

**communiqué /press release****For immediate release****Three CCA exhibitions explore how cities  
are shaped by their transportation systems  
in the exhibition *Cities in Motion***

**Montréal, 21 November 2000** – Presented concurrently at the Canadian Centre for Architecture from November 15, 2000 to April 1, 2001, three exhibitions united around the theme ***Cities in Motion*** show how modern transportation systems have changed the fabric and scale of cities over the past century and illustrate the challenge faced by architects today and in the future. ***Cities in Motion*** is a continuation of the debate on urban conditions and the evolution of the city which the CCA began in the spring of 1998 with ***Montréal métropole*** and recently pursued in ***Shaping the Great City: Modern Architecture in Central Europe 1890-1937***.

CCA director Kurt W. Forster explains the idea underlying ***Cities in Motion***: “The city is a key protagonist in the history of our times, the locus and generator of modern culture, and the central battleground of architectural ideas. ***Shaping the Great City***, a dynamic presentation of the contest between architectural ideas and ideas about the scale and form of the city in Central Europe, showed how the modern city was born at the beginning of the 20th century. ***Cities in Motion*** brings us back to North America to see how the modern city may remake itself in the century to come.”

Two exhibitions, ***Montréal mobile*** and ***Toys and Transport***, look backward to show—through building toys, model trains, illustrated books, drawings, commemorative pamphlets and the work of famous photographers—how modern transportation systems

have changed the fabric and scale of modern cities since the early 19th century. The third and largest component of the **Cities in Motion** program, entitled **New York: The CCA Competition for the Design of Cities**, offers a vision of the future. Taking a complex area of Manhattan as a case study, the CCA's first international Competition for the Design of Cities, in 1999, was an invitation for ideas from around the world on how to connect large cross-sections of the city's infrastructure. The **New York** exhibition presents spectacular and provocative models, computer animations, and the projects submitted by the five finalists. Shown in New York last fall, this exhibition has already generated debate, controversy and new thinking about urban design throughout the world.

### ***Montréal mobile***

The exhibition opens with a view of the Old Port of Montreal at the beginning of the 20th century, illustrating how the city, sitting at the junction between the head of the sea lanes and the end of the canal and rail connections to the Great Lakes, served as a great commercial warehouse. Here all modes of transport—shipping, rail and roadway—converge to form the basis of a city's economic life.

***Montréal mobile*** then highlights four critical developments in Montreal's transportation history: the Victoria and Jacques-Cartier bridges, the Ville-Marie Expressway, and the Métro. Maps, prints and stereoscopic photographs show the construction and later transformation of the great Victoria Bridge, from the 1850s to the turn of the century. The impact of the automobile is evoked through construction photographs of the Jacques-Cartier Bridge and the Ville-Marie Expressway, both of which made severe tears in the urban fabric. In fact the site of the Canadian Centre for Architecture helps heal the negative impact of the expressway. The final episode shows the city's search for an alternative means of high-speed urban transportation in the extraordinary graphics and publicity material created to excite enthusiasm for the subway system, built in the 1960s and 1970s.

### ***Toys and Transport***

Every new transportation link and every change in systems of urban mobility introduces new infrastructure to the urban landscape: massive cuts enabling railway tracks to converge at a terminal or junction; wide railyards that service suburban and metropolitan transit systems; the proliferation of bridges, ramps, elevated highways, freeway cuts, parking lots and even service stations. ***Toys and Transport*** draws from the CCA collection, presenting over 75 objects, among them historic toys, architectural photographs, illustrated books and pamphlets. It covers nearly 200 years of urban transformation brought about by the development of transportation systems.

The wide variety of items in this exhibition will appeal to visitors of all ages. Pamphlets and albums of printed views—often designed to promote or celebrate these achievements—tend to rejoice in their scale and dramatize it further, while construction toys domesticate them, make them manageable and accessible to children, and stimulate the imagination. Early photography reflects the same enthusiasm; indeed, much of it was commissioned by the railways themselves. More recent photographers, however, carefully observe and even exaggerate the disruptive effects of a city's transport infrastructure. Films by the Lumière brothers, Buster Keaton and Charles and Ray Eames reflect these changing perceptions.

The curator is Richard Ingersoll, professor in the Faculty of Architecture of Syracuse University, in Florence, and in the Facoltà di Architettura of Ferrara. He has written an essay in the form of a fable for ***Toys and Transport***, the illustrated 64-page exhibition catalogue.

### ***New York: The CCA Competition for the Design of Cities***

Launched in November 1998 by the International Foundation for the Canadian Centre for Architecture, this prestigious competition invited architects from around the world to submit solutions to a problem facing all major cities at the dawn of the 21st century: how to heal the gashes left by transportation structures that are vestiges from a bygone era of

economic activity. The site selected to illustrate this problem was an area in one of the world's great metropolises, New York.

Located on Manhattan's West Side, the area in question played a key role in the city's development during industrialization and the golden age of rail and sea transport. The result: an impressive number of railways, warehouses and abandoned factories. However, a number of recent developments, such as the construction of a major rail terminal and the expansion of the Jacob Javits Convention Centre, indicate that the city planners may want to turn this part of Manhattan into a vital new centre. The uniqueness and complexity of the site, given the many different elements it contains, render existing urban development formulas ineffective, both socially and economically. Competitors therefore were encouraged to go beyond convention in their thinking and to consider how to overcome the site's current isolation, spark new forms of urban experience, and vitalize those forms that may have been overlooked.

In February 1999, a jury of eight internationally respected architects and city planners, headed by the CCA's founding director and chair, Phyllis Lambert, selected five finalists among some one hundred nominations from around the world:

Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos, Van Berkel & Bos UN Studio, Amsterdam;

Peter Eisenman, Eisenman Architects, New York;

Thom Mayne, Morphosis, Santa Monica;

Cedric Price, Cedric Price Architects, Londres;

Jesse Reiser and Nanako Umemoto, Reiser + Umemoto RUR Architecture P.C., New York.

Announcing the Eisenman design as the jury's choice, Phyllis Lambert said, "The entries to the IFCCA Prize Competition have raised the entire level of discussion about the role of architecture in the city. Through their analyses, the competitors have established the terms in which we can think of the future of the city." It is the "future of the city" that the **New York** exhibition offers to visitors by showing the spectacular and provocative models

submitted by the five finalists. The exhibition is rounded out by the impressive computer animation produced for the Fondation Daniel Langlois by 4-éléments Studios, and the large-scale photographs of renowned photographer Joel Sternfeld.

The curator, Ralph Lerner, dean of the School of Architecture at Princeton University was director of the IFCCA Prize Competition for the Design of Cities.

### **Public Programs**

To complement ***Cities in Motion***, the CCA offers a wide variety of activities and public programs for all tastes and ages: guided tours of the exhibitions, school programs, creative workshops for the whole family, and Thursday evening public lectures and films. These programs help disseminate fascinating ideas about urban culture and infrastructure, the special energy of cities, and the possible shape of the metropolis in the future.

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