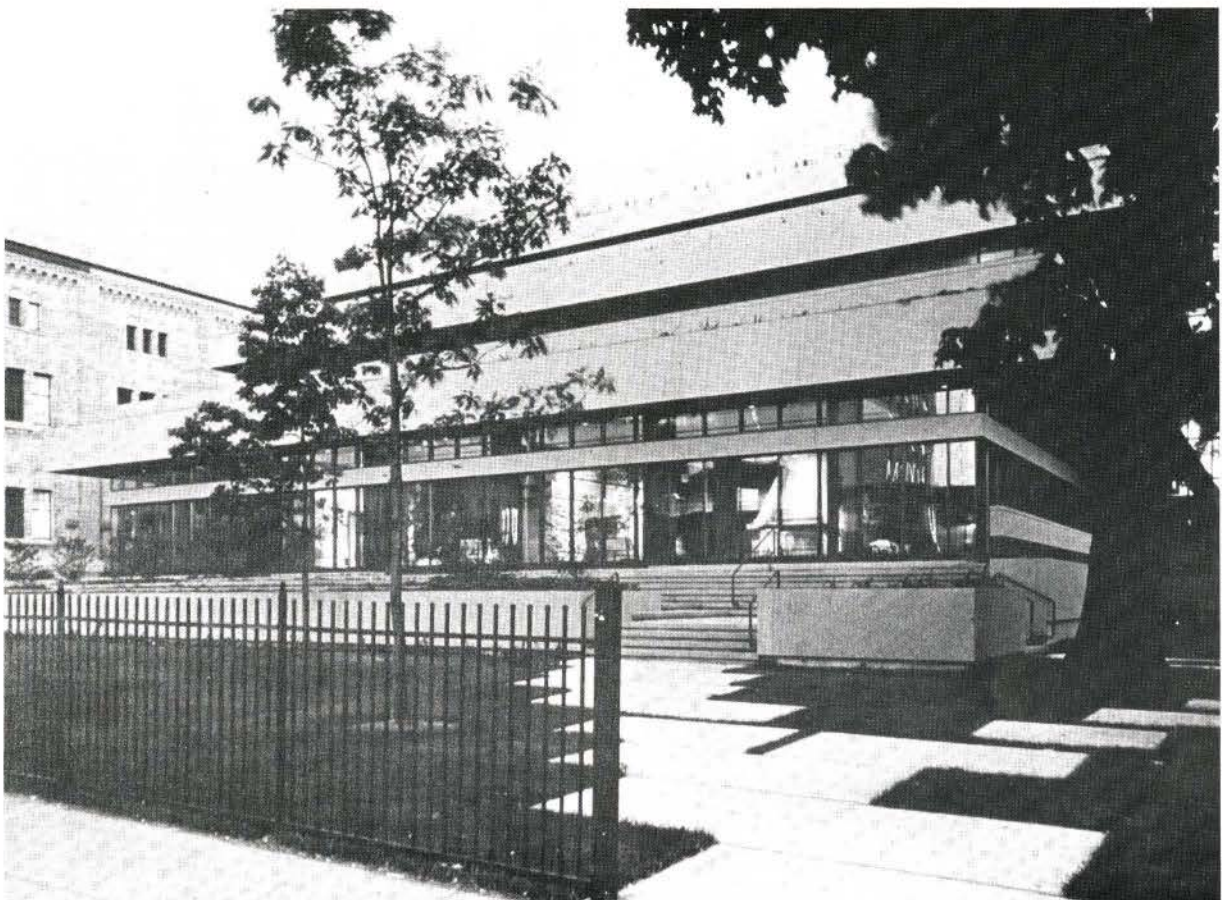


Zeidler Roberts Partnership/Architects



Queen's Quay Terminal, North-East elevation.

ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM AND QUEEN'S QUAY TERMINAL TWO TORONTO LANDMARKS RENOVATING

by Don Lovell

Two very large and extremely challenging renovation projects have recently been completed in Toronto. The \$50 million Queen's Quay Terminal by Zeidler Roberts Partnership/Architects has converted the 1926, Toronto Terminal Warehouse into a multi-use waterfront facility. A similarly costly project, \$60 million, was executed by the Royal Ontario Museum to renovate and expand their museum facilities almost doubling the total area from 36,000m² to 65,000m² and making it the second-largest museum building in North America.

While these two projects vary in purpose and usage, they both add to the enjoyment of Torontonians and visitors to that city. Additionally, they provide a significant step in the recognition that the architectural heritage of Canadian cities must be preserved and that alternative use or expansion may be accommodated by sensitive and rationalized renovation and addition.

Queen's Quay Terminal is the first major development project of the Toronto Harbourfront master plan. In 1980, Olympia & York with Zeidler Roberts Partnership/Architects as prime consultant won a staged competition for the renovation of the approximately 92,900m² (one million square feet) Terminal Warehouse.

This huge warehouse had been designed by New York architects, Moores and Dunford, to provide Toronto with a massive fireproof storage area that could be serviced by both rail and dock facilities. Completed at a cost of \$3 million in 1927, the L-shaped building with

nearly 305 metres of dockage sat on 10,000 wooden nine metre piles. The facade treatment was utilitarian with the exception of the north front which was executed in a modest form of the then popular Art Deco style. The most noteworthy interior detail was the use of "mushroom" columns six metres on centre.

The Toronto Harbourfront authorities recognized the potential for the Terminal Warehouse to become the eastern anchor for their Harbourfront plans. Zeidler Roberts Partnership proposed to regenerate the old warehouse into an active year-round mixed-use waterfront centre for urban life. They envisaged that a variety of retail uses, restaurants, shopping marts, offices, residential units and harbourfront functions could galvanize city pedestrian flow to pulsate through the revitalized building.

Queen's Quay Terminal was completed in June, 1983. The project contains two levels of commercial retail and restaurant space plus a 450 seat theatre on the third level, car parking is also provided on the third level and future garage parking facilities are included in the harbourfront plan. The removal of cars from the harbour sides of the complex maximizes the view from retail and restaurant space. Five levels of offices, 39,000m², are located above the parking level. The central atria above the theatre provides views from the office areas into the condominium courts. The residential function is met by 72 condominium units forming four levels atop the complex. A glass covered pool with water view compliments these living units.



Toronto Terminal Warehouse circa 1930s.



South atrium looking towards the south-east harbour. Note mushroom capped columns.

The existing image of the Terminal Warehouse has been maintained despite such a major renovation. The original Art Deco atmosphere was enhanced through the restoration and addition of harmonious detailing. The north facade was not added to and the tower clock form was maintained as well as being extended to the ground level.

The pattern and rhythm of the east elevation recalls the original warehouse facade. Glass protrusions provide seating for cafes and restaurants at the arcade level. The fenestration is enlivened by the addition of three floor bay windows which appear as dark projections on a rhythmic spacing and help to give an otherwise flat plane depth and distinction.

Condominium units have been cleverly handled by stepping them back from the roof of the existing building. A patina metal cladding provides a visual link to the Royal York and Union Station roofs.

Interior planning has been equally sensitive and captures the original structural integrity of the warehouse. The "mushroom" cap columns with their dropped panels have been exposed to create a dynamic structural statement as well as to assist in the definition of the various functional areas. Removal of some columns was necessary to accommodate large spaces such as the theatre and to provide natural light to the heart of the complex. An architectonic quality has been achieved throughout by the use of simple structural elements such as wire mesh handrails and grid ceilings while Art Deco plaster moulds and terrazzo flooring in classical patterns adds complexity and enrichment.

The layout of Queen's Quay will optimize its waterfront location by encouraging walks along the inside as well as the exterior of the building. Restaurants open onto the Quay, in good weather, while allowing the interior spaces to be visually linked to the harbour. The various activities within the complex are not separated but instead augment and refreshen each other. This is without doubt a building designed for peoples' enjoyment and one which should play a marked role in the enhancement of urban live along Toronto's harbourfront.

