

# READING TORONTO

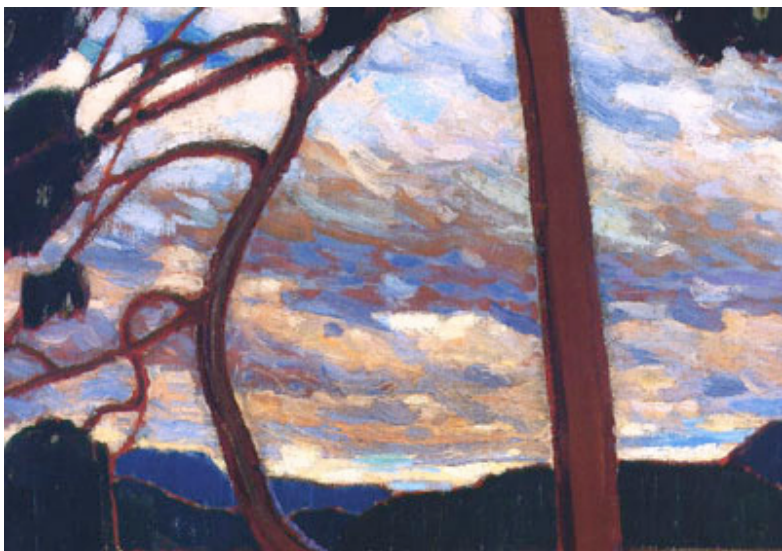
the city is a book with 100,000 million poems

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## 2005 10 11

### 157 Coxwell, Part 2

As odd as this may sound the crisis moment for 157 Coxwell was the choosing of its colour palette. I've evolved this little house by expanding on the resin-impregnated plywood and frame methodology of 1292 College Street. However Coxwell would be, for all intents and purposes, four floors as opposed to two. The experimenter in me had something to do with that height. I needed to push the limits of this sustainable wood-based minimal 'rain-screen' beyond the two floor norm. The resulting form: a tall proportional mass atop 4 steel pillars. The composition was already strong in drawing and model. Setting the form back into the two existing trees provided a balance to the rectilinear movement of the building while echoing the adjacent low-rise apartment building form. However colour was killing me. If I missed the colour balance the whole thing would be disastrous. Redesign of the mass might have to happen.



'Contextual dimension' is very important. It is that dimension beyond the two or three dimensions we are accustomed to. Atmospherics, landscape, prevailing winds, time, smell, sound, season, client needs, micro and macro culture, technology, economics, etc. Therefore, at the naked site I sat on the grass, the sidewalk, the adjacent park beside and behind, in the neighbour's yards to sketch, to contemplate and colour. No solution.

Constipated in thought I went to the art gallery to mope. Then it happened. No really it did. I'm sitting amongst 'The Group of Seven' paintings. Being amongst paintings, particularly these paintings are healing for me. With my face in my hands, I looked broken. I raised my eyes to the paintings and then it hit me: the colours of the sky, the flora and fauna. The various hues, depths, tones, intensities and responses over the day and seasons. That is what I had been missing. True colour is never alone; it is a tapestry of ever changing and yet knowable themes. (See the above painting segment) Time to play. If I could marry the distribution of colour within building's intrinsic form, this composition just might begin to sing.

