

A Treasure of Stone and Light

At the confluence of the Ottawa River and the Rideau Canal, commanding spectacular views of the Gatineau Hills and the cities of Ottawa and Hull, the permanent home of the National Gallery of Canada rises like a giant candelabrum in the heart of the community. Designed by world-renowned Canadian architect Moshe Safdie, the new National Gallery with its glass-covered colonnade and its geometrical, neo-gothic tower, had become a landmark even before it officially opened on May 21.

The new Gallery — under construction for four and one-half years — offers a symphony of spatial experiences atypical of contemporary architecture. The structure is also a marked departure from the ho-hum interiors of the converted office block that housed the gallery's collections for the

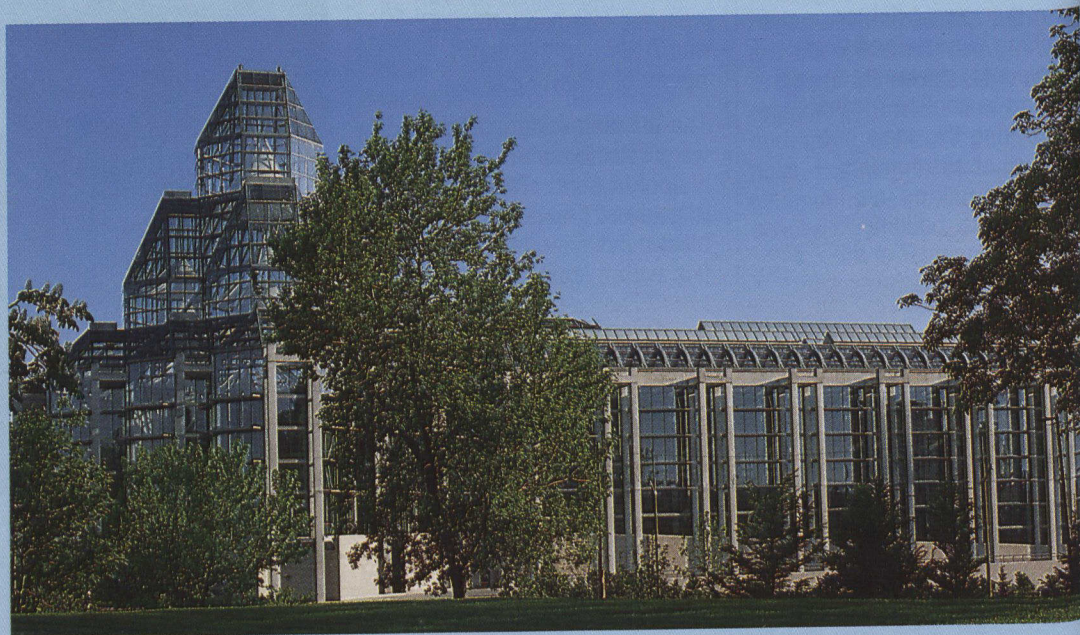
Inspiring the "range of emotions one experiences when listening to a piece of music."

previous 28 years. Says Safdie: "I hope that people walking through the building will feel the complexity and range of emotions one experiences when listening to a piece of music."

Safdie conceived the building as a series of smaller pavilions, each with a distinct character and spatial defini-

tion, so that visitors could orient themselves and contemplate works of art in comfort. The public spaces, with their exuberant, celebratory architecture, are like streets and piazzas leading to the galleries. By contrast, in the more serene architecture of the galleries, the works of art become the focus of the visitor's attention.

Representing the best in contemporary Canadian architecture and building technology, the new National Gallery celebrates its geographic surroundings, respects its architectural neighbours and creates a setting worthy of the works of art it houses.



came up with a scheme that incorporated a clock tower and peaked and pyramidal copper roofs, to allude to Ontario's nineteenth-century public buildings, as well as typical farmyard forms, to refer to the region's long farming history.

Inside, however, the building is undoubtedly twentieth century — and heading for the twenty-first. Its fitness centre, daycare centre and recreational areas reflect the demands of today's Canadian employees, and its amphitheatre, art gallery and civic square re-establish the city hall as the focus for community activity it once was.

Mississauga City Hall has been hailed as "landmark architecture." It is without

doubt Canada's foremost example of a post-modern building that enjoys widespread popularity with architects the world over.

Another architectural landmark in Canada — one that has helped put Toronto on the international map — is the Toronto Eaton Centre. Popular from virtually the day it opened in 1979, the shopping complex is visited by about 1.5 million weekly — tourists and Torontonians alike. The architecture of the centre has played no small part in its astounding success, not only as a commercial venture but also as a major tourist attraction and meeting place.

Unlike the open landscape surrounding Mississauga City Hall and the serene water-

front location of the Halifax Sheraton, the site for this shopping complex is on frenetic Yonge Street, reputed to be the longest street in the world and certainly one of Canada's busiest. Still, as in the other designs, the common objective of building in context — integrating the project into the fabric of the neighbourhood — is clearly evident.

The Zeidler Partnership of Toronto started by designing a three-storey, glass-covered *galleria* that stretches the 270-m length of the centre. Running parallel to Yonge Street on the city's grid pattern, the *galleria* is a street in its own right, albeit indoors. Like many pleasant streets, it has trees, benches, balco-

nies, terraces, bridges, and sidewalk cafés, with a restful garden at one end and a fountain at the other. Pedestrians on Yonge Street often duck into the centre to continue their journey more pleasurably in the climate-controlled indoors, proof positive that the centre is seen as a natural extension of the city.

As the eyes of the world turned to Calgary and the 1988 Olympic Winter Games last February, they saw more than one kind of world-class feat performed. Besides athletic excellence, architectural distinction was also recorded and given form in the Olympic Oval on the campus of the University of Calgary.