Reading the City: Montreal and its neighbourhoods

Fall 2013 ARCH 541 Selected Topics in Architecture Section 002  
*Reading the city: Montreal and its neighbourhoods*  
3 credits

Mondays 10:30 am to 12:30 pm  
Room 420, Macdonald-Harrington Building  
except for walking tours – departure points listed in schedule

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all course information is also available on MyCourses

**Course Content**

To intervene, an architect has to understand; to understand one has to know how to read the city. This course is intended to develop both the capacity to read and an understanding of the architecture of Montreal and its context at the level of the neighbourhood. The emphasis will be on the evolution of Montreal architecture as seen from the sidewalk – seven of the thirteen sessions are walking tours.

The class is a lecture-based course - both in class and in situ - that will seek to make the city real for a generation more comfortable in the virtual. The intent is that the history of the city reveals itself over the course of the lectures and visits. Maps from every era will serve as the thread that binds in the course – they will demonstrate the successive layers of construction of the city. Images will help the student understand the form, volume and materials used in each period as well as changes to the character and nature of neighbourhoods.

Significant emphasis will be placed on buildings of the last twenty-five years in the course so as to stress the importance of intervention in the practice of Montreal architects. The course is intended to make students aware of the ‘Montrealness’ of the city.

**Learning Outcomes**

Having completed the course, the student should:

- understand how Montreal has evolved over the course of its history
- understand the architectural intentions, the forms and materials that characterise the different eras; the socio-cultural context of those eras and how they manifest themselves in different neighbourhoods
- be aware of the post-1945 era and the changes in Montreal architecture in the latter half of the 20th century – most particularly the relationship between contemporary architecture and its environment

**Instructional method**

Each session will present one or more neighbourhoods either in class in a lecture format or in a walking tour which will start from a designated metro station or intersection.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>week</th>
<th>location</th>
<th>subject</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 Sept.</td>
<td>room 420</td>
<td>Introduction / McGill Campus</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 Sept.</td>
<td>métro Champ-de-mars</td>
<td>Old Montreal / La ville fortifiée</td>
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<td>23 Sept.</td>
<td>métro Place d’Armes</td>
<td>The faubourgs: St. Laurent and des Récollets The first suburbs</td>
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<td>30 Sept.</td>
<td>room 420</td>
<td>Quartier Latin / The institutional city How to research Montreal neighbourhoods</td>
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<td>7 Oct.</td>
<td>métro Sherbrooke</td>
<td>Plateau Mont-Royal / The dense city</td>
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<td>exit rue de Rigaud</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>15 Oct.</td>
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<td>assignment 1 due</td>
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<td>21 Oct.</td>
<td>métro Pie-IX</td>
<td>Maisonneuve / The deliberate gesture</td>
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<td>exit boul. Pie-IX est</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 Oct.</td>
<td>room 420</td>
<td>St. Jacques / Ste. Marie / Workers’ neighbourhood How to research neighbourhoods post-1945</td>
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<td>4 Nov.</td>
<td>Peel and René-Lévesque</td>
<td>Downtown / Icons and their roles</td>
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<td>north-west corner</td>
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<td>11 Nov.</td>
<td>Crit Room 1 TBC</td>
<td>presentations in class – assignment 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 Nov.</td>
<td>métro Côte-des-Neiges</td>
<td>Côte des Neiges / The village</td>
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<td>exit Côte-des-Neiges est</td>
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<td>25 Nov.</td>
<td>room 420</td>
<td>Westmount / Outremont / 20th century suburbs</td>
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<td>2 Dec.</td>
<td>room 420</td>
<td>Rosemont / The post-war neighbourhood</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>métro Lionel-Groulx</td>
<td>St. Henri / the city below the hill</td>
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<td>3 Dec.</td>
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<td>assignment 3 due</td>
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Required Readings
The following articles and essays will be sent as pdfs by e-mail to the class on the Friday before
the weekly Monday meeting. Links to useful websites will also be sent.


16 Sept. Clay, Grady, “Crossing the American grain with Vesalius, Geddes and Jackson: the cross
Section as a learning tool”, in Everyday America: cultural landscape studies after JB Jackson,

23 Sept Linteau, Paul-André, “Factors in the Development of Montreal” in Montreal Metropolis, 1880-1930,

30 Sept. Fournier, Marcel and Véronique Rodriguez, “An Age Rich in Miracles” in Montreal Metropolis,


4 Nov. Lortie, André, The 60s: Montreal Thinks Big, p. 95-102, Montreal, Canadian Centre for Architecture /


25 Nov. van Nus, Walter, “A Community of Communities; Suburbs in the Development of “Greater

Assignments
Assignments will be evaluated according to comprehension of the question, quality of research
and quality of analysis.

Assignment 1 – analysis of an ensemble of buildings
due Tuesday 15 October 2013 – submit a pdf by e-mail no later than 2:00 pm
Students will select one of a series of building sets – typically part or all of a city block– and will
produce a two-page description and sidewalk analysis of the ensemble, as well as a separate
one-page research summary. Descriptions should include a very succinct summary of the quartier
for context and the sidewalk analysis should address when, how and why the buildings were built.
Maps and images should be included within the two pages.

Assignment 2 – presentation in class Monday 11 November 2013
Pairs of students will be asked to identify, observe and analyze recent interventions in the area of
the six to ten block neighbourhood around one of the building ensembles studied in Assignment 1.
A maximum ten-minute long, 20-screen presentation should include observation, analysis and a
reading of the intentions of two or three projects built post-1945 in that area.
Assignment 3 – termpaper: analysis of a neighbourhood
due Tuesday 3 December 2013 – submit a pdf by e-mail no later than 2:00 pm
Students will select a neighbourhood and will write a 2500-word illustrated in-depth analysis of the patterns and layers of that Montreal neighbourhood. This analysis should pay particular attention to public spaces, to the street patterns and to the influence and impact of recent projects on the character and nature of that area.