#### Think Toronto

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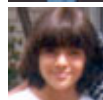
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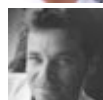
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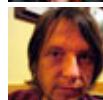
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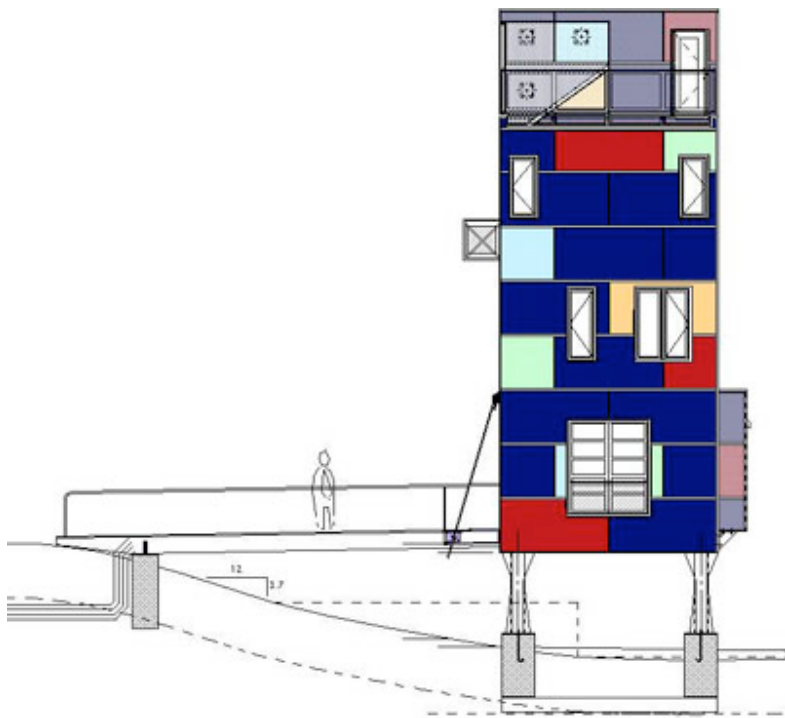
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Designing for myself is more involved. I carry various personalities at any given moment: caregiver, cultural survivor, entrepreneur, lover, artist, geek and athlete. Bringing into reality my inner considerations can often lead to mental short-circuiting. At those times, in particular, I make special efforts to engage with the creative energy of others: cross-pollination. The AGO, other galleries, al&d library and gallery, OCAD, the ROM, Hart House reading room, sketching there (one of my favourite things to do), attend poetry readings, write poetry, design models and art with school children, coral concerts, lectures, specifications analysis, visiting spaces in the city and in other cities. My favorite 'active-pause' is to sit with paintings, drawings and sculpture. As it happens cities are living paintings for me. The process of 157 Coxwell, the house, is a reflection of this personal muse – even though it is simply constructed.



[\[email this story\]](#) Posted by Rohan Walters on 10/11 [Comment Here](#) (1)

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The Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture  
The World is Flat  
Voltaire's Bastards  
Google News  
Huffington Report  
Dailykos

## Toronto Galleries

Allan Gardens  
Archives of Ontario  
R.C. Archdiocese of Toronto  
Art Gallery of Mississauga  
Art Gallery of Ontario  
Art Gallery of York University  
Art Metropole  
Bata Shoe Museum  
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Blackwood Gallery  
Bradley Museum  
Creative Spirit Art Centre  
CBC Museum  
Campbell House  
Museum of Carpets and Textiles  
CNE Archives  
Casa Loma  
Centennial College  
Colborne Lodge  
Collections and Conservation Centre  
David Dunlap Observatory  
Gallery TPW  
George Brown College Archives  
Gibson House Museum  
Glendon Gallery  
Goethe-Institute  
Grange  
HVACR Heritage Centre Canada  
Halton Region Museum  
Hamilton Artists Inc.  
Historic Fort York  
Historic Zion Schoolhouse  
Hockey Hall of Fame  
Hart House, University of Toronto  
The Law Society  
MacKenzie House  
Market Gallery  
Mercer Union  
Metropolitan Toronto Zoo  
Museum of Childhood  
National Ballet  
Ontario Association of Art Galleries  
Ontario Crafts Council  
Ontario Jewish Archives  
Ontario Science Centre  
Power Plant-Contemporary Art Gallery  
Royal Canadian Military Institute  
Royal Ontario Museum  
Ryerson Polytechnical University Archives  
Salvation Army  
Scarborough Historical Museum  
Sharon Temple Museum  
Spadina Museum  
Textile Museum of Canada  
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