McMinn + Janzen Studio

Toronto, Ontario

McMinn + Janzen Studio, based in Toronto, engages in architecture as a poetic and nuanced interpretation of program and context in both urban and extra-urban landscapes, in residential, institutional, and commercial contexts. The studio focuses on the potential of fabricated environments as an enhancement of cultural life in the city and its surroundings, with the intrinsic objective of efficient and responsible use of available resources in the short and long term. Melana Janzen is an OAA registered architect and holds a Master of Architecture degree from the University of Waterloo. She writes periodically on topics in Canadian architecture for architectural journals and advocates for neighbourhood building, for the benefit of the city and also the future of her two small children. John McMinn has taught at schools of architecture in North America and Europe, and currently teaches at the University of Waterloo. He holds degrees from the Architectural Association in London, UK, and McGill University. He is a writer and curator of architectural exhibitions, focusing on the cultural dimensions of sustainable architecture from a critical regionalist perspective.

CP Harbour House

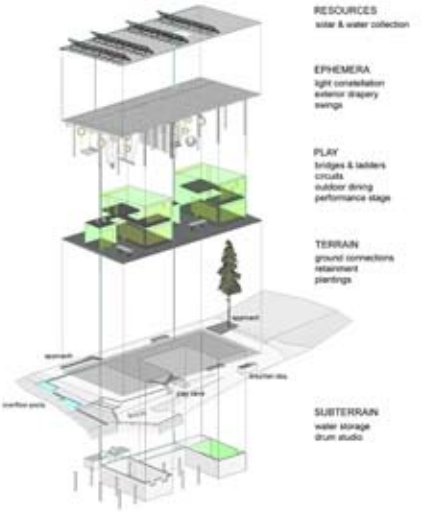
Big Bay, ON

The CP Harbour House is a vacation home for two Toronto families on the shores of Georgian Bay north of Owen Sound, Ontario. Overlooking offshore islands and the limestone cliffs of the Bruce Peninsula, it appears to hover above a small harbour marina where sailboats and motorboats are kept by residents of nearby island cottages.

The building is an assembly of four discrete enclosures linked by an expansive deck and roof. Double-storey serviced cabins are flanked by smaller guest bunkies, providing autonomy to the two families' separate quarters; one intensely social with a distinctly Latin vibe, the other with a focus on play-scapes for young children. The interior areas are modest and tightly planned for snug winter accommodation, but in summer the house expands, with a greatly enlarged outdoor living spaces under the sweeping expanse of the roof. The totemic, temple-like quality of the post-and-beam structure provides a flexible armature for hanging seats, swings, beds, and lanterns, amplifying both the social events and play functions of the program.

Careful site integration based on building orientation and configuration was planned for a net-zero carbon footprint, which was also achieved through optimized passive heating, cooling, and ventilation, wood-burning heat, and a large photovoltaic array. Available local materials and artisanal production methods were used, including earthen floors of sand and clay quarried from a neighbour's site, and locally harvested cedar decking and siding, manufactured by a nearby Amish community's horse-drawn milling operation. Other sustainable products include bamboo plywood cabinets, mineral-wool and soya- based insulation, salvaged thermal glazing and slate countertops from billiard tables, reused slate flooring, and fabric for balustrades and privacy screens sourced from a terminated garment factory. The photovoltaic array will provide energy for electric vehicles when the market provides them, reducing the carbon cost of travel to and from the city.

1 Xx
2 Xx
3 Xx
4 Xx
5 Xx



1

GROUND FLOOR
1/16" = 1'-0"

SECOND FLOOR
1/16" = 1'-0"

2