

Canada's top architecture awards announce 2024 winners

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Toronto

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The most prestigious awards in Canadian architecture were announced Monday, encompassing buildings from homes on the shores of Cape Breton to a mountaintop stadium in B.C. The 2024 Governor-General's Medals in Architecture are the latest in a 74-year tradition of national architecture prizes, which are now presented by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) along with the Canada Council.

The jury included architect Michael Green, Wanda Dalla Costa of Tawaw Architecture Collective, Nadia Tromp of South Africa's Ntsika Architects, Albertan architect and Athabasca University professor Henry Tsang and Anne Vallières of Quebec City's STGM Architecture. "This year's recipients continue a long-standing tradition of design excellence," RAIC president Jason Robbins said in a statement, "making a significant impact across all aspects of our lives."



Ema Peter Photography

GROW, Calgary

Modern Office of Design + Architecture (MODA)

This 20-apartment building in Calgary's Bankview neighbourhood makes clever use of a sloped site, stacking units back-to-back and topping them with terraces for gardening and socializing. Emerging Calgary office MODA is on a winning streak: it's also won this year's Professional Prix de Rome.



Riley Snelling

King City Public Library and Seniors Centre, King City, Ont.

Kongats Architects

In the Toronto suburbs, this new facility puts a seniors' centre and library in a sleek Y-shaped structure clad in a beautifully detailed coat of stone and wood. The Toronto firm led by Alar Kongats focuses on public buildings; this is its fourth Governor-General's Medal.



Scott Norsworthy

Garden Laneway House, Toronto

Williamson Williamson Inc.

Toronto and other North American cities are revisiting “accessory dwellings” – houses in backyards or back alleys – to provide new housing. [This one delivers an uncommon level of spatial complexity](#), using a deep basement and well-placed windows to provide generous spaces. A textured brick façade plays with local building traditions.



Scott Norsworthy

Churchill Meadows Community Centre and Sports Park, Mississauga, Ont.

MJMA Architecture & Design

Toronto office MJMA, one of the country's leading designers of recreational facilities, claims two of this year's medals. Churchill Meadows includes a 75,000-square-foot recreation centre which meets the adjacent park with a 200-foot long screen of aluminum mesh and glue-laminated wood.



Scott Norsworthy

Neil Campbell Rowing Centre, St. Catharines, Ont.

MJMA Architecture & Design and Raimondo + Associates Architects

Another uncommonly elegant athletic facility, this waterfront building in Southern Ontario marries the modernist glass box with mass timber structural elements to achieve strong environmental performance.



Adrien Williams

Théâtre de Verdure, Montreal

Lemay

This 1950s theatre in Montreal's Parc La Fontaine was rebuilt by local office Lemay with an unusual spatial approach: the structure can open up behind the stage to frame the landscape behind the performers. The jury praised it for "its immaterial presence, delicate placement on the water and backstage opening up and out to the public [which] blurs the boundary between theatre and landscape."



Adrien Williams

Promenade Samuel-De Champlain-Phase 3, Quebec City

Daoust Lestage Lizotte Stecker Architecture

This urban design and landscape project is the third stage in a 15-year renovation of Quebec City's industrial riverfront. (A previous city also won a GG.) The promenade is a crisp modernist linear park with beaches and a new bathing pavilion that also provides generous public amenities. The jury noted the "collective support of a strong development vision, endorsed and supported by successive governments over time."



James Brittain

Pumphouse, Winnipeg

5468796 Architecture

The 1907 James Avenue Pumping Station has proved a puzzle for Winnipeg developers and architects about how to give this historic structure a new use. Architects 5468796 created their own plan: two black-on-black apartment blocks flank the yellow brick pumphouse, which now holds a restaurant and office space in a newly inserted mezzanine. This technical and economic savvy allowed the heritage site to begin a new chapter of occupancy and vibrancy.



Andrew Latreille

SFU Stadium, Burnaby, B.C.

Perkins&Will

This stadium at the historic Modernist campus of Simon Fraser University features a dramatic thin roof that stretches out to cover half its seats, defining a smaller covered space which can be used for other events. “In a time of excess, the SFU Stadium illustrates restraint and elegance that will no doubt remain functional and beautiful for many decades to come,” the jury wrote.



Maxime Brouillette

École de l'Étincelle Chicoutimi, Que.

Agence Spatiale / APPAREIL Architecture / BGLA

The [Lab-Ecole program](#) has improved the design quality of Quebec's public schools, a building type that is crucial and often neglected. Here, the architects have broken the school into a series of house-like elements and wrapped them around a courtyard. This, along with refined details and extensive use of wood, set the building far apart from the current norm of cheap school facilities. One significant flaw – its library is built around a two-storey bleacher stair, a faddish spatial strategy that excludes people with physical disabilities.



Younes Bounhar

Cabot Cliffs: Cliffs Residences, Halfway Hut and Pro Shop, Cape Breton, N.S.

Fowler Bauld & Mitchell Ltd. (FBM)

This project on Cape Breton Island includes houses linked by communal kitchens. The jury applauded this unusual model for providing social connections, and the buildings for echoing “the simple wood vernacular traditions” of the island. “The result is an architecture that is rooted in the place, offering a connection with the natural setting,” they wrote.



Anton Kisselgoff

31 Scarsdale Road, Toronto

Suulin Architects

It is rare for a Governor-General's Medal winner to be located in an industrial park. This one, in suburban Toronto, is a collection of three warehouses that architects Suulin renovated into an office complex, demolishing little. The jury praised the project "for its important recognition that the preservation and renovation of existing building stock is one of the most important choices societies can make when considering sustainable building."