

A New Landmark on Aoyama Street

The distinctive glass roof enclosing the top four stories will make the Embassy a major landmark on Tokyo's fashionable Aoyama Street. It has been designed to accord with municipal restrictions on the amount of shadow which may be cast on neighbouring properties, including Takahashi Memorial Park to the east and Akasaka Imperial Palace to the north. The "sun shade envelope" dictated by these regulations has been transformed by the architect from a design constraint into a stunning work of art in glass and steel.

Architect Raymond Moriyama (born in Vancouver) of Moriyama and Teshima Planners Ltd., Toronto, has a long list of internationally-acclaimed achievements to his credit. They include the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, Toronto (1963), the Ontario Science Centre, North York, Ontario (1969), the Metropolitan Toronto Library (1977), Place St. Charles, New Orleans (1985), 10 South LaSalle, Chicago (1986) and the City Centre Development, North York (1987).

The new Embassy is located on a 1.74-hectare (4.3-acre) site which was purchased in 1932 and has been occupied since 1933 by Canada's chancery and residence. Place Canada is 31,000m² in size, of which 9,886m² below street level and on the first three floors are in trust and let to commercial tenants in order to defray the costs of construction.

Among the major works of Canadian art at Place Canada are two gigantic bells in the form of arch-shaped resonant tubes, facing onto Aoyama Street and entitled "Arc and Bow" by Gar Smith (born in Toronto), and a window wall by glass artist-designer Warren Carther (born in Winnipeg) inside the foyer of the south entrance.