Evaluation
1. attendance at all sessions – in class and walking tours 10%
2. a written analysis of an ensemble of buildings in a particular neighbourhood 25%
3. presentation of recent interventions to the same neighbourhood 25%
4. termpaper 40%

All assignments must be submitted to complete the course. Late submissions will be penalized.

In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

Please refer to www.mcgill.ca/integrity/studentguide/ for guidelines on how to avoid plagiarism.

Bibliography

History of Montreal, its architecture and its architects


Germain, Annick and Damaris Rose, Montréal The Quest for a Metropolis, Chichester, Wiley, 2000.

Gournay, Isabelle, Ernest Cormier and the Université de Montréal, Montreal, Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1990.

Grénier, Cécile and Joshua Wolfe, Discover Montreal, Montreal, Libre Expression, 1990.


Lambert, Phyllis and Alan Stewart, Opening the Gates of Eighteenth-Century Montreal, Montreal, Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1992.


Marsan, Jean-Claude, Montreal in evolution: Historical analysis of the development of Montreal’s architecture and urban environment, Montreal, Méridien, 1990.


**Periodicals**

for 1950s/1960s/1970s Architecture Bâtiment Construction

for 1980s to 2013 ARQ

Canadian Architect

Azure, Formes, Esquisses

Continuité www.actionpatrimoine.ca/continuite/collection.htm

**Libraries**

Blackader-Lauterman

Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1920 rue Baile, open Wed. to Fri.

(by appointment 514-939-7011 or e-mail ref@cca.qc.ca)

Université de Montréal – Faculté de l'aménagement, 2940 Côte Ste. Catherine

Grande Bibliothèque, 475 de Maisonneuve East

Heritage Montreal documentation centre, 100 Sherbrooke East, Su. 0050

(by appointment only 514-286-2662)
Websites

City of Montreal
www.ville.montreal.qc.ca

Old Montreal
www.vieux.montreal.qc.ca/eng/accueila.htm

Master plans for Montreal boroughs
www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/masterplan

Montreal archives
Brève histoire de Montréal by Paul-André Linteau is available online in both English and French - the best short history of Montreal illustrated with images and drawings from 20 different Montreal archives
www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/montrealistes/500ans > select English

Montréal Municipalité et Métropole : 1920-1960 301 photographies
www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/archives/seriez/

Databases on Montreal’s built heritage
www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/patrimoineurbain > select bases de données
includes:
Grand répertoire du patrimoine bâti de Montréal built heritage directory
L’ensemble des propriétés municipales de Montréal
Le patrimoine du Vieux-Montréal
La toponymie

L’histoire des grandes rues montréalaises
www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/grandesrues

Office de consultations publics de Montréal
for information on projects currently in public consultation and archives of projects from 2002-2013:
www.ocpm.qc.ca

Réalisons Montréal : Montréal ville UNESCO de design
Design Montréal – particularly for Cahiers des bonnes pratiques en design
www.realisonsmontreal.com/

Site officiel du Mont-Royal
See Les inventaires for information on buildings on the flanks of Mount Royal
www1.ville.montreal.qc.ca/siteofficieldumontroyal/front

Québec
Repertoire du patrimoine culturel de Québec
Province-wide repertory
www.patrimoine-culturel.gouv.qc.ca

STM
Maps and information
www.stm.info

and Montreal by Metro, the unofficial site – metro station architecture
www.metrodemontreal.com

McGill University
Blackader Library: include (among others):
   Canadian Architect and Builder http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/
   Hospital Architecture of Montreal http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/hospitals/

Walter Hitschfeld Geographic Information Centre
   Montreal maps online
   http://www.mcgill.ca/library/find/maps/carto/

Canadian Architecture Collection
   for archives of Montreal architects including biographies
   http://cac.mcgill.ca/home/cover.htm

Virtual McGill
   for information on McGill buildings
   http://cac.mcgill.ca/campus/

Université de Montréal
   www.bib.umontreal.ca/AM/ressources/architecture.html

Bibliothèque et archives nationales du Québec
   primary resource for online access to historic Montreal maps
   www.banq.qc.ca/collections/cartes_plans/ressources_BAnQ/doc_cartographiques/index.html
   direct link to list of insurance maps
   www.banq.qc.ca/collections/cartes_plans/ressources_BAnQ/doc_cartographiques/doc_assurance/

Heritage Montreal
   http://www.heritagemontreal.org/en/
   and website on 13 different neighbourhoods available in English
   www.memorablemontreal.com

Canadian Centre for Architecture
   www.cca.qc.ca

McCord Museum
   particularly: online version of Montreal Points of View permanent exhibition
   Notman Collection
   www.mccord-museum.qc.ca

DOCOMOMO
   Architecture moderne au Québec et ailleurs – includes list of publications and downloadable audioguides on Expo 67 and Modernist Montreal
   www.docomomoquebec.ca/
Reading the City: Montreal and its neighbourhoods

The following are included for reference and are available in French only:


Communauté urbaine de Montréal, Service de la planification du territoire, Répertoire d’architecture traditionnelle sur le territoire de la Communauté urbaine de Montréal, in 10 volumes, Montréal, 1981-1990.


Leduc, Maryse and Denys Marchand, Les maisons de Montréal, Ministère des Affaires culturelles et Ville de Montréal, 1992.


