

George Baird has been in architecture for over 42 years and has influenced countless architects. His prolific career has had a cumulative effect on the profession in Canada and internationally. His achievements can be grouped by his practice of architecture, teaching of architecture, and his work on the theory of architecture and its criticism.

## PRACTICE OF ARCHITECTURE

Baird Sampson Neuert Architects Inc. is a partnership of three architects with a distinguished history of contributions to architecture, education and community development in Canada and abroad. The activities of the firm include a holistic approach to advancing architecture and culture in the pursuit of design excellence and innovation as understood in its broadest meaning. In 2007, the firm was the recipient of the RAIC Architectural Firm Award. The firm continues the tradition of teaching and learning, and in the last three years has received monies through tax rebates from the Science, Research, and Experimental Development program supporting companies who perform research and experiments as part of their work.

## TEACHING OF ARCHITECTURE

Both within schools of architecture, and his office, George Baird has taught and mentored generations of students, both in Canada and abroad. An incredible number of these students are now playing leading roles in practice and academia. George recently concluded his five-year term as Dean of the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design at the University of Toronto where he received his own Bachelor of Architecture in 1962.

As Dean, George Baird built upon the notable renewal by his predecessor, Dean Larry Richards, securing significant resources directed towards the future of the school. During his tenure, the Faculty received a historic gift by John and Myrna Daniels of \$14 million, the largest gift to date of any architecture school in Canada. This gift established an endowment for financial aid to students in perpetuity, and made possible the future expansion and renovation of the Faculty's building. In recognition of the gift, the Faculty was renamed the "John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design."

Beyond the major gift by the Daniels, during Baird's Deanship, the Faculty received a provincial grant of \$1 million for studio upgrades. The project was initiated and completed during this time. As well, George Baird was successful in obtaining the provincial grant for the seventh term of the MArch program, elevating and reinforcing the importance of a rigorous curriculum with provincial authorities and providing financial stability for the Faculty.

Dean Baird initiated numerous academic searches resulting in five new tenure-stream appointments, the successful tenureship of six professors, one senior lecturer appointment, one tenure reappointment, and six part-time appointments.

George Baird was integral in the establishment of the Cities Centre, a multi-disciplinary research institute established in February of 2007 in response to one of the five major research priorities defined in the University's "Stepping Up" plan. The mandate of the Centre is broad: to encourage and facilitate research, both scholarly and applied, on cities and on a wide range of urban policy issues, both in Canada and abroad, and to provide a gateway for communication between the University and the broader urban community. The new Centre became official on November 15, 2007 with approvals from the Faculty Council of the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, as well as from the Faculty of Arts and Science, the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, and the University of Toronto's School of Graduate Studies.

#### WRITING OF THEORY OF ARCHITECTURE & CRITICISM

George's academic achievements are a tribute to his dedication to architectural theory, design and literature. His opinions are deeply respected and influential to the architectural and larger community where he is asked to participate as advisor, juror and speaker for a variety of functions. He has published and lectured widely throughout most parts of the world.

During his career, Baird has focused on issues of architectural design, design history and theory, and urban design. He is co-editor (with Charles Jencks) of *Meaning in Architecture* (1969), and (with Mark Lewis) of *Queues Rendezvous, Riots* (1995). He is author of *Alvar Aalto* (1969) and *The Space of Appearance* (1995). He edited with Barton Myers, "Vacant Lottery" in *Design Quarterly* (1978) which was original in its research on Toronto both in its method and information. Most recently, his researches in architectural theory have focused on the question of the political and social status of urban public space, and on debates revolving around the subject of "critical architecture." In this regard, his much discussed essay: "Criticality and Its Discontents" was published in the *Harvard Design Magazine* in Fall 2004, and his subsequent text: "Thoughts on Criticism in Architecture" in the *Journal of Architectural Education* in March of this year.