Heritage Reframed
University building renovation and extension, Toronto, ON, Canada

Main authors
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Summary by the jury
The proposed building provides a new home for the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape & Design (DFALD) on the site of a culturally significant nineteenth century structure in the center of Toronto. The project’s basic objectives are twofold: to rehabilitate existing urban, landscape, and architectural elements through reuse and complementary additions — and, to demonstrate the university’s aim to foreground sustainability as part of its pedagogic program through the use of state-of-the-art construction materials and energy systems. The envelope of the historic structure is upgraded to increase thermal resistance, while the new addition combines a range of measures to demonstrate responsible resource consumption, with design strategies maximizing fresh air ventilation, effective day lighting, and storm water harvesting.

Appraisal by the jury
This project was applauded for its rare approach towards bringing a heritage building back to life through new construction, one respectful of the existing structure, while introducing new spatial qualities to the entire ensemble. Here, a dialog is established between the past and the present, for an educational facility directed toward the future — a dialog most clearly expressed in the sequence of spaces at the intersection of the “new” and the “old”. Additionally, the jury greatly respects the efforts undertaken to integrate environmental principles in the development of the design, without falling into the pitfalls and clichés of “sustainability”. On the contrary, new standards for architecture are confidently brought to the fore.

Project data
Context Architecture, building and civil engineering
Client University of Toronto
Background Private commission
Planned start July 2014

Further authors
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Image 3: Spadina Crescent is one of three significant public spaces on campus that break from the city grid.

Image 4: The "street" links campus to the neighborhoods, punctuated by a café and other public programs.

Image 5: Extensions into the landscape connect the building and a circumferential walk around the circle.

Image 6: New program elements plug into the existing U-shaped wing, optimizing flexibility and adaptability.

Image 7: Inter-disciplinary learning is aided by access and views among classrooms, studios and event spaces.

Image 8: High open space and abundant natural light support the collaborative studio culture.

Image 9: Design strategies maximize fresh air ventilation, effective day lighting and stormwater harvesting.

Image 10: The envelope maintains optimal 40% of glazed and solid walls with 2 low-e coatings on all windows.