

**For immediate release**

**HERZOG & DE MEURON: ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE MIND  
CCA TO EXHIBIT A «CHAMBER OF WONDERS» OF THE  
PRITZKER PRIZE-WINNING ARCHITECTS**

**Montréal, 22 October 2002** – The Swiss architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron (both born in 1950) have established themselves at the centre of architectural discourse by taking positions that are essentially artistic. They seem to wander imaginatively through the visual world, ranging over times and tastes, man-made and natural products, always with a primary interest in how things come to be made. In buildings like their acclaimed Tate Modern in London, they and the partners of their firm Harry Guggler and Christine Binswanger have explored the uncertain border between fact and fancy, prose and poem. In 2001 they were honoured for their overall achievement by the Pritzker Architecture Prize.

From 23 October 2002 to 6 April 2003, the Canadian Centre for Architecture will present the exhibition ***Herzog & de Meuron: Archaeology of the Mind***, organized for the CCA by guest curator Philip Ursprung. Acknowledging the importance of finding new ways to reveal the transformative process of architecture, Ursprung has collaborated with the architects themselves to establish a kind of imaginary museum within the CCA, where visitors may encounter an exhaustive display of materials from Herzog and de Meuron's archive and from related collections. The objects that mingle in this "archaeological" display include study models, books, photographs, toys, fossils, Chinese scholars' rocks, and highly significant works of contemporary art, all of which have informed the architects' thinking. In their interplay these materials create a perceptual model of the world that Herzog and de Meuron inhabit and try to change.

"Our models and experiments with materials are not works of art but rather a kind of accumulated waste." says Jacques Herzog. "Only in that respect do they have something in common with natural history, the theme of this exhibition: collected documents and bones or fossils are in that sense all of a kind — lifeless waste animated only by the beholder's distinctly creative and attentive gaze. Our last major exhibition in 1995, at the Centre

Pompidou, was entrusted to the artist Rémy Zaugg; this time we bow to the ideas of Kurt Forster, who initiated the project, and Philip Ursprung, curator, opening up our archives like a Wunderkammer and transferring them to the space of the CCA. Since architecture itself cannot be exhibited, we are forever compelled to find substitutes for it."

After its presentation at the CCA, ***Herzog & de Meuron: Archaeology of the Mind*** will travel to the Heinz Architectural Center, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, from 5 June to 7 September 2003, the Schaulager, Münchenstein/Basel, in spring 2004, and the Netherlands Institute of Architecture, Rotterdam, in fall 2004. A 460-page book, ***Herzog & de Meuron: Natural History***, edited by Philip Ursprung and designed by Lars Müller, will accompany the exhibition. The exhibition will also be the occasion for conferences to be held at the CCA between now and April 2003. The Architect and the Artist, on Wednesday 23 October at 7 pm, will present Jacques Herzog in conversation about the work of the architect and that of the artist. Another conference, entitled Artists on Architecture, will be presented on Thursday 31 October at 7 pm; artists having a different view of architecture will express their ideas about the built form.

"In ***Herzog & de Meuron: Archaeology of the Mind***, we have invited the architects to enter into a visual conversation with the museum," notes Philip Ursprung. "It is a dialogue that has produced new ideas, and that has brought us into vital contact with the processes and materials of this work. By alluding to the narrative structure of a 19th-century museum, the exhibition makes it seem as if some future archaeologist had set about organizing and contextualizing the architectural models in Herzog & de Meuron's enormous archive/laboratory."

According to Nicholas Olsberg, Director of the CCA, "It is apparent that Herzog & de Meuron look at the world from the threshold between the fanciful and the scientific, the playful and the reverent, the metaphysical and the material. Their built work seems to exist on a horizon, where junctures can be made to appear between surface and depth, subtleness and sublimity, metaphor and reality, flux and permanence. There Herzog & de Meuron find a kind of vital serenity, an angle of repose."

The exhibition encompasses several hundred of the architects' working models – many of them very small and some (the full-scale material models) enormous. The latter, which are crucial to the architects' design process and have never before been exhibited, "loom over the installation like the monumental fragments in archaeological museums," says Philip Ursprung, "helping to suggest a history of the architects' work."

Confronting these hundreds of models are objects of ethnography, palaeontology, and the fine and applied arts. From the extraordinary collections of the CCA come historic photographs, toys, and commercial catalogues. Also on view are fossils from the Musée du Séminaire de Sherbrooke, entomological collections from the Université de Montréal, and Chinese scholars' rocks. Works of art incorporated into the exhibition include a painting by Gerhard Richter and sculptures by Donald Judd, Robert Smithson, Joseph Beuys, and Alberto Giacometti.

### **Delving into the Archive**

By way of introduction, the exhibition begins with a single astonishing work: a large-scale panoramic photograph by artist Jeff Wall, taken at Herzog & de Meuron's building for the Dominus Winery in Yountville, California (1995–98). The work departs from Wall's usual style in recalling the appearance of a 19th-century pinhole photograph. It presents a vista of the vineyards and mountains, with the building itself barely visible in the far distance. In this way, Wall's image both evokes the building's relationship to its surroundings and reflects on the inability of photography to register more than a fragment of reality.

