

A round up of some of the Ontario Association of Architects award winners.

Dave LeBlanc

From a Vegas-style light show at Ryerson University and a sublime pharmaceutical building at the University of British Columbia, to a beautifully composed residence on the Cedarvale ravine and another on the Scarborough Bluffs, jurors tasked with doling out Design Excellence Awards on behalf of the Ontario Association of Architects were bleary-eyed, to say the least.

Ensnared at OAA headquarters in Don Mills (a sort of Justice League for the T-square set) on a crisp February day, only the free coffee and pastries – and the promise of an awards dinner to follow in May – kept these audacious architectural aficionados going.

I should know: I was one of them.

And I exaggerate. But still, we did scan more than 125 submissions, survive a few good-natured dust-ups, and were the last group to leave (there were other juries, but they got off easy).

Veteran architect David Sisam, our non-voting chair, led Toronto city councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, MOD Development's Gary Switzer, Andrea Gabor from Urban Strategies, and your humble architourist through the mysterious world of awards-granting (okay, not so mysterious, I served as a juror in 2006) and, a few weeks ago, our efforts were rewarded as we watched the smiles and speeches on stage.

Since this gala was not televised, I thought I'd share some of the winners. First, however, I should note that jurors did not know the names of the firms responsible for each design on judging day; also, this was the first time buildings by OAA registered architects built outside of Ontario were eligible

House on the Bluffs

Also winning the People's Choice award, Taylor Smyth architects delivered a stunner of less than 2,500 square feet that gives the illusion of 4,000 – but good design can achieve this. The rear elevation, almost all glazing, is exquisite, and the asymmetrical detail by the front door is a nice touch. Mr. Sisam said the “house embraces light and air with a transparency and shifting of volumes that connect it to its remarkable site.”

66 • GLOBE REAL ESTATE THE GLOBE AND MAIL • FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2013

In praise of good design

A round up of some of the Ontario Association of Architects award winners



DAVE LEBLANC
THE ARCHITOURIST
daveblanc@globeandmail.com

From a Vegas-style light show at Ryerson University and a sublime pharmaceutical building at the University of British Columbia, to a beautifully composed residence on the Cedarvale ravine and another on the Scarborough Bluffs, jurors tasked with doling out Design Excellence Awards on behalf of the Ontario Association of Architects were bleary-eyed, to say the least.

Ensnared at OAA headquarters in Don Mills (a sort of Justice League for the T-square set) on a crisp February day, only the free coffee and pastries – and the promise of an awards dinner to follow in May – kept these audacious architectural aficionados going.

I should know: I was one of them.

And I exaggerate. But still, we did scan more than 125 submissions, survive a few good-natured dust-ups, and were the last group to leave (there were other juries, but they got off easy).

Veteran architect David Sisam, our non-voting chair, led Toronto city councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, MOD Development's Gary Switzer, Andrea Gabor from Urban Strategies, and your humble architourist through the mysterious world of awards-granting (okay, not so mysterious, I served as a juror in 2006) and, a few weeks ago, our efforts were rewarded as we watched the smiles and speeches on stage.

Since this gala was not televised, I thought I'd share some of the winners. First, however, I should note that jurors did not know the names of the firms responsible for each design on judging day; also, this was the first time buildings by OAA-registered architects built outside of Ontario were eligible.

Cedarvale Ravine House Initially thinking Drew Mandel's design was yet another Dwell magazine box, the floor plan pulled me in: one rear wall angles outward to hungrily pull in more ravine view into the interior, and the cantilevered second-storey (over the pool!) juts out to grab at the landscape also. That much of the facade is opaque is wonderful, too, as this speaks to our climate (more on this later). In addition to a Design Excellence award, Mr. Mandel won the Michael V. and Wanda Plachta award (projects that cost no more than \$8-million).

University of British Columbia Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences/CRD II Star Trek's Borg had more design sense: they'd build something like this. Seriously, though, this is one sexy lab building by Sauter + Perrotte Architects (and Hughes Condon Marler Architects) that deserved Best in Show. Judges enjoyed learning about the design process – a piecemeal photo of a tree was used as inspiration for the protruding glass facade – and photos of the stunning, shad-like wood interior.

House on the Bluffs Also winning the People's Choice award, Taylor Smyth Architects delivered a stunner of less than



Drew Mandel won the Design Excellence award for his Cedarvale Ravine House. TOM ABBAN



Dubeldam Architect • Designer's infill project in the Annex gave a sensitive nod to the existing heritage of the neighbourhood. KIM GUNDO



Taylor Smyth Architects won the People's Choice award for House on the Bluffs. BEN BROWN



The UBC Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences by Sauter + Perrotte Architects (and Hughes Condon Marler Architects) deserved Best in Show. WASC COOPER



change? In an old Ottawa neighbourhood, the personal home of architect Emmanuelle van Rut-