

Toronto firm named recipient of RAIC's 2014 Emerging Architectural Practice Award

OTTAWA, April 8, 2014 —The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) announces the Toronto firm of Williamson Chong as recipient of its 2014 Emerging Architectural Practice Award.

“The firm is consistently producing innovative projects that contain quality detailing and craftsmanship including a focus on the use of wood,” said the jury.

Established in 2011, the seven-person office of Shane Williamson, MRAIC, Betsy Williamson, MRAIC, and Donald Chong was recognized for an award-winning practice which combines teaching, research and community involvement.

Projects range from experiments with new technologies for wood fabrication to a master-plan proposal that re-imagines a former sand-and-gravel quarry in Haliburton, ON, as a sustainable village designed to produce food for the local area.

Built projects include a house on a 12-foot-wide lot in Toronto which reflects the firm's interest in the innovative use of brownfield and marginal sites. The Galley House aims to show how a slender detached housing type can be viable in terms of square footage while not shortchanging itself on natural light and amenity.

“We are honoured to have been selected for the Emerging Architectural Practice Award, which recognizes our work to date but, more importantly, speaks to the potential of our design and research to significantly contribute to architectural discourse and the built environment in Canada,” says Shane Williamson.

“As the second recipient of this award, we would like to thank the RAIC for providing such a unique vehicle to support the trajectories of early-career architects and offices.”

They will receive the award at the [2014 Festival of Architecture](#), held in Winnipeg May 28 to 31 by the RAIC and the Manitoba Association of Architects.

Shane Williamson is an associate professor of architectural design and computing at the University of Toronto.

Betsy Williamson serves on the Art Advisory Board of the Toronto Sculpture Garden and is a member of the Waterfront Toronto Design Review Panel.



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613-241-3600 | fax/télééc. 613-241-5750 | info@raic.org

Donald Chong is co-author of *Site Unseen: Laneway Architecture and Urbanism in Toronto*. He sits on the design review panel for the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto.

As winners of the 2012 Professional Prix de Rome from the Canada Council of the Arts, the partners will visit Austria, Scandinavia, Japan, and South Korea to investigate advanced wood construction and emerging manufacturing technologies.

“Where steel and concrete were the focus of 20th century development in the building industry, we believe that technologically-advanced wood products will drive the next wave of innovation,” they say in a statement.

“Canadian architecture should be at the forefront of this work.”

Details and downloadable images are available at [Emerging Architectural Practice Award](#)

The RAIC Emerging Architectural Practice Award aims to recognize the principals of an emerging architectural practice that have consistently produced distinguished architecture. The award recognizes the achievements of the principals for the quality of their built work, service to their clients, innovations in practice and public recognition.

The RAIC is a voluntary national association established in 1907 as the voice for architecture in Canada. Representing about 4,800 members, the RAIC works:

- To advocate for the built environment
- To celebrate the richness and diversity of architecture in Canada; and
- To support architects in achieving excellence.

For information:

Maria Cook

Manager, Communications and Advocacy

mcook@raic.org

613-241-3600 .213

www.raic.org



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613-241-3600 | fax/télé. 613-241-5750 | info@raic.org

ROYAL ARCHITECTURAL INSTITUTE OF CANADA | INSTITUT ROYAL D'ARCHITECTURE DU CANADA
330 - 55, rue Murray St., Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 5M3 | www.raic.org