The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) although faced with a very different problem than the Terminal Warehouse planners, nevertheless had one aim in common, to preserve the existing building. Expansion feasibility studies conducted in 1970, had identified the need for large additional floor area as well as the inclusion of up-to-date environmental controls. Such a large expansion on a small site coupled with many specific needs posed a significant design problem. Gene Kinoshita, partner in charge of design for the associated architectural team of Mathers & Haldenby/Moffat & Kinoshita understood that the linkage of old to new would be a crucial design generator.

From the initial planning stages it was decided that the 1912 west wing and the 1932 east wing and centre block would be retained. The requirement for more floor area was so large that almost all of the remaining site would be needed. The design solution consisted of constructing new buildings within the two open courtyards formed by the existing H-shaped museum. This proposal left the H-building intact while adding new galleries connected to the old by two U-shaped atrias. The atrias would provide changes in space and light which would relax a visitor's mental and physical state and in turn relieve the visual and psychological by-products of "museum fatigue".

An effort was made to make the new buildings harmonious with the existing and yet reflect modern technology. The use of a receding stepped structure with landscaped terraced floors is intended to reduce the scale and soften the impact of the addition along the north elevation. These galleries are fully glazed and provide a visual connection to the street for passers-by both at night and during the day. Although the plan view of this addition appears to work well the north facades reveal that the dominate monolithic horizontal layering of the new galleries are a stark contrast to the Romanesque arches and vertical banding of the 1912 and 1932 end wall elevations.

The interior view of the multi storeyed atria, as seen on the cover of the *Bulletin*, is very pleasing and reveals the effective linkage which allows for the complex and varried differences in floor levels between

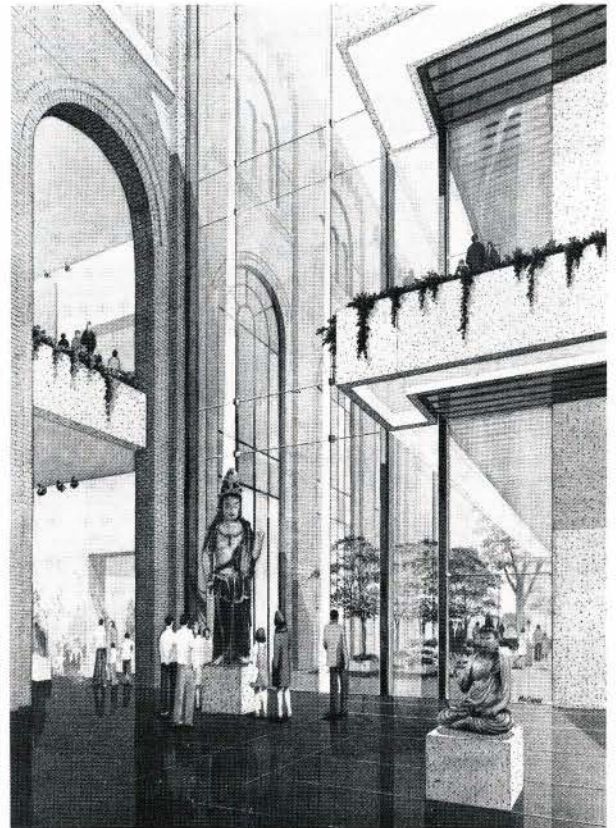
old and new display spaces. The technical means to achieve these connections consist of bridges, ramps, stairs and dual-door elevators. The atrium design concept also allowed for the resolution of environmental control concerns such as humidity, temperature, ultraviolet light, security, fire safety, fumigation and waterproofing. Atriums serve as an environmental buffer zone between the highly controlled new galleries and the less regulated older buildings. The skylighted atria have a further advantage in that natural light is permitted to areas that would otherwise be windowless enclosures.

