



# Patkau Architects

EXCELLENCE IN ARCHITECTURE



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EXCELLENCE

Based out of Vancouver, British Columbia, Patkau Architects is an award-winning architecture and design research studio founded by John and Patricia Patkau. Since its inception in 1979, the firm has developed a diverse portfolio of projects for a wide array of clients. From residential developments to

large metropolitan libraries, Patkau Architects are committed to delivering the highest quality design and planning services.

"We started our practice when we were extremely young architects in Edmonton, Alberta," says John Patkau, Co-Founder and



Daegu Gosan Public Library International Architectural Competition, Daegu, Republic of Korea

# NCE IN ARCHITECTURE

one of four Principals currently within the firm. "Which at the time was, and has often been a booming economy, and it was a great place to get started as architects because there was work everywhere."

After operating for several years in Alberta,

Patkau Architects relocated their headquarters due to economic circumstances, and in search of a more fitting locale for their practice.

"In 1983 and '84, there was a big recession in the oil-based economy that drove our work,"

*ARTlab, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Picture: James Dow and Patkau Architects*



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Congratulations PatKau Architects on receiving the Governor General's Medal for Architecture for the Tula House, it was a pleasure working with you on this project.

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says John. "At that time we relocated to the west coast to Vancouver. Principally because we realized the type of practice that we wanted - which was aimed at very special projects, extremely high-end, well-done projects- we needed to be located in a larger community. And also, we had a great personal love of the landscape of the Pacific Northwest, so it really was the right spot for us"

With over 30 years of experience and success to their credit, the firm employs a crew of architects who are committed to achieving the highest standard in their industry. John states "The culture is very much based on

striving for architectural excellence."

"We have a long track record of delivering high quality projects," he adds. "And a lot of depth of experience given that we've been practicing for over three decades. The team we have here is a team that's been working together for almost that long, so it's an extremely experienced and confident group."

In the selection process of their projects, John emphasises caution and the need to align their goals with those of the project, ensuring the highest quality of work. "We're in some ways very careful about the projects



*ARTlab, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba (Picture: Patkau Architects)*



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we undertake," he says. "We try as much as possible to make sure the ambitions of the project and our ambitions as architects are coincident, but it's really an office which is committed to going the extra mile to achieve very high standards."

## AWARD RECOGNITION

The firm focuses primarily on projects which serve an important role in their respective communities across Canada and the United States. "We tend to specialize in cultural and educational buildings," John explains. "Things like public libraries, art galleries,

universities and research buildings."

Patkau Architects have completed projects such as La Grande Bibliothèque du Québec in Montreal, Québec, which won the firm multiple awards including the Mies Crown Hall Architecture Prize for an Outstanding Project in 2014. In Toronto, Ontario, the company recently completed construction of both the Goldring Centre for High Performance Sport for the University of Toronto, as well as the Fort York National Historic Site Visitors Centre.



*Linear House, Salt Spring Island, British Columbia (Picture: James Dow and Patkau Architects)*

Regarding current projects in development, John says, "Here in British Columbia, we're working on two art museums. A private art museum called the Audain Art Museum, and a public art museum called Presentation House Gallery. Both of those are very ambitious cultural projects."

Aside from their cultural developments, Patkau Architects utilize their talents within the residential development sector as well. "We occasionally do houses," John explains. "And typically those houses are on very interesting natural sites and are for clients who are looking for something unusual. Something that isn't the norm."

In 2014, Patkau Architects was awarded the Governor General's Medal in Architecture for their work on The Tula House. Built amidst a breathtaking landscape, this stunning development is situated on a remote island which overlooks the Pacific Ocean. The design of the structure reflects the irregularities of its surroundings, crafting a dynamic home environment while retaining a natural atmosphere. The project proved challenging due to its location, though Patkau's unique vision and dedication to quality prevailed.

