

# METROPOLIS

ARCHITECTURE AND  
DESIGN AT ALL SCALES  
March 2020

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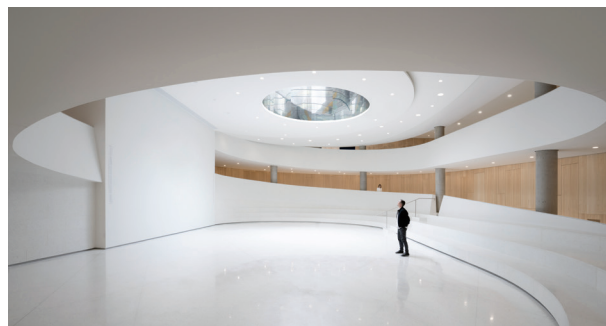
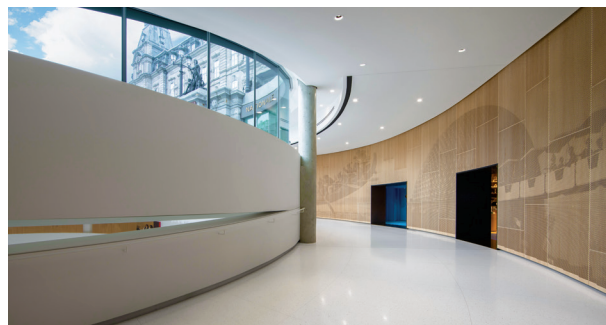
OKLAHOMA CONTEMPORARY  
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Clockwise from far left: A model of the new parliamentary complex in Quebec City illustrates the relationship between the new and old buildings; the 1886 structure towers over the subterranean pavilion; inside, a ramp connects various rooms for legislators and the public; an oculus lets in light and points toward the historic parliament.



## ARCHITECTURE

### Underground Nation

When Montreal practice Provencher\_Roy was selected to design a new visitor center and entrance for Quebec's historic Parliament Building, the architects knew that just adding an external pavilion to the storied site was not going to pass muster: The team was adamant that any additions to Eugène-Étienne Taché's 1886 structure not interfere with the original.

"Instead of building this pavilion far out front, we decided the entrance should value the initial architecture and its heritage," says Nicolas Demers-Stoddart, a partner at Provencher\_Roy.

The solution, then, was to go underground.

From the new addition's glass doors, a white circular ramp sweeps out, lined by a wood wall with symbols and figures of democracy that reflect Quebec's diversity, including First Nations

and women leaders. It also strings together commission rooms and a range of public spaces, encircling a new atrium topped by an oculus that looks up toward the Parliament Building's tower.

"We chose a language and an architecture that was very minimalist in terms of its materiality. There are really just two textures, white and wood," says Demers-Stoddart. "Because it's underground, using a lot of white reflective surfaces allowed us to amplify the feeling of being in a very light space."

The CAD \$65 million, 55,000-square-foot pavilion is gaining LEED certification, but more importantly, with its array of classrooms, viewing galleries, and pedagogical spaces, it succeeds in providing residents with greater access to their nation's political workings, both literally and metaphorically. —*Rita Lobo*