Visitors may then go on to see how Herzog & de Meuron have been able to combine various formal vocabularies by "tidying up" the leftovers of earlier buildings. They have pursued this process since their student days at ETH Zurich (where they transformed an attic) through their reworking of London's Bankside Power Station into the Tate Modern (1994–2000). Their projects can be read as a continuous redrawing of earlier ideas and buildings. Their view of architectural history is less concerned with radical innovation than with the uninterrupted, gradual transformation of existing structures.

Another aspect of the architects' work is their fascination with mundane sights and materials and how they may be changed into something startling. This sort of alchemy has been practised by artists such as Alberto Giacometti and Joseph Beuys – and also by pharmaceutical chemists. The motif of the spiral symbolizes such change for Herzog & de Meuron and appears throughout their work: from their very first proposal for the Basel Marktplatz (1979), where the sound of an underground river would be conveyed to the surface through spiralling tunnels, to the cast-iron curtain construction of the Schützenmattstrasse Apartment and Commercial Building (1984–93), the sinuous water-purification system of the Park for the Avenida Diagonal (1989), and the copper-wire wrapping of the Signal Box, Auf dem Wolf (1989–94).

The process of collecting and organizing materials has been at the heart of Herzog & de Meuron's work since their breakthrough project for the Ricola Storage Building in Laufen, Switzerland (1986–87), and it continues in such projects as the spectacular Dominus Winery, with its caged stones. The architects' keen interest in archives and in the compilation of series was a central topic of art in the 1970s, particularly among figures like Robert Smithson, Bernd and Hilla Becher, and Gerhard Richter, whose works will be exhibited as a contrast with the architects' projects.

A decisive step in Herzog & de Meuron's career was the incorporation of imprints, moulds, and photographs into their projects. Leading them from an analytical to an allegorical approach, this process radically modified their work and opened new territories for architecture. The exhibition includes materials relating to projects like the Ricola-Europe SA Production and Storage Building (1992–93), where this theme was first realized in full through the use of a repetitive silkscreened skin, after a photograph by Karl Blossfeldt. Also included are sample panels from the Eberswalde Technical School Library (1994–99), for which artist Thomas Ruff chose from his own archive the photographic images that were transferred to the surface of the building. Samples of these pre-fabricated concrete panels are juxtaposed with photographs by Ruff and his teachers, Bernd and Hilla Becher, as well as with various moulds and imprints from earlier historical periods.

There is a formal contrast in Herzog & de Meuron's work between spirals (with their organic symbolism) and the orthogonal forms of industrial mechanics. In projects like the Pilotengasse housing built in Wien-Aspern (1987–92), the double hull of the SUVA House extension (1988–93), the Railway Engine Depot, Auf dem Wolf (1989–95), and the new de Young Museum (1999, projected completion 2004), the architects have built up rationally ordered compositions from parts that retain a discrete individuality. In this way, Herzog & de Meuron present "the simultaneity of different occurrences" and allow the outside and inside to interpenetrate. Analogies in the world of painting and sculpture run from the works of Helmut Federle to the Minimalist sculptures of Donald Judd.

Leading back toward the introductory photograph by Jeff Wall, the exhibition presents materials on the themes of time and field, boundary and infinity. The architects have created a beautiful surface tension in recent works like the library of Cottbus Technical University (1998, projected completion 2003), the St. Jakob Park soccer stadium, commercial centre, and residence for the elderly (1996–2002), with its futuristic fiberglass surface, the framed brick surface of the Tate Modern, and Prada Tokyo (2000, projected completion 2003).

### **Guest Curator**

The guest curator for ***Herzog & de Meuron: Archaeology of the Mind*** is Philip Ursprung, an American-born scholar who is currently Science Foundation Professor for Art History in the Department of Architecture at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH Zurich). Educated at the University of Geneva and the Freie Universität Berlin (from which he received his Ph.D. in 1993), he taught in the art history department of the University of Geneva, collaborated with Kurt W. Forster at the Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture at ETH Zurich, and was a visiting professor of art history at the Hochschule der Künste Berlin before taking up his current post. He has published on contemporary art (Happenings, Viennese Actionism, Minimalism, Land Art, and video) and on the history of art and art criticism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He is co-author of *Kunstkritik: Die Sehnsucht nach der Norm* (1993), author of *Kritik und Secession, Das Atelier: Kunstkritik in Berlin zwischen 1890 und 1897* (1996), and co-editor of the exhibition catalogue *White Fire – Flying Man: Amerikanische Kunst in Basel 1959–1999* (1999). From 1990 to 1996 he was co-curator for contemporary art at the Kunsthalle Palazzo, Liestal, Switzerland, and in 1999 he was co-curator of the exhibition *White Fire – Flying Man* at the Kunstmuseum, Basel.

### **Accompanying publication**

Echoing an encyclopaedia rather as the exhibition mimics a museum, the 460-page publication ***Herzog & de Meuron: Natural History*** includes six portfolios presenting images of models and projects by Herzog & de Meuron and related works, introduced by interviews with the architects. More than twenty scholars, architects, and artists from various fields have contributed essays to the catalogue, including the book's editor Philip Ursprung, Carrie Asman, Kurt W. Forster, Georges Didi-Huberman, Peggy Phelan, Thomas Ruff, Rebecca Schneider, Adolf Max Vogt, and Jeff Wall.

**The CCA thanks St. Lawrence Cement, BMO Financial Group, and RBC Financial Group as well as Liberty Yogourt for their support of the exhibition and the accompanying public programs.**

**The CCA gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage, and the Conseil des arts de Montréal.**

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