



*B.C. Binning House [1942]: View of Entry Hall*

RAIC Foundation Award 2007

*West Coast Modern: Archive and Special Collection*

*Phase One: Inventory*

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Project Summary:

The period immediately following World War II was characterized by unprecedented building in North America, which in Architectural practice was often accompanied by adventurous design activity. This was especially evident on Canada's West Coast, where vigorous experimentation occurred in both public and residential commissions. The work represented an authentically regional idiom of modernism, and was recognized at the time in attracting a geographically disproportionate number of *Massey Awards* as well as extensive popular dissemination in journals such as *Western Home and Living*.

Some sixty years later, many of the protagonists of this seminal historic moment in Canadian Architecture are nearing the end of their lives, with no explicit collection of archival drawings, library holdings and other records of the discourse that surrounded the production of the built work. While fragments of Erickson's archives are now held by collections in Montreal and Calgary – for instance - there is no single local centre in which a critical mass of pertinent documents can be found, and made available to present and future scholars.

*This proposal seeks 'seed' funding for the critical first phase of the project to create such an Archive and Special Collection here in Vancouver.*

As a first step, the work undertaken within the scope of this proposal would provide an initial inventory of works available, while beginning the process of establishing committed donations. To give some indication of the potential of the archive, the initial inventory would begin with exploring the possible future holding of the libraries of Douglas Shadbolt, Andrew Gruft, Abraham Rogatnick: the possible future holding of archival material and libraries of Fred Hollingsworth, Peter and Cornelia Oberlander, Barry Downs, Geoffrey Massey, B.C. Binning.

In the course of exploring the archival material available anticipation is that unknown material may surface and, in addition, that the potential existence of such an archive will most certainly attract and include more recent works by architects such as Peter Cardew and the Patkaus, for instance.

The documentation of this inventory and a preliminary assessment of its physical condition would then serve as the substantive underpinning of a proposal for the establishment of a *West Coast Modern Archive*, spearheading future fundraising efforts. While the *UBC Library Special Collections* department is willing to house such a collection – and has the appropriately conditioned space to do so – resources must be ultimately be found in order to catalogue a first round of bequests and ultimately provide an endowed 50% librarian to be responsible for the continuing expansion and long term maintenance of the collection.

The potential value of such a project is compelling and its timing critical – both with the view to identify and interview key figures willing to contribute, but also at a moment in the local economy when private fundraising shows evidence of likely success.

### Project Time Frame:

The full, comprehensive Archive project, including fund raising and initial implementation, will likely take place over the next 3-5 years. The scope of 'Phase One: Inventory' should be sufficiently advanced following a period of six months so that the information obtained may be consolidated and deployed for further development efforts – allowing another two months or so. It is anticipated that the first phase of inventory and assessment would commence 1 July with the intention of being completed by early in 2008.

This component of the larger project will proceed concurrent with proposals for a monograph focusing on the West Coast Modern House, anticipating publication in Fall 2008, with the intention of holding public house tours of local significance. This is to say that the project understands its potential to galvanize public interest in the topic at the same time as it promotes scholarly activity.

### Project Budget:

The primary task of the 'Inventory' phase is to assemble a team of academics, potential donors of material and potential financial sponsors of the Archive. In this respect both Rhodri Windsor-Liscombe of *UBC Fine Arts Department* together with Greg Bellerbe of *Emily Carr Institute's Charles Scott Gallery* have committed their support in preparing a first approximation of likely interest and to make direct personal contacts. All of this work would be undertaken within the resource base of current institutional responsibilities.

The primary deployment of requested funding would be remuneration payments for assistance in the initial review of the material, assessment of its value and first broad description of the scope and magnitude of the potential collections. This process would include a degree of clerical back up, as well as graphic design in preparation of the final assessment document.

[rates per UBC Research Assistant graduate student norms]

Preliminary Review and Assessment	60 hours X \$22.50	\$1350.00
Coordination of Research	20 hours X \$45.00	900.00
Document Publication Costs		250.00
Total Requested Budget		\$2500.00

### Dissemination Plan:

The direct outcome of this preliminary research would be in the form of a document entitled *West Coast Modern Archive: Inventory and Assessment*. This would serve as a key foundation in bringing the project further towards fruition and expanding awareness of the project to varied interests in the community. Effort will be made to coordinate with both local popular and professional media outlets in order to bring the project to the broadest audience possible. Recent monographs on Fred Hollingsworth and B.C. Binning offer positive evidence of interest in the content under scrutiny. Attribution to the RAIC will be consistently delineated throughout the project, with special note of the extraordinary value that such 'seed' support can have in establishing a degree of operational 'traction'.



## Contact Information:

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## Curriculum Vitae:

<i>Architectural Association School of Architecture</i>	AA Dipl (Honours)	1979
<i>University of Manitoba</i>	Bachelor of Environmental Studies	1975
<i>University of British Columbia</i>	Full Professor	2005
	Associate Professor	1997
<i>University of Texas at Austin</i>	Associate Professor	1992
	Assistant Professor	1990
<i>Architectural Association School</i>	Unit Master	1980
	Lecturer	1979

## SCHOLARLY AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

### Refereed Presentations

*'Cabin and Camp: Modernism Comes to Vancouver', Refereed presentation Association of Art Historians Conference, 'Articulating an Alternative Modernism'. April 2003, University College, London.*  
*'The Demise of Housing (once and for all...)', Refereed presentation Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, October 2002, Annual Technical Conference, 'Housing'. Portland.*  
*'Making History Speak: The Roger's Pass Interpretive Centre', Refereed presentation Society for the Study of Architectural History in Canada, May 1998, Annual Conference, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.*

### Design Charette and Workshop Participation

*'Chaos City: Great Northern Way Campus Charette' group leader, March 2003, University of British Columbia, Vancouver*  
*"Landscape Urbanism", Charette and Symposium March 2002, Center for American Architecture and Design, Austin.*  
*"Mid-Campus Community Design" Charette participant, March 2000, UBC Campus Planning Vancouver.*  
*"Sustainable Burnaby" Charette group participant, August 1998, James Taylor Chair in Sustainable Development, Vancouver.*

## Invited Presentations

'The Legacy of BC Binning and Early Modern Vancouver Houses' presentation given at the symposium 'West Coast Residential: Figuring (on) a Legacy', June 2003, Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, Vancouver.

