him at the old farmhouse.

As a result of that first meeting in 1954, we started the shopping centre in Don Mills (again badly hurt by subsequent additions). Our relationship with the Don Mills Development Company became a very close one. It not only caused us to move into the area, purchasing property at the southwest corner of York Mills Road and Don Mills Road, it resulted in commissions from a variety of companies who contemplated building there. Barber-Green, now the Global Television headquarters, Ortho Pharmaceutical, in fact, some ten or twelve buildings all within a relatively short period of time eventuated from that call from the development company. We were at one point administrative architects interpreting deed restrictions on the behalf of the Development Company. Owing to John B.'s persuasiveness with school boards and the Development Company, we had now a variety of continuing clients, which allowed us to retain a highly competent group of professionals. What heretofore I have neglected to say, and which may be of fundamental importance, was the fact that – in 1945, and in 1947 – we could not find engineering firms that could fully integrate engineering with architecture. We couldn't find contemporary hardware, and we wouldn't find any of the variety of materials that are taken for granted today. The



6.12. Toronto International Airport, Malton, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 58312-3).

6.13. Toronto International Airport
Aeroquay, Malton, Panda Associates
fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 64040-12).





6.14. Toronto International Airport
Aeroquay, Malton, Panda Associates
fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 64040-96).

6.15. Toronto International Airport Power Plant, Malton, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 64812)



components we wanted either had to be custom built and were expensive or we had to import them. We found it impossible to find engineers who were wholly sympathetic to what we were doing. We looked very carefully at the engineering firms who were then in existence, and found them unaware of the most elemental of architectural criteria, certainly as we saw them. Therefore, we started our own engineering departments, within a year or two, and by 1949, we were a fully integrated firm consisting of architects, structural engineers, mechanical engineers, electrical and interior designers. Later we were to add landscape architects and urban planners.

We were the first firm to open a Specifications Department. Specifications was not then thought to be a full-time occupation or vocation for an architect. We hired a young Englishman, Denis Brough, who became intensely interested in specification writing. Denis became so interested in fact that he went on to become the founder and first president of the Specifications Writers Association of Canada. Specifications until then were something an architect did on a part-time basis, pasting things together out of an old specification. Specifications became a full-time sub-discipline in itself, and important to the whole process.

Most importantly, we became integrated (figs. 6.16–17). The idea for that integration came from a book I had read in 1944. On one occasion since, I have reminded the author, George Nelson of New York, of just how important his book was to our practice. The book was, in fact, as George readily admits, a kind of promotional brochure on behalf of Alberta Kahn Associated Architects and Engineers of Detroit. However, when I was 21 or 22 years old, it was the first organizational chart of an architectural firm I had seen. It also caused me to select firms to work for between semesters, some of which were organizationally minded firms as well as those which professed a concern for design. I remember that I was disturbed greatly by the very uneven quality of design of the Kahn organization. Albert Kahn could design the Chrysler Body Plant, which I thought superb, but when it came to designing the administration building, there was a total contradiction: architecture was apparently thought to be something divided and not consistent. I was soon dissuaded of this thought through the emerging importance of the work of Skidmore and Owing, later Skidmore, Owing and Merrill. They demonstrated to me that there was nothing mutually exclusive about good design and good organization, nor between scale

6.16. John B. Parkin Associates Office Building, Don Mills, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 551149-7).





6.17. John B. Parkin Associates Drafting Room, Don Mills, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 66414-6).

and quality in the complexity of contemporary architecture. I found this greatly reassuring for it became clear to me that if we, as younger men, were to prevail in contemporary architecture then we had to have a superlative organization. We had to have at our disposal an organization that would emphasize absolute cost control and absolute commitment to the completion of drawings on time, an absolute commitment to outstandingly professional and responsible people. In effect, the often-repeated canard that our firm was modelled on Skidmore, Owings and Merrill is entirely wrong. It was modelled on the organization of Albert Kahn. The Kahn monograph is rather sentimental to me because that was where it really started, together with the supplementary reinforcement of SOM's early work.

Now, you might well ask, did I really set out to create a large firm at that particular point? I would have to say no. Our main concern was quite frankly, survival, because our incomes were modest and because we were returning whatever we made to the firm. The firm grew through these reinvested funds. We knew perfectly well that if we were going to practice contemporary architecture in what was at that time an extremely conservative city, "a red-brick Midland city," then we had to be, in

effect, much more efficient than anyone else and have more versatile resources. We had to reject the notion that contemporary architecture was more expensive, wilful, capricious, and somehow not functional. In effect, we had to be just a little bit better, just a bit more efficient, and our buildings had to be, above all, completely and consistently contemporary in every detail. We had to have clean and orderly premises, in effect to get rid of the idea that, well, "they're a bunch of arty, young men more concerned with design and not at all concerned with the hard realities of building." We had no notion that we would ultimately become one of the large firms in the country, let alone the largest. I have to say in truth – certainly for my part and I think for John's part too – that we had no wish to be the largest. That was a somewhat inexorable thing. When you add one man a month over ten or fifteen years, then it begins to add up. As the months slipped by we weren't particularly aware of growth because we were busy and terribly preoccupied and working extraordinarily long hours.