"Our house projects tend to always be fairly extreme," says John. "And The Tula House






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*Linear House, Salt Spring Island, British Columbia (Picture: James Dow and Patkau Architects)*



*Fort York National Historic Site Visitors Centre, Toronto, Ontario (Picture: Tom Arban Photography Inc.)*

is an example of that. It's a house located on quite a remote island, constructed out of very challenging construction materials; concrete and steel. In that remote location, it was quite a challenge, but it was executed to an extremely high level. So it's that kind of very unusual circumstance in which we

sometimes do houses."

## FINDING THE RIGHT PROJECTS

Teamwork and communication are the staples of any thriving operation, and it's no different at Patkau Architects. John points out



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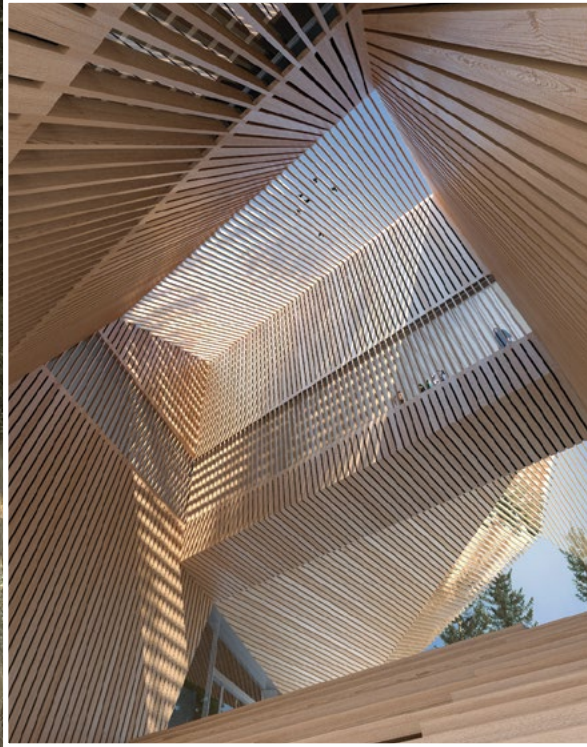
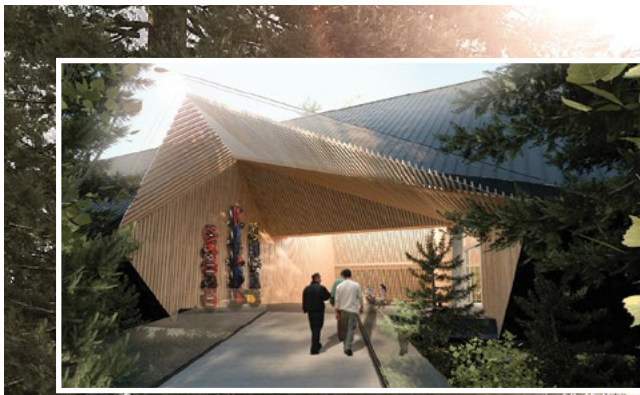
that the firm is well-versed in working with separate architecture firms to complete projects, especially in the case of developments away from home. "Because most of the projects we undertake are not in our geographic location, we are often working in partnership with other architects who deal with the needs of being on the ground where the project is located," he says.

"The result is that we typically work on projects that are larger than would be indicated by the size of our office," says John. "We typically focus on the conceptual design and design development aspects of the project, and

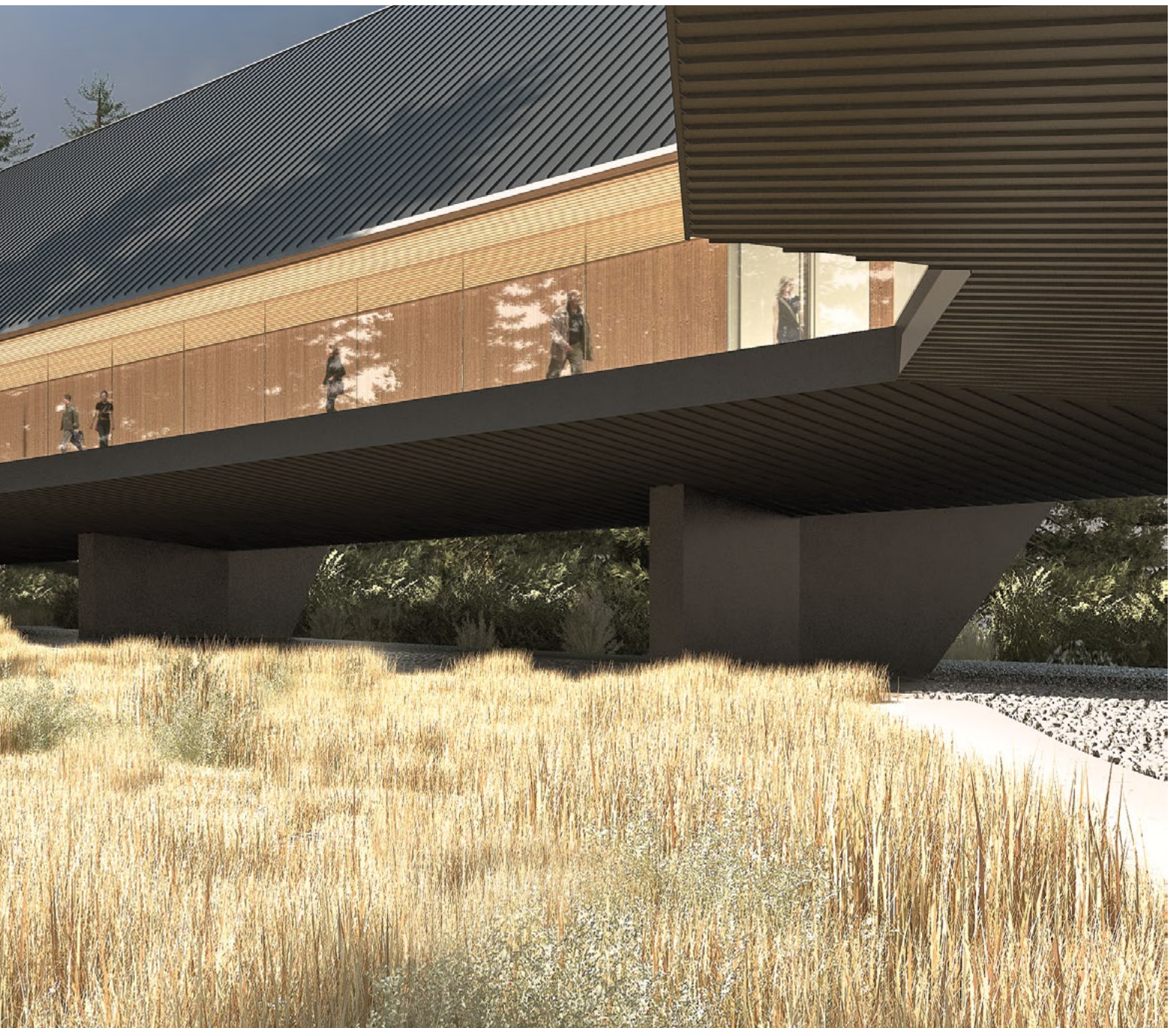
work with the local architects who take care of the construction phases and administration of the project. We're very experienced at working with other firms, and we're very good at working in a great diversity of communities from coast to coast."

Moving forward, Patkau Architects aim to continue working within the institutional sector and designing culturally significant buildings. The firm remains committed to seeking out unique projects to showcase their innovative design abilities.

"We are very focused on cultural projects and projects that have an important role in soci-



*Presentation House Gallery, North Vancouver, British Columbia (Rendering by Patkau Architects)*



*Audain Art Museum, Whistler, British Columbia (expected completion in late 2015)(Rendering by Patkau Architects)*

ety; museums, libraries, things of that nature." John explains. "We feel that those are places where we can contribute well, but we're also looking for unusual projects. We really thrive on eccentric opportunities which allow us to do things which are -if not unprecedented- highly unusual. Finding those opportunities is something we are really intent on."

"The world is always changing and bringing new challenges," says John. "For us, the first challenge, and the most difficult, is getting a good match between the client and our firm. Finding the opportunities which are right for us."