'Architecture in the Wild' invited lecture, March 2003, Architectural Association of Ireland, Dublin.

"Good Building: the Case for Undisclosed Space" invited lecture, March 2002, Faculty of Architecture, The University of Texas at Austin.

"Undisclosed Space" invited lecture, August 2000, School of Architecture, University of Waterloo.

"The Pyramid and the Labyrinth" invited lecture, October 1999, Department of Architecture, University of Hong Kong.

"Notes on Idiom..." invited lecture series, October 1998, Department of Architecture, University of Queensland.

'Constructing a Democratic Landscape' invited lecture, June 1998, Visiting Lecture Series, University of Washington, Seattle.

August 1998, University of Queensland, Brisbane.

September 1998, RMIT University, Melbourne.

'Entropy and Measure' invited lecture, November 1996, Visiting Lecture Series, Tulane University, New Orleans.

February 1997, The University of Texas at Austin.

## Conference Participation

'Cabin and Camp' Symposium Organizer and Introductory Speaker March 2003, University of British Columbia, Vancouver..

Annual International Conference, Session Moderator

June 2000, Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, Hong Kong

Moderator, Plenary Panel Discussion,

May 1999, Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Annual Festival, Vancouver.

'Architecture: Material and Imagined', Plenary Panel Presentation

April 1997, Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture

Annual National Conference, Dallas.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Macdonald, Christopher, with Enns, Herbert and Prangnell, Peter. 'Cabin, Cottage and Camp'. Blue Imprint Press, Vancouver, 2005.

Macdonald, Christopher. 'Introduction and Overview' chapter in book, Architecture Canada 2004: The Governor General's Medals for Architecture. RAIC and TUNS Press, Halifax, 2005.

Macdonald, Christopher. 'The Demise of Housing (once and for all)' In Conference Proceedings, Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture Technical Conference on Housing. 2005.

Macdonald, Christopher. "The Vancouver Special Redux." In *Canadian Architect*, July 2004, pp. 22-25.

Macdonald, Christopher. "Good Building..." In *Center* Volume 12/13, 'The Good Building / Pressing Style', October 2003.

Macdonald, Christopher. "Undisclosed: Architecture in the New Public Landscape." In *building/art*, Andrew King, Jocelyne Belisle and Lawrence Eisler ed. University of Calgary Press, 2003.

## CURATORIAL WORKS

*Cabin, Cottage and Camp: New Designs on the Canadian Landscape*. Charles H. Scott Gallery, Curator, Vancouver 29 March-29 April 2005.

*West Coast Residential: The Modern and the Contemporary*, Charles H. Scott Gallery: contributor to exhibition, Vancouver 21 June – 31 August 2003.

*'A Modernist Legacy 2: Three Houses by Judith Chaffee'*  
Exhibition at *Mebane Gallery*, School of Architecture, November 2002.

University of Texas at Austin. Co-curator of exhibition with Kevin Alter

*Vancouver Modern: Houses 1945-1960*. Curator of exhibition *Third Avenue Gallery*, Vancouver, December 1997.

## SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

Vice President, <i>Canadian Architectural Certification Board</i>	2005 to 2006
Member, <i>Council of Canadian University Schools of Architecture</i>	1999 to 2006
Member, <i>Annual Conference Organising Committee</i>	
Northwest Chapter Society of Architectural Historians	2005
Member, <i>AIBC Annual General Meeting Committee</i> ,	2003
Member, <i>AIBC Annual Conference Steering Committee</i>	1997 to 2002
Member, <i>AIBC Annual Meeting and Festival Steering Committee</i>	2000
Chair, <i>AIBC Exhibition Events Sub-committee</i>	1998

Selection Committee, <i>CMHC 'Reports of the Year'</i>	2004
Jury Chair Canada Council Governor General's Awards for Design Excellence	
Member, Selection Committee, <i>CMHC External Research Programme</i>	
Member, <i>RAIC Gold Medal Assessment Review Panel</i>	2003
Jury Member, <i>American Institute of Architects Alaska Annual Design Awards</i>	2002
Member, Peer Assessment Committee, <i>Canadian Architecture Biennale in Venice, The Canada Council for the Arts,</i>	
Jury Member, <i>AIBC Lieutenant Governor's Awards for Design Excellence</i>	

Member, <i>Canadian Architectural Certification Board Accreditation Visiting Team,</i> <i>Dalhousie University School of Architecture</i>	2004
Chair, <i>Canadian Architectural Certification Board Accreditation Visiting Team</i> <i>University of Waterloo School of Architecture</i>	2002
Chair, <i>External Examiners Review Panel, University of Queensland</i>	2001
Member, <i>National Architectural Accreditation Board Visiting Team,</i> <i>Louisiana State University</i>	
Observer, <i>Canadian Architectural Certification Board Accreditation Visiting Team,</i> <i>University of Manitoba Faculty of Architecture</i>	1999

## AWARDS AND DISTINCTIONS

<i>AIBC Annual Award for Innovation, ENDS Programme Curriculum Development</i> With Martin Lewis and Douglas Paterson	2003
<i>Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, Elected to College of Fellows.</i>	2002