I've mentioned the role of Eric Arthur, who was always there at significant points, writing in his very incisive way, influencing those who occupied senior executive posts in Toronto, and insisting that the "proper"

route was the competition route – through the O.A.A. competition, the Queen Elizabeth Theatre competition, the Fathers of Confederation competition in Charlottetown, and, most importantly, at least so far as we were concerned, the Toronto City Hall competition.

The Toronto City Hall competition was won by Viljo Revell. I was called by John Bassett, an old friend and then publisher of the *Toronto Telegram*, in fact, I was routed out of bed at about 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning by the *Telegram* to come down to the old City Hall attic, to see the models and to describe what I thought of the new building. Need I add that, I was not mindful of the fact that an associate architect had yet to be picked (no doubt because of the hour)! I came out with a statement in defence of what was decried by many as an impracticable design and one which would be too costly to build. The competition had been held, the sanction had been given to contemporary architecture through an international competition and most people were intensely interested in seeing the new building built. The previous design was rejected out of hand, and the earlier consortium of architects paid off. Shortly thereafter, Viljo Revell walked into our offices and asked us to become his joint-venture partners in the building of the New City Hall. A new

firm was created called Viljo Revell, John B. and John C. Parkin Architects and Engineers and a contract entered into with the city. Viljo brought his principal associates with him from Helsinki: Bengt Lundsten (1928–), Heikki Castrén (1929–), and Seppo Valjus (1928–).¹⁷ They moved into Don Mills with their families, and Viljo bought a house. He in fact designed a house for himself, in Toronto, but it proved too expensive to build. To our chagrin, our initial estimates for the New City Hall appeared to be in the order of \$30–40 million. The initial design presented serious technical problems, as well as serious capital cost problems. We had been told by the Mayor of Toronto, Nathan Phillips, that if it cost a penny over \$25 million, it would be politically impossible to contemplate construction; it simply would not pass City Council. So we took that as a constraint against which to control our estimates. Viljo's associates moved in with us and Viljo became a friend, colleague, and partner. The problem of cost control was a vexing one through the whole process. We had begun to hear rumblings from Sydney, Australia, about what was just possibly likely to happen; and indeed did happen some years later, in Utzon's design for the Opera House. There were some of the same jurors, of course. The very

dominant, persuasive personality of Eero Saarinen was a member of both competition juries. The most challenging issue was the question of how we could maintain the integrity of the design while achieving the wish of the Mayor and of Viljo Revel that the building be built. Are we getting into too much detail?

MCM I don't think so, having got up to City Hall you've done a wonderfully well-structured chronological thing up to ...

JCP A matter of further interest on the City Hall might be the fact that, in its original form, the inner curves of the two main towers had all of the characteristics of an airfoil with the negative forces that one finds on the underside of an airplane wing. Theoretically, and perhaps actually, the curtain wall might have been taken right off the edge of the individual floors. We also had huge deflection at the edge of the cantilevered floors. The theory, of course, of the original design was that the typical floors in the office towers would be cantilevered from the service cores of the two towers. Our own structural engineers were aided by Severud Elstad Kruger of New York with Dr. Bandel in charge. We had a very eminent structural team at work. Wind tunnel tests were made at the Institute of Aerophysics at the University of Toronto.

We had other aerodynamic tests, wind tunnel tests in the United States undertaken in order to establish formula since no arithmetic formula for computation of all of the various stresses were readily available to us. As I say, that was point one. Point two was the great problem of the deflection of the floors. Point three was the configuration of the inner face of the curtain wall on both towers. So what had to happen? Firstly, we had to adjust as subtly as possible, the compound curves of the curtain wall so that they no longer had the characteristics of an airfoil. In addition, we were well over capital cost but had no cost consultant truly capable of verifying this. John B. and I, at a personal cost of \$90,000 in changes, and with Viljo's permission, redrew a very substantial number of drawings. We had the complete concurrence, of course, of Viljo. The only other person privy to this whole process was the mayor himself. If we had priced the project at that time it was conceivable that it would have cost \$30 million or more and, therefore, would not have been built nor would it have been politically acceptable.

Of course, all manner of rumours were beginning to suggest that the City Hall would "blow down." The matter became an election issue on the part of one man who gathered about three hundred votes and who claimed

that we were setting up vortex currents around the council chamber that would cause it to lift-off. The headlines of those days, which I have in my files, make very amusing reading. The building stands. One compromise which Viljo and we had to initiate was the introduction of columns at roughly the midpoint and down the full length of both the east and west towers. We maintained the visual expression of the individual beams on the various ceilings in so doing. I think it interesting to note that there was apparently a great difference in personality and in their sense of the possible between a man like Viljo Revell, whom I came to know so well, and a man whom I do not know but have read a great deal about, Jørn Utzon (1918–2008). This difference is seen in their respective attitudes to the buildings for which they were the principal or the originating authors – the Toronto City Hall and the Sydney Opera House. Utzon would apparently not relent in any way. Revell was quite unlike Utzon. We found that when presented with hard fact, Viljo Revell saw the immediate reality of the issue. He so much wanted his building to be built that the columns went in. The resultant height of each tower decreased, in one case by some fifty feet, with great savings in capital cost. Deflection was minimized and the airfoil problem

was eliminated; we could now fasten the curtain wall properly to the leading edge of the individual floors.