The theme for the new buildings was also stimulated by a change in display organization at the ROM from departments to "cluster" grouping. Eight clusters provide a network of galleries which interrelate exhibits by conceptual and/or chronological factors.

In addition to maintaining the original museum and maximizing the courtyard facades of the H-building through the use of atriums, significant decorative architectural features, such as the gold mosaic dome of the entrance rotunda, were repaired and cleaned.

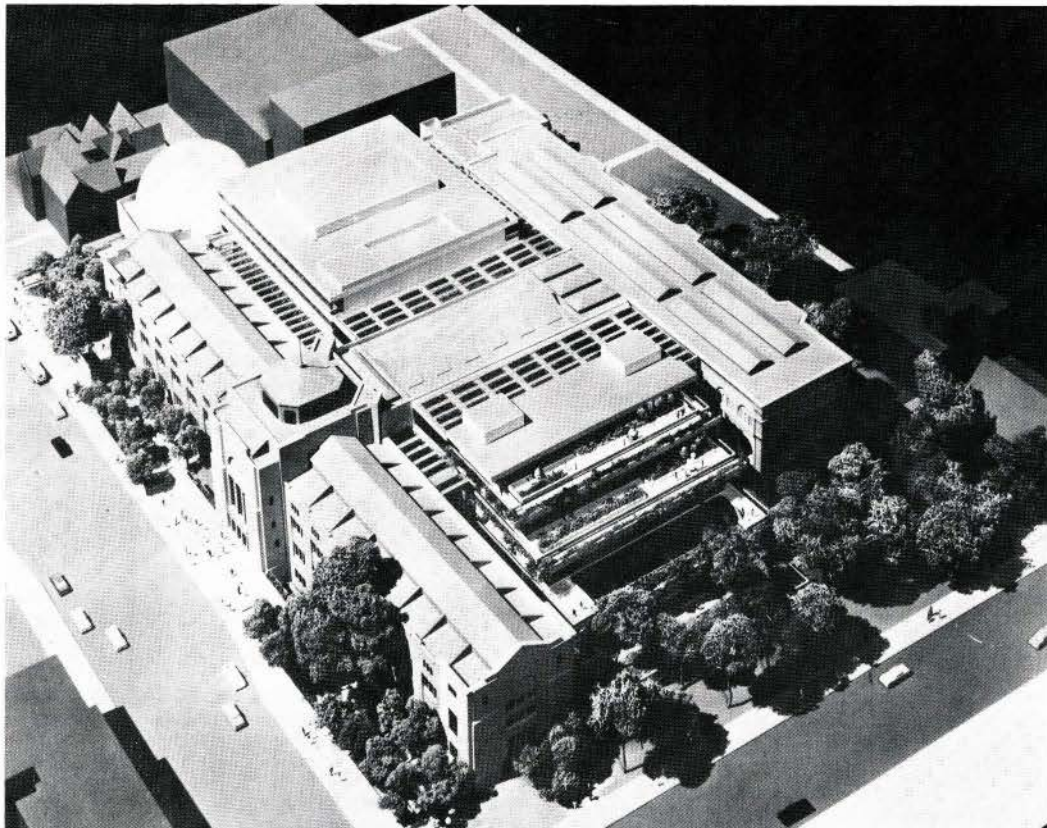
The Queen's Quay Terminal and the ROM projects differ in the means that designers have taken to enfuse new life into the existing buildings. Without question the principle contributions that these recent works have made to the preservation and revitalization movement in Canada have been to demonstrate that heritage landmarks do exist, that these landmarks are invaluable in the identity of the urban centre and that they can be given new and expanded roles in the life of the community.

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Michael McCann

Atria between existing museum, left and new terraced galleries, right.



Panda Associates

The landscaped, terraced floors act as an extension of the existing garden. The scale and impact of the addition are reduced by the receding stepped structure and softened by the landscaping of the terraces.