

Press Release

Embargo until Monday, October 6, 2004 at 10 a.m.

**Brilliant Success for the
10th Commerce Design Montréal Contest:
*Announcement of the 2004 SAQ People's Choice Award and 10th
Anniversary Award winners***

Montréal, Wednesday, October 6, 2004, 10 a.m. — At a press conference at City Hall today, Commerce Design Montréal wrapped up its 10th edition by announcing the winners of the 2004 SAQ People's Choice Award and the 10th Anniversary Award. Both distinctions are decided by members of the public, who showed tremendous enthusiasm this year for what is already a very popular contest. Montréal Mayor Gérald Tremblay was proud to announce “a phenomenal level of participation in the contest: this summer, 58,725 people voted. That's 20,000 more than in 2003, which was already a record year.”

To mark its tenth anniversary, Commerce Design Montréal organized not one, but two People's Choice contests this year: For the first, voters were asked to choose from the 2004 Jury Prize winners, and for the second, to choose their favourite from all the winning businesses in the contest's 10-year run.

The **2004 SAQ People's Choice Award** went to **Adonis**, designed by **Les architectes Boutros + Pratte**. The winner perfectly reflects the contest's impact and mission: It is an independent grocery store, in an outlying borough (Saint-Laurent), that decided to invest in design as a way of enhancing its surroundings and standing out from its competitors. Clearly a winning decision!

Votes for the **10th Anniversary Award** were cast only through the Commerce Design Website, and the winner was **Les Halles de la gare** (1998), designed by **CAMDI Design** and **CDID Design**. This huge food fair, a well-organized and welcoming expression of abundance, has been a popular favourite year after year.

Two lucky voters were drawn at random and have won a trip for two to one of Air Canada's European destinations and \$2,000 spending money. They are David Méthot, of Montréal, for the 2004 SAQ People's Choice Award, and Marie-Lou Galarneau, of Montréal, for the 10th Anniversary Award.

A 10-year success story

Aside from the exceptional public participation, Mayor Tremblay had another reason to be happy: the success of the contest itself. “With close to \$7 million in public and private-sector investment over the course of 10 years, Commerce Design Montréal is clearly an extraordinary success that has reached its objectives and generated real benefits,” he pointed out.

For instance:

- The contest has created a ripple effect among merchants, who are increasingly seeing that good design pays off: 46% have reported an upswing in the number of customers, 40% say that their sales have gone up, and 51% note that they are attracting a new clientele.

- The contest has expanded the market for design professionals: 80% of winning designers say that they have gained new business contacts as a result of Commerce Design Montréal, and 46% say that these contacts have led to contracts.
- Finally, the contest has also sparked public interest in design. The promotional campaign for the winning businesses reaches over 12 million people every year, 2 million of them in other provinces, the United States and Europe. The number of voters in the SAQ People's Choice Award contest reached a new record of over 58,000 this year, as compared with just 3,000 when it was started in 1998.

In addition to its indisputable contribution to improving Montrealers' environment, Commerce Design Montréal has raised the city's international profile, since winning the Outstanding Achievement Award from the International Downtown Association and now that it is exporting its concept to the United States (New York) and France (Saint-Étienne and Lyon). In fact, two of the guests at the ceremonies were Tim Tompkins, President of the Times Square Alliance (Design Times Square, New York) and François Jamond, Vice-president in charge of culture for greater Saint-Étienne (Commerce Design Saint-Étienne, France).

On the strength of this success, and wishing to share their experience, the contest organizers launched three publications: **10+1 Designers**, with portraits of the 11 design and architecture firms that have won the most awards since the contest was founded in 1995; **Commerce Design Montréal 1995-2004**, a 10-year report presenting the contest and its impact; and **Commerce+design : les clés du succès**, a handbook for people thinking of opening or redesigning a business.

Commerce Design Montréal is ending its first decade in style, with an international symposium bringing together a number of new design cities to share their design promotion strategies, programs and policies. Naturally enough, the symposium is entitled *New Design Cities*, and has its own Website: ville.montreal.qc.ca/colloquedesign

So after these 10 triumphant years, where does Commerce Design Montréal go from here? The success of this original experiment and all the benefits for Montréal as a young design metropolis are encouraging the organizers to consider ways of extending this tool for promoting design and architectural quality to new dimensions of Montrealers' lives.

The details of this renewal and repositioning will be announced soon. In the meantime, designers and merchants are invited to keep contest organizers informed of their new achievements by writing to info@commercedesignmontreal.qc.ca

The 2004 Commerce Design Montréal contest and its partners

The Commerce Design Montréal contest is an initiative of the City of Montréal, carried out in partnership with the Québec government. Produced by the Société de développement de Montréal, the contest is supported by the Association professionnelle des designers d'intérieur du Québec, the Fonds d'études et de recherches en design intérieur de l'Est, the Ordre des architectes du Québec and the Regroupement des centres-villes et des artères commerciales. Since 1995, it has been rewarding Montréal businesspeople for investing in the overall design quality of their business premises, with the help of skilled professionals.

Commerce Design Montréal is produced with financial support under the Agreement on the Cultural Development of Montréal. The City's partners in the 2004 edition are the Québec government – ministère des Affaires municipales, du Sport et du Loisir, ministère de la Culture et des Communications, ministère du Développement économique et régional et de la Recherche; MétromédiaPlus and the STM; the SAQ; Air Canada; Hydro-Québec; Tourisme Montréal; and the Montréal International Interior Design Show.

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Source and contact

Source: Commerce Design Montréal

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Appendix: short descriptions of award winners

SAQ People's Choice Award

Adonis (cd - photo 1)

2001 Sauvé West

(514) 382-8606

Design: Les architectes Boutros + Pratte, (514) 866-1149

Like a covered marketplace, dotted with stalls, ringed by small shops and opening outward: a Middle-Eastern food megastore with the daring to create a downtown-type centre just where the city is starting to thin out. An elegant modernist façade and sunny terrace give onto the street; parking has been pushed underground or tucked away; the delivery area sends trucks down a ramp, the building is lower in the rear and it is landscaped to blend in with the residential neