

street, had strict guidelines for Erickson and his team of architects to follow. "The embassy had to fit into the surrounding environment," explained Keith Leffler, supervising architect for the project. "PADC has some of the strictest bylaws in the world. They tell you what height the building has to be and make sure you respect the lines of nearby buildings."

"It's very unique for us to work with an organization that has so much design control and power who can tell you to change something if they do not like it. Fortunately the people liked what we were doing and they were very helpful to us."

The chancery's three wings and six freestanding 15-m columns of unpolished aluminium surround a spacious courtyard. A shallow, curving pool runs along the courtyard's west side opposite the colonnade. The row of fluted aluminium columns marches down the open side of the courtyard supporting a glass skylight. Cascades of white roses and greenery designed by Cornelia Oberlander of Vancouver soften the stone walls above the pool while hawthorn trees shade staff and visitors from the summer sun and provide pleasing lines in winter.

On the plaza's southeastern corner is the Rotunda of the Provinces — 12 columns, representing the 10 provinces and two territories, clustered around a cascading fountain and supporting the intersecting office wings above.

While the Rotunda is an obvious acknowledgment of Canada, some critics are finding Canadian symbolism everywhere — from the blue-tinted Adair marble quarried in Ontario's Bruce Peninsula which clads the building to the unique aluminium on the courtyard columns.

The courtyard opens to a park on one side and to Pennsylvania Avenue on the other. In addition, the theatre, the 20 000-volume library and art gallery are open to the public by appointment.

In security-conscious Washington, the Canadian embassy may appear refreshingly accessible. However, people should not think security is lax — the chancery is well equipped to meet the challenges of any would-be terrorist. All the windows are bulletproof, and mechanically controlled security doors control access to the office areas.

Inside, past the security areas, novel wall murals and marble floors greet the visitor,



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an attractive spiral staircase winds its way to the second and third floors while glistening stainless steel doors divide the areas in which the embassy's 325 employees work.

The pièce de résistance is Ambassador Derek Burney's spacious office on the sixth floor. Floor-to-ceiling windows overlook a terrace and command an impressive view of the Capitol building and the Mall.

Another special feature is the embassy's "Canada Room," a multipurpose room which is large enough to accommodate 200 at a sit-down dinner. Set on the ground floor, it overlooks the pond in the courtyard and has two huge doors that can slide open if weather permits.

A Showcase for Canadian Artists

The embassy also serves as a showcase for Canada's artistic community. More than 100 pieces have been acquired for display in the public and office areas of the chancery.

Gordon Smith's haunting "Rain Forest," an abstract painting representing the forests of the Queen Charlotte Islands, greets visitors in the waiting room of the Consular and Immigration Section. In the cafeteria, embassy staff eat lunch within sight of a

giant Michael Snow photograph. The outdoor pool beside the embassy's main doors will be the site of the Spirit Canoe, seven tons of bronze sculpture, created by Haida artist Bill Reid. The lobby is graced by David Ruben Piqtoukukun's Innuksuk — rough piles of rock — echoing the massive manlike figures used as landmarks by Inuit hunters. The art gallery, expected to be the embassy's most visited public area, is located one floor below the main lobby entrance. Moreover, the works of such Canadian artists as Carl Beam, Joyce Wieland, David Bolduc, and Pitseolak are featured throughout the embassy.

The Hottest Ticket in Town

Since the embassy opened its doors, the public affairs office has been besieged with letters from service groups, professional clubs and private schools requesting tours of the new building.

"Our public areas are going to be well used," said embassy spokesperson Jock Osler. "Tourists have traditionally showed up at the door. But some haven't figured out what the new building is all about. They say: you're new. . . which museum are you?"



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