

or rock bands or just stroll; in the winter to ice skate on the rink at the south end of the great square. Partly because of the building, Toronto people felt drawn closer to city politics and a new era of reform government was born.

Across Canada in the 1960s a new consciousness of the arts arose, along with new urban consciousness. Public spaces for music, theatre and dance became essential aspects of Canadian city life. The Montréal architects Affleck, Désbarats, Dimakopoulos, Lebensold and Sise were major figures in this movement, designing the Montréal Place des Arts, the Confederation Centre in Charlottetown, the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Raymond Moriyama became a leading figure in the Toronto area with his Ontario Science Centre and his Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre. Canadians, as never before, demanded public places for art and recreation, and looked to the architects to provide appropriate designs. More often than not, the architects were able to provide inspired designs.

These public buildings suggested what good architecture could accomplish for the future of Canadian cities. But they were not the beginning of modern architecture in Canada. For years our architects had been adopting and developing the new styles from Europe and the United States — and developing some of their own. In Toronto the austere and perfectly proportioned buildings of John C. Parkin had been winning attention since the 1950s. Earlier still, modern architects in Canada had made their first strong impression not with public buildings but with private houses, and not in the eastern cities but in Vancouver.

There, in the early 1950s, a kind of modern movement took hold. It produced dozens of beautifully designed private houses, many of them featuring the creative use of wood. During that period it seemed to many people that all the best architecture in Canada was in B.C. Arthur Erickson has written about those years: "In 1956 it was the Vancouver 'school' that caught the admiration of the country. Unfettered by the constraints of climate, the Vancouver school was able to show a freedom in planning and a bold use of materials that was impossible in eastern Canada."