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Canadian Centre for Architecture

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## communiqué / press release

*Montreal, 9 May 2017*– The Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) opens the exhibition ***Besides, History: Go Hasegawa, Kersten Geers, David Van Severen***, curated by Giovanna Borasi, CCA Chief Curator. The exhibition presents a conversation initiated by the CCA, with the conviction that studying architecture's ideas involves using the past and the present as tools to envision the future. The conversation, which took place over the past year, involves Go Hasegawa (Go Hasegawa and Associates, Tokyo), Kersten Geers and David Van Severen (OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen, Brussels), and the history of architecture. This dialogue is now on view in the CCA's main galleries from 10 May until 15 October 2017.

*Besides, History* examines the role that history plays in contemporary architecture practice. The invited architects reread, redraw, translate, and appropriate from the past and from each other in order to construct relationships and meaning out of a constellation of references. Collected from many historical periods and geographies, these references—Andrea Palladio, John Hejduk, Aldo Rossi, Kazunari Sakamoto, and others—reveal a very different attitude of inquiry, more directly related to the architects' aesthetic research without becoming strictly operational or literal.

“The architects in this current generation operate with the belief that everything has already been done but nevertheless argue that we should build something meaningful for our time,” explains Giovanna Borasi. The exhibition galleries form a statement in response to this by creating a space where visitors can experience the conversation that took place between the architects in the presence of history. “Typical historical categories such as authorship are challenged as one architect appropriates the work of the other and represents it with his own tools, comparing it with his own work to reveal similarities and differences. Objects from the CCA collection are included to show the recurrence and familiarity of certain ideas.”

### **The conversation is presented in seven thematic galleries:**

***Through Your Eyes*** is an introduction curated by Italian photographer Stefano Graziani, who has photographed key works by both architecture offices. His selection introduces the cultural contexts that have influenced each office’s thinking, and addresses the proximity of ideas for the two practices and their shared interests in searching for precision in the use of historical elements. The selection includes photographs by Felice Beato and Richard Pare drawn from the CCA collection, as well as photographs by Bas Princen and Takashi Homma.

***Common Ground*** comprises a selection of twelve representative projects by the two practices. The distinction between one and the other is intentionally ambiguous, as the models were all made by Go Hasegawa from the same material and at a scale of 1:100.

***Apparent Banality*** shows how the choice of material is a fundamental part of architecture for both offices. To illustrate the architects’ ideas of scale, architectural elements, and materiality, abstracted models of two buildings—Go Hasegawa’s **house in Kyoto** and OFFICE’s **Villa Schor**—are installed in the galleries at a 1:1 scale.

***Section as Logic of Assembly*** presents architectural drawings as tools to represent and to verify ideas. A selection of detail sections from a range of projects by both offices (from a single-family house to an urban community centre), are redrawn by Go Hasegawa at a 1:5 scale.

***A View with a Room*** offers an immersive perspective on one project by each architecture office, designed and printed on fabric by OFFICE. This unusual operation, another result of the conversation between the architects to compare their work openly, allowed each to appropriate the work of the other and to represent it within his own frame of reference.

***Plan as Perimeter*** displays a selection of plan drawings by both offices, in a continuous line along with references from the CCA collection. The plans, selected by OFFICE, contribute to a definition of the perimeter as an architectural concept.



This exhibition is part of a CCA series that pairs architecture offices in order to investigate and interrogate current ideas in thinking and practice. In developing an installation within the context of the CCA galleries, participating architects are given the opportunity to contribute to and shape a larger conversation on concepts of particular relevance for the CCA. Previous exhibitions in the series include *Rooms You May Have Missed: Umberto Riva, Bijoy Jain* (2013); *Other Space Odysseys: Greg Lynn, Michael Maltzan, Alessandro Poli* (2010); *Some Ideas on Living in London and Tokyo by Stephen Taylor and Ryue Nishizawa* (2008); and *Environment: Approaches for Tomorrow – Gilles Clément, Philippe Rahm* (2006).

## **PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

On **Tuesday 9 May at 6pm**, the CCA hosts public lectures by Go Hasegawa, Kersten Geers, and David Van Severen, followed by a conversation with Giovanna Borasi (Paul Desmarais Theatre, in English, free admission). The event is followed by the exhibition opening from 7:30pm to 10pm. Subsequent public programs will be scheduled through October 2017.