An anecdote that may be of interest was the only real “controversy” Viljo Revell and I ever had, oddly enough with the way water behaved on the surface of the building. At luncheon some fifteen years ago, I questioned Viljo on the absence of drips on the building to shed water. There were none under any of the windows, nor elsewhere for that matter. Did he fully realize that North Americans have a deep commitment to cleanliness (an impertinent question to a Finn, I suppose!) and that when buildings become dirty, they are immediately scrubbed? Had he watched television and seen the detergent and soap commercials? Viljo replied that he thought that, in that respect at least, the building should be European; that it should age gracefully like a beautiful woman. Constant change is part of the aging process, he said, and he hoped that Canadians would become used to that and to aging buildings. In so charming a simile I found myself unable to debate the point. The building does have a play of water on its surface.

There were a number of problems with the podium. Firstly, monies were never made available to finish its upper roof. The podium has always been a desert; it

makes a very marvellous viewing place, however. We had an unhappy incident with the fire chief at the time who once asked that we be certain a fire truck of large dimension could go up the ramp and allow access to the towers in case of fire or disaster. What, of course, wasn't recognized was that the ladder trucks of Toronto then would only reach half the height of the building. A demonstration was made, however, and a large vehicle punctured the membrane of the roof. Ever since, we have had a problem with leaks in the podium roof. The podium was intended to be paved on the upper level and on the lower Nathan Phillips Square level. In fact, the podium was even conceived to be extended northerly. You'll notice how precariously the two towers sit on the podium's extreme north edge. The podium was designed to provide an inexpensive solution for deep space – the Land titles and the Registry Office, and to compensate for the very expensive space in the two towers and for the Council Chamber itself. Contrary to other sources, the podium was designed to expand in a northerly direction and to take into account the inevitable expansion of various departments of the Metropolitan and City corporations. In fact, we all felt that, in the latter part of the century, expansion could conceivably go to Dundas

Street. The upper podium could then become, by virtue of size and the variety of other elements on it, fully as interesting as the lower square, and to attract larger numbers of people.

No one has fully understood the intent of the ramp from the lower square to the upper podium. It was Viljo's wish that there be a much greater connection between the Metropolitan Court House (then not yet designed) and the City Hall and that the ramp would go up and across the face of the podium, cross the Chestnut Street right-of-way and provide an elevated ramp system to the Metropolitan Courts building. The ramp would then continue across University Avenue, and terminate between the United States Consulate and the Canada Life Building, to give much-needed pedestrian access from the west side of University Avenue, across University Avenue, past the Metropolitan Court House and past – and to the upper plaza. To integrate the design of the Court House and the City Hall, a committee of Benchers of the Law Society of Upper Canada was established. Mr. Robinette and I met with Mr. Lawson, then the Planning Commissioner. Mr. Robinette remained or had just concluded his term as Treasurer of the Upper Canada Law Society; and Mr. Lawson was still Planning

Commissioner for the city and was instrumental in setting criteria for the City Hall. Mr. Robinette was entirely sympathetic to our aspirations for an interconnection between City Hall and the Court House. Why was none achieved? Frederick G. Gardiner was Chairman of the Metropolitan Corporation at the time, and the Bank of Canada Building on University Avenue had been recently completed. Mr. Gardiner much admired that particular building and thought that the Metropolitan Court House should be of similar architecture. Thus the architects for the Bank of Canada building were appointed architects for the Metropolitan Court House. We were never invited to meet together, with the result that the two buildings have only a nominal association, through an interesting vista and an interesting fountain. I recall feeling that this was a great tragedy in urban planning, and moreover, a lost opportunity for Revell to enliven University Avenue, as well as to design a great square.

The colonnade around the City Hall has been often criticized. It is less controversial today than it was when first built. Many people wondered why they were “unable to see the new City Hall” – meaning “why can’t we see it from our automobile as we drive by?” That was Revell’s very point. Viljo wanted people to leave their car,

to walk into the square, to participate and to celebrate in the square, rather than simply to perceive the City Hall from a moving car. The elevated walkway on the colonnades was intended to be the beginning of a system of elevated pedestrian walks, which would extend throughout the downtown area, and, in favourable weather provide an alternative to a subterranean concourse. This was the genesis of an idea that has found only modest extensions, to the Holiday Inn north of the City Hall and to the Four Seasons Sheraton in the south. If the colonnades don’t work as they were intended, then the authors of the adjoining buildings should be questioned – not the theory. There is another important implication to the City Hall colonnade. Revell was quite uncertain if the old City Hall would long survive. Further, there was only a vague commitment to the redevelopment of the south side of Queen Street. Therefore, he wished to contain the square as a single composition. He also held the generally accepted theory that a square is but a very large room without a roof. A sense of consistent enclosure is essential if a square is to visually “read” as one. To that extent, the colonnade is terribly important.

Some have questioned whether or not a building of any sort should have been built on the south side of

Queen Street. Viljo certainly felt a sense of real enclosure was necessary. In fact, one of the design consultants for the Four Seasons Sheraton was, in fact, his colleague, Seppo Valius. I was involved, also with him, in the concept design of the Four Seasons Sheraton but, owing to the later change in my professional firm, did not see the development of the working drawings. If any redevelopment were to take place on Queen Street South, Viljo felt it should be in the form of a building in order to give a sense of enclosure to Nathan Phillips Square. We felt that any monies saved by the building (after all, the south side cost something like \$7 million to acquire), should be spent in building parkettes elsewhere throughout downtown Toronto. I think these are very important things to remember.

One final question was how important it was to retain the old City Hall by virtue of its “relation to the arches over the skating rink” in the square. That’s pure accident, I assure you. There is simply no intended geometric relationship of any consequence between the west elevation of the old City Hall and the arches. The old City Hall does show on the original competition drawings but there was no conviction either on Viljo’s part or mine as to whether or not there was an implied and

a continuing relationship between the old and new. The retention of the old City Hall should have been debated on historic grounds but certainly not upon any formal intent. Since many have said that there was a formal intent on the part of Revell, it is important to record that such was not the case.

McM Yes, I didn’t realize that, because the sweep of the ramp on that side having been described by some of them, I can’t remember who, as part of the design which was paying its respects, so to speak, to the old City Hall.

JCP Not in the least. The ramp was to have allowed the visiting dignitary to be admitted directly into the Council Chamber area, to go up to the aldermen’s lounge and thence to pass the Metropolitan Court House building and over and across University Avenue. Revell’s concept would have joined Bay Street to University Avenue, and particularly to the west side of University Avenue which suffered from neglect for so many years.

There are a great many personal anecdotes about our relationship with Revell and his associates which we could discuss on a later occasion. I think we have covered most of the principal planning, architectural and structural issues, save one final matter – the cost. The bids came in at roughly \$22.5 million. As a result, we

recommended – and the mayor and Council immediately accepted – that the curtain wall on the exterior and inner faces of the two towers which was to have been aluminum, be redetailed in stainless steel, and that the rear of both towers which were to have been simply raw concrete for economic reasons, be redetailed into an interesting texture of marble and concrete. At the same time, we developed a system whereby those precast elements were, in effect, used as the outer face of the pouring system as the building went vertically during construction.

McM Did this just come at that stage or had this been something you'd worked on earlier and put to one side because of cost?

JCP The original notion was to place marble on the exterior of the building but the specificity of the detail was not, to my recollection, really established. You know that the pattern of the floor of the Hall of Memory relates, in rough form, to the pattern of the marble on the exterior of the towers. The rear walls were really “woven” into the building at a somewhat later date, and when we had more time to consider consistency of the detailing: the consistency between the lineal nature of the floor, the back of the towers, and the lineal nature

of the ceiling. The ceiling, incidentally, has some of the attributes of its ultimate origin, as a Scandinavian wood ceiling. The City Hall ceiling system has evolved into a North American system of aluminum channels, which in modification has been used in countless buildings throughout this continent and throughout the world.¹⁸

One thing did not happen, to my eternal regret, but had an interesting side effect. Viljo had always hoped a major piece of sculpture would be located in the square. He had already initiated, on his own volition, a series of discussions with Henry Moore at Much Hadham, Hertfordshire. Revell and Moore had developed a small maquette showing a major piece of sculpture and its relationship to the main body of the City Hall, to the very tall flagpole, to the skating rink, and to the water. One hundred thousand dollars in the original budget was appropriated for a sculpture, and we had further monies appropriated for a mural in the main lobby. In our zeal to have the building built, these all-important elements were momentarily neglected. Eventually we recommended that the Moore sculpture be placed back into the program and that Henry Moore be commissioned. Somehow or other the view became prevalent that this sculpture was intended to be a cenotaph. Letters of

protest to the Toronto newspapers deplored the use of a “human figure with a hole in it” as inappropriate for a cenotaph. There was no intention that any major sculpture in the square be a cenotaph; the cenotaph was to remain at the foot of Bay Street. In due course, our recommendation came before City Council. It was voted down. The following morning I had a phone call from a close friend who asked then that he remain anonymous – and to this day remains anonymous – who said, “I don’t want to be the only damn fool in Toronto but my family and I are prepared to give \$20,000 if you will mount a campaign, John, or ask the Mayor to mount one to save the Henry Moore.” I immediately phoned the mayor, Philip Givens. He said he was delighted, and, said further that he would organize a committee. Within a relatively short time we raised \$100,000. Moore’s asking price was, I recall, \$120,000 but by allowing a second casting the asking price (of a no longer unique piece) dropped from \$120,000 to \$100,000. The second casting is in front of Mies van der Rohe’s West Berlin Museum where it literally drowns in space. Moore is not very happy with the result there. I have elsewhere a total transcript of the events leading from the point at which the *Archer* was

saved. A reception was held for Henry Moore, but by then Viljo Revell had died.

He did live long enough to see his building substantially completed. On his last visit, he said that he was extremely pleased. Every detail, whether Viljo was in Toronto or in Helsinki, was subject to his personal review. Revell analyzed every drawing. When he was away, transatlantic post kept him fully informed; everything was done to maintain the spirit of his intent.

The sequence of events that resulted from the meetings of Revell and Moore led eventually to the arrival of the Henry Moore collection at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Henry Moore had come to Canada for a reception in his honour. At that time, a prominent businessman, Allan Ross, suggested that Toronto might acquire more of his work. (The transcript of events subsequent to this will be given to you. The transcript was done with Henry Seldis, the art critic of the *Los Angeles Times*, who then went on to write a book *Henry Moore in America*, a copy of which I must provide you. My notes record faithfully both through transcript and book, how Toronto and how Canada became the recipients of the magnificent gift benefactions of Henry Moore.)¹⁹

A series of other events occurred causing John Robarts, then premier of Ontario, to acknowledge the acquisition of the Moore collection and the impending receipt of the Zacks collection, through a gift of \$12.5 million from the Province of Ontario, in order to build a major new extension to the Art Gallery of Ontario. Tomorrow morning (Saturday, March 1, 1975), the Honourable Hugh Faulkner, Secretary of State of the Government of Canada, will announce that the federal government will give the AGO \$4 million towards the building of yet further galleries. This gift, with additional monies, will complete the total building program of the Art Gallery and allow us, we hope, to build a mall from the Art Gallery to University Avenue. Possibly then, University Avenue will cease to be a "façade-like arrangement," without depth. Just as one sees a vista from University Avenue to the *Archer* when looking east as one walks or drives north on the University Avenue, another vista will be available as one looks west along Dundas Street. It will be a similar mall, or a linear park lined, I hope, with the sculpture of either Moore or another major sculptor.

The building of City Hall was that mark of public faith, that major gesture, which seems to be always

required of government, if the private sector is to respond. The consequence of the building of the City Hall was a renewed interest in downtown Toronto. Downtown renewal was enormously assisted further through the creation of the Redevelopment Advisory Council, clearly modelled on the Allegheny Conference in Pittsburgh. Virtually every member of the original Redevelopment Advisory Council caused a building to be built. For example, it was Allan Burton, president of Simpsons Ltd. (who himself had taken three years of architecture at the University of Toronto), and his brother, the then chairman of the board, the late Edgar Burton, who made certain that Simpson Tower, which is so essential to the southeast corner of Nathan Phillips Square, was built. Since we had a long relationship with the Simpson Company, dating from 1952, we were asked to design the Simpson Tower. Our ties with Simpson's were important since they were our first major commercial client, and certainly our first national one. Allan Lambert was also a member of the Redevelopment Advisory Council. As head of the Toronto Dominion Bank he intended to build a relatively modest headquarters for the bank. He was persuaded by CEMP, the Bronfman Investment Company, to enter into a joint venture in order to

create a much larger complex. There are now three towers, the Toronto Dominion, the Royal Trust, and now the Commercial Union, all done in association with Bregman and Hamman. This urban concentration has been extended with the completion of Commerce Court, and the Royal Bank Plaza now under construction just to the south and to the east, to the south of Toronto Dominion and to the east of the Royal York Hotel. The First Canadian Tower, headquarters of the Bank of Montreal in Ontario, designed by Edward Durrell Stone of New York with Bregman and Hamman as the Canadian architects, is now being occupied. We have a complex now of what was once a very sordid, blighted downtown. This new complex is, of course, open to some criticism: it is windy, and it is sunless on many occasions. But no matter how much criticism the complex may receive, for those of us who knew Toronto in the 1950s, it is an infinitely more attractive, lively spirited place, lined with throngs of people winter and summer. An article, "Toronto the Dreary," was written prior to the building of the City Hall, in which I described Toronto as a city of corridors without a living room. I felt then that we were developing living rooms for people in Toronto.

Now some of these open spaces exist, with some squares attractive, others not.

The design collaboration of the Toronto Dominion is another story. The first associate design consultants were the New York office of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, and the designer in charge, with whom we worked closely, was Gordon Bunshaft. I told Gordon of my concern, which I later expressed to Mies van der Rohe, that the six-foot fall from King Street to Wellington Street would result in a hostile and unfriendly wall along Wellington Street. People in urban spaces are, I believe, attracted to walls but only if there's a sense of something behind, something of intrigue, something that causes you to wonder what really is going on behind that wall. That doesn't pertain at Toronto Dominion. We had also hoped that a very large Picasso would be placed in the Toronto Dominion Plaza. I had wanted a piece I had seen with the late Martin Baldwin one night at Allan Lambert's house. I hoped that we would be able to obtain a casting of this sculpture of a lamb and shepherd. It is a major piece and would have immeasurably helped the Toronto Dominion Plaza. In hindsight, however, I think it probably would have been too small for that environment. One would really need a

Picasso very much like the one Bill Hartman secured for the Murphy and Mies complex of buildings in Chicago. That would have been perhaps more apt.

I think that the elements that were woven into the Nathan Phillips Square, as contrasted to Toronto Dominion, were the very things that have caused that square to be filled with people. Nathan Phillips Square, for example, contains many benches which encourage visitors to linger. There are admittedly not enough and those that are there are simply street furniture provided by the Parks Department. But perhaps soon they will be replaced by benches that are consistent with what Viljo hoped for. The Toronto Dominion, on the other hand, is devoid of benches, as it is devoid of water, of fountains, of sculpture, and of all the things that would cause people to linger and to find an open space in an urban context attractive and inviting (fig. 6.17).

McM I've always regretted the loss of the old banking building. I remember there was a lot of argument about it at the time but looking back it would have been, it seems to me, fitting if there had been the interplay between the new buildings which so clearly derived from the same tradition, ultimately, as the old building ...

JCP Fortunately, as you know, there's an exquisite scale model of the original bank building on permanent display in the new banking pavilion designed by Mies. I do agree with you; it was a tragedy, as was the loss of the Cawthra Mansion on the northeast corner. I would have thought that with relatively little expense, it could have been moved stone by stone and re-erected elsewhere.

In my article, "Toronto the Dreary," I had suggested that we should have rural Upper Canada villages. Then when our historic buildings are threatened with demolition, they could be placed in some kind of downtown enclave, preferably close to St. Lawrence Hall and St. James Cathedral, on a street paved with cobbles. The original location could easily be marked by a plaque. Rather than isolated buildings, it would be preferable to relocate these historic buildings and place them in proximity with other similar buildings, thus recreating the ambience of early York, early Toronto, and preserving the scale of the original. How much better, for example, to have the Chief Justice's house in proximity to William Lyon Mackenzie's house and St. Lawrence Hall than to have it wedged between the Canada Life Building and the Bank of Canada Building! In this way we could create a lively tourist centre rather than having a series of

6.18. Toronto-Dominion Centre, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 68854-23).



isolated buildings that are of unique merit but are not used as intensively as they should be.

Restoration is a difficult problem. I've never been skilled in the design of traditional buildings, never having really detailed anything of a classical nature, although I did catch the end of the Beaux-Arts period at the University of Manitoba. Thus, when I was asked if we would undertake the redevelopment of the Grange House, as well as the Art Gallery, I said that I felt that someone who was in full sympathy with the style should be involved. I recommended that Peter John Stokes be retained, simply because he would do it expertly. Fortunately, the Art Gallery accepted our recommendation. I think this kind of referral is a very important part of professional practice. The general notion that all architects are equally adept and skilful at everything is a form of self-delusion. Of course, many attempt to get away with it. You can always hire a consultant and bury him in an office but I do not agree with this practice. I prefer to do what those in other professions do and refer clients to people who have a demonstrable competence in a specialized area, rather than assuming that we're specialists in everything.

There is much more to be said about the Toronto Dominion Centre. (figs. 6.18–23.) When Gordon Bunshaft developed the scheme, the building was to be a very tall one. There was no anticipation at that time that the Commerce Court or any other building might be built across the street, or that other large, tall buildings might be coming. There was no notion, certainly, that the Bank of Montreal would be torn down and replaced by a seventy-two-storey building. Gordon Bunshaft evolved a remarkably handsome design for the Toronto Dominion. It was in concrete, some sixty storeys tall. The concrete piers, which protruded from the face of the building, were, in my recollection, some fifteen feet by five feet. They tapered in a long shallow curve to the top of the building and were held together by an ingenious structural design evolved by Paul Weidlinger of New York. Paul had developed a truss system to stabilize the building at the top, but there were a number of inherent defects. Firstly, Gordon Bunshaft's intent was to have columns with very large aggregate of, say, two or three inches across. The aggregate would be used in the mix and then the matrix would be sand-blasted, so that the aggregate would have a very rough, strong system of expression. Aside from the cost, this plan posed all kinds

6.19. Toronto-Dominion Centre progress photographs, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 67203-10).





6.20. Toronto-Dominion Centre, Toronto, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 74236-4C).

6.21. Gypsum Work at Toronto-Dominion Centre, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 68772-31).





6.22. Office interiors at Toronto-Dominion Centre, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 68459-2).

6.23. Toronto-Dominion Centre, Panda Associates fonds, Canadian Architectural Archives (PAN 68854-19).



of technical problems – “bathtub rings,” the problem of pouring concrete five hundred feet in the air – four hundred feet in the air during winter months – and not least of all, the problem of stabilizing the building in a very real way. Clare Carruthers, of Carruthers Wallace, in Toronto, was the engineer who ultimately had to bear legal responsibility for the building. He could not accept the structural claims advanced by Paul Weidlinger. Here was an honest difference between two eminent professionals. What ensued is perhaps of a very private nature. About this point, Phyllis Lambert came into the picture as she had done earlier at 375 Park Avenue. I had known Mrs. Lambert for some time. She is the daughter of Mr. Bronfman and one of the beneficial owners of half of Toronto Dominion Centre. She expressed in very clear terms that the design architect for Toronto Dominion Centre should be Mies van der Rohe.

The interview ends abruptly here, but with the expectation that further conversations would ensue. Although this did take place, in the views of the authors, the interview as reproduced here provides the gist of his comments on modern architecture.

NOTES

- 1 Suanne Kelman, “There goes the neighbourhood,” *Globe and Mail*, August 25, 1989, p. 38
- 2 The original tapes of all three interviews are available in the Canadian Architectural Archives.
- 3 The Cadillac Fairview website provides a useful summary of the process leading up to the design of the building: “In partnership with Fairview Corporation (now Cadillac Fairview), [Allen Lambert, Chairman of TD Bank] first considered a single modern tower at the corner of King and Bay Streets. But an opportunity to assemble an even bigger site presented itself and the partnership agreed, bigger would be better. They made a decision to be bold and take a chance. The near full block project now required an architect. Nothing of this size had ever been built in Canada, so it was decided that an international search was required. After numerous potentials and one unpleasant firing, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe was retained. It became the perfect partnership.
His initial design for the site was a bold, two tower design plus Banking Pavilion. Only one major design change was demanded by the partnership. The complex needed an underground retail mall. After passionate debate, Mies came around, agreeing to revise his original design. Eventually, the original black tower design was expanded to five Towers, with the addition of 95 Wellington Street in 1995 bringing the complex to a total of six Towers.” As cited at: <http://www.tdcentre.com/en/About/Pages/MoreHistory.aspx> (accessed 7 February 2012).
- 4 For general information on Canadian architecture of this period, see Michael McMordie, “Canadian Architecture since 1900,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 29, no. 3 (1976): 6–7.
- 5 John C. Parkin provided some dates in his hand-written review of the interview. Square brackets are provided by the authors.
- 6 Sic. Despite Parkin’s corrections on this sentence, its meaning is elusive.

- 7 According to Andrea Kristof, writing in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, “Ferdinand Herbert Marani, architect (b. at Vancouver 8 Aug 1893; d. at Toronto 18 July 1971). Marani graduated from the University of Toronto in 1920 and shortly thereafter established a practice in Toronto. His partnerships include Marani and Morris (1947–59) and Marani, Rounthwaite and Dick (1964–71). His designs, which are noted for his contemporary translation of the Georgian tradition, include the original Bank of Canada building in Ottawa, the Medical Arts Building in Toronto and the Canadian Forces Headquarters in Washington, DC. Marani served in WWI and WWII and was a chairman of the Ontario Association of Architects and of the Ontario College of Art.” As cited at <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/ferdinand-herbert-marani> (accessed 7 February 2012). See also Geoffrey Simmins, “Rounthwaite, Dick & Hadley Architects & Engineers (RDH),” <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/rounthwaite-dick-hadley-architects-engineers> (accessed 7 February 2012).
- 8 Harry Seidler was an Austrian-born Australian architect and proponent of modernism in architecture. With respect to William Somerville, Jean Coutu, in “Vehicles of nationalism: Defining Canada in the 1930s,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 37, no. 1 (2002): 180–203, provides many details regarding Somerville’s prolific career. She remarks that during the 1930s in Toronto, “Hamilton-born, Toronto-based architect William Lyon Somerville was awarded nearly every contract that required an architect” (quote on p. 183). The partnership of Somerville, McMurrich & Oxley was formed in 1953. It became McMurrich & Oxley in 1976. In 1992, the University of Calgary’s Faculty of Environmental Design received an endowment by the late Mrs. A.G. Burton of Calgary in memory of her father, William Lyon Somerville, ARCA, FRAIC, FRIBA. The William Lyon Somerville Visiting Lectureship is designed to fund a visit and public lecture by a practitioner, academic, or critic.
- 9 Hugh Stubbins, Jr., in addition to being a long-time faculty member at Harvard, designed a number of high-profile buildings around the world, including the 1991 design for the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.
- 10 Parkin was keeping excellent company. Each of these individuals became distinguished architects and educators known for modernist practice. In 1959, Victor Lundy (with Walter Bird) designed the *United States Atomic Energy Commission Portable Theatre*. German-born Ulrich Franzen (1921–) graduated from the GSD in 1948 and went on to a notable career. According to the University of California (Berkeley), where Martin Meyerson (1922–2007) was Professor of City and Regional Planning, Emeritus as well as Acting Chancellor, “Martin Meyerson, a brilliant scholar, creative institution builder, and formidable administrator, left his mark on the field of urban planning and on three major American universities. He died on June 2, 2007 of prostate cancer. Born in 1922 in New York City, Meyerson grew up there and received his B.A. from Columbia University in 1942. In 1949, he was awarded the Master of City Planning degree from Harvard University. He began his academic career as an assistant professor of the social sciences at the University of Chicago in 1948, whence he moved to the Department of City and Regional Planning at the University of Pennsylvania in 1952. In 1957, he left Pennsylvania for Harvard University, where he headed the Joint Center for Urban Studies and served as acting dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Design. In 1963, Meyerson was appointed as the second dean of the newly formed College of Environmental Design at Berkeley, replacing William Wurster, who served only for a brief time. Martin Meyerson excelled both as a scholar and as an administrator and institution builder. He came to urban planning after World War II, when the field was first beginning to develop within universities and there was a need for strong theoretical foundations. His book, *Politics, Planning, and the Public Interest* [1952], coauthored with Edward C. Banfield, provided a key part of that foundation.” Lloyd Rodwin (1919–1999) was a

- noted urban planner. In 1956, he published *British New Towns Policy* (1956), which critiqued Ebenezer Howard's *Garden Cities*. He eventually became the Ford International Professor Emeritus of Urban Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and co-founder of the MIT–Harvard Joint Center for Urban Studies.
- 11 William Wilson Wurster (1895–1973) was an architect as well as a major figure in American architectural education. See: Richard C. Peters, "W.W. Wurster," *Journal of Architectural Education* 33, no. 2 (1979): 36–41.
 - 12 English architect, educator, and proponent of the International Style Sir Leslie Martin, winner of the RIBA Gold Medal in 1973, designed among many other buildings, the Royal Festival Hall in London (1949–51), and Harvey Court, Gonville & Caius College (1960–62), in Cambridge, England. Moholy-Nagy was a noted artist and teacher, particularly known for his work with the Bauhaus, both in Germany and, after 1937, at the "New Bauhaus" in Chicago, which he directed. Hungarian-born Georgy Kepes was a noted artist with a diverse practice and a strong interest in science. According to a 2002 *Boston Globe* obituary, he "spent much of his career at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he was a professor of visual design from 1946 until retiring in 1974. He founded the Center for Advanced Visual Studies in 1964 and was its head until 1974."
 - 13 Louis Archambault (1915–2003) was a Quebec figurative sculptor. In addition to freestanding sculptures, Archambault executed some works with architectural scale, such as: *Canada from Sea to Sea*, 1956–1958, which consisted of 191 tiles and 37 heads of terracotta and aggregates, with slip and glaze, with 21 perforated metal sheets, 49 aluminum struts and 48 aluminum rods (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada). He was made a member of the Order of Canada in 1998. Jacques de Tonnancour (1917–2005) was a noted Québec painter, known both for figurative work and for landscapes. Possibly his best known work is *Two Seated Women (light version)*, 1945 (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada).
 - 14 Architect Vincent Rother's most noted building (designed with John Bland and Charles Trudeau) was the International style Ottawa City Hall, opened in 1958. In 2000, the City Hall functions moved to another building, designed by Moshe Safdie, and the old city hall is now known as 111 Sussex Drive and is owned by the federal government of Canada.
 - 15 For an overview of Eric Arthur's career, see: <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0000337> (accessed 7 February 2012).
 - 16 The entrepreneur and art collector Joseph Hirshhorn is best known for having founded the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C.
 - 17 The City of Toronto Archives holds a photo of Viljo Revell with Bengt Lundsten, Seppo Valjus, and Heikki Castrén. Date:1958, Photographer unknown, City of Toronto Archives RG 32 A2 Box 12.
 - 18 "Its happy conclusion," according to Parkin.
 - 19 We are unaware of the location of this transcript.

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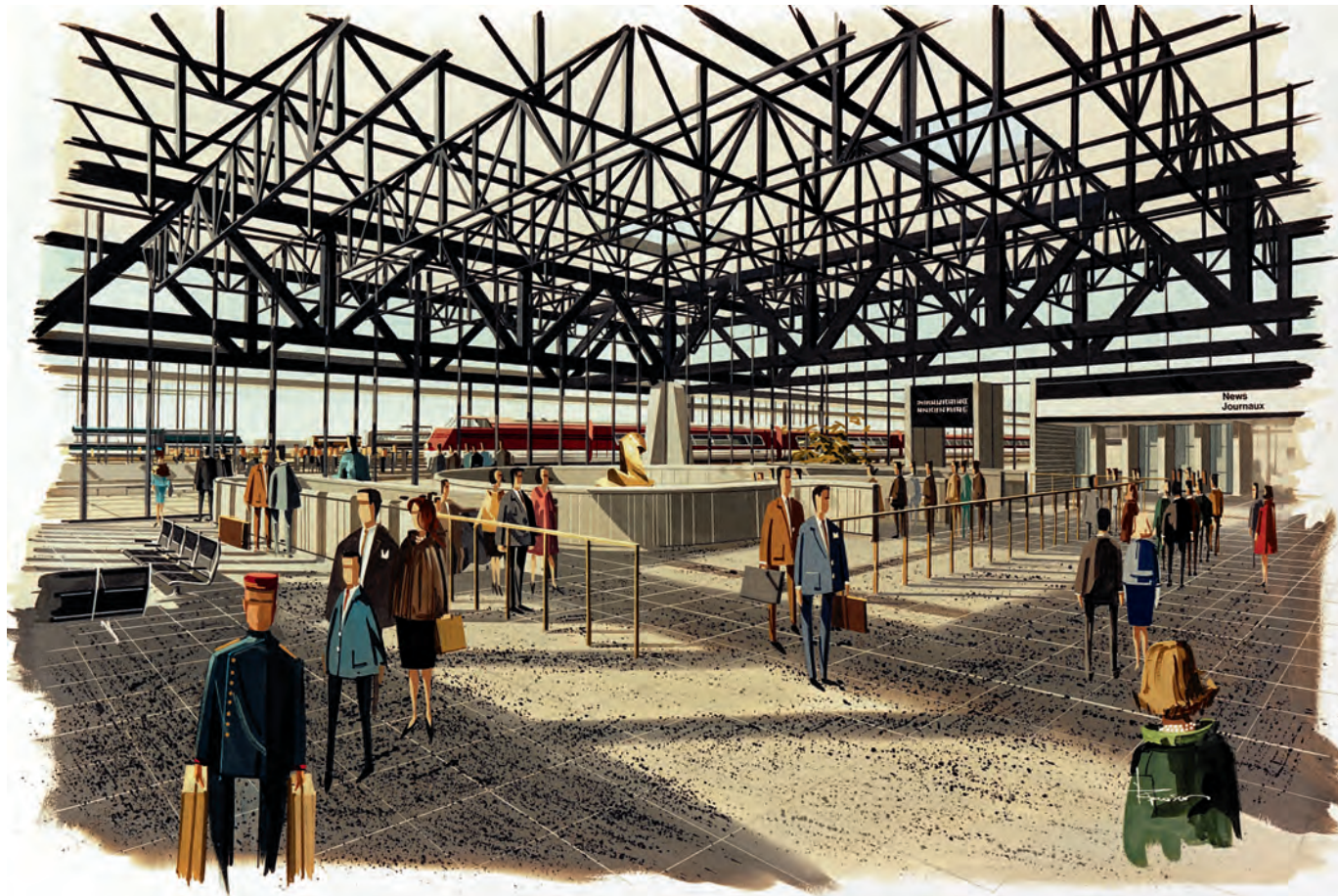
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