## **PUBLICATION**

A complementary publication, also entitled *Besides, History: Go Hasegawa, Kersten Geers, David Van Severen*, will be co-published by the CCA and Walther König (English edition) and Kajima Institute Publishing (Japanese edition). It includes contributions by Giovanna Borasi, Kersten Geers, Go Hasegawa, and David Van Severen, and is designed by Irobe Design Institute. The anticipated publication date is October 2017.

## **EXHIBITION CREDITS**

Curator: Giovanna Borasi

Concept: Go Hasegawa; Kersten Geers and David Van Severen

Curatorial team: Irene Chin, Andrew Goodhouse, Ariana Revilla, Tania Tovar Torres

Curatorial coordination: Irene Chin

Design: OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen (Yuichiro Onuma, Shinji Terada), Brussels; Go Hasegawa and Associates (Laura Merlin, Keiichiro Komai, Suguru Nozaki, Tomohiro Yoshida), Tokyo

Design development: Sébastien Larivière, Anh Truong

Graphic design: Irobe Design Institute, Tokyo

**#besideshistory**

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## **GIOVANNA BORASI**

Giovanna Borasi joined the CCA as Curator for Contemporary Architecture in 2005 and became Chief Curator in 2014. Her exhibitions and related books shape contemporary discussion in architecture with a particular attention to alternative ways of practicing and evaluating architecture, and how environmental, political and social issues are influencing today's urbanism and built environment: *Environment: Approaches for Tomorrow* (2006) on the work of Gilles Clément and Philippe Rahm, *Some Ideas on Living in London and Tokyo* by Stephen Taylor and Ryue Nishizawa (2008), *Journeys: How Travelling Fruit, Ideas, and Buildings Rearrange our Environment* (2010), and *The Other Architect* (2015). She co-curated *Other Space Odysseys* (2010), *1973: Sorry, Out of Gas* (2007), *Actions: What You Can Do With the City* (2008 – 2009), *Imperfect Health: The Medicalization of Architecture* (2011) and *What About Happiness on the Building Site* (2017).

Giovanna Borasi has written widely on contemporary architecture, has served on international juries, and is a regular speaker at symposia and conferences.

## **GO HASEGAWA**

Go Hasegawa is a Japanese architect based in Tokyo. Hasegawa graduated with a Master of Engineering from the Tokyo Institute of Technology in 2002, after which he worked at Taira Nishizawa Architects before establishing Go Hasegawa & Associates in 2005. He has taught as a visiting professor at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, the Academy of Architecture of Mendrisio in Switzerland, Oslo School of Architecture and Design in Norway, and the University of California (Los Angeles) in the United States. Currently, he is John T. Dunlop Design Critic in Architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. He has received a number of awards, including the 2008 Shinkenchiku Prize and the 2014 AR Design Vanguard. In 2015, he received his PhD in Engineering from the Tokyo Institute of Technology. His first monograph, "Go Hasegawa Works", was published by TOTO Publishers in 2012 and a new monograph was recently published by a+u as of January 2017.

## **DAVID VAN SEVEREN**

David van Severen is founding partner of OFFICE Kersten Geers and David van Severen. He graduated in Architecture and Urbanism at the University of Ghent, Belgium and at the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura in Madrid, Spain. Until 2004 he worked for Stéphane Beel Architects in Ghent, Xaveer De Geyter Architects in Brussels and for Atelier Maarten van Severen. He has been a teacher and guest critic various international schools, and is currently teaching architectural design at the Academy d'Architecture, Versailles (France).



## **KERSTEN GEERS**

Kersten Geers studied at the University of Ghent and at the Escuela Tecnica Superior de Arquitectura in Madrid, Spain. He worked in Rotterdam for Maxwan/Max.1 Architects until 2001 and from 2001 to 2005 for Neutelings Riedijk Architects. He was a tutor at the TU Delft, the University of Ghent and the Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio, and a guest lecturer and guest critic for the Berlage Institute in Rotterdam, and Columbia University in New York, among other institutions. He is founding member and editor of San Rocco magazine, and frequently publishes essays on architecture in a variety of magazines and books. In 2002 he founded Office Kersten Geers David Van Severen together with David Van Severen. In 2008 they were awarded with the Belgian Prize for Architecture and in 2010 with the Silver Lion at the 12<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennial of Architecture.

## **THE CCA**

The CCA is an international research centre and museum founded by Phyllis Lambert, on the conviction that architecture is a public concern. Based on its extensive collection, exhibitions, public programs, publications and research opportunities, the CCA is advancing knowledge, promoting public understanding, and widening thought and debate on architecture, its history, theory, practice, and role in society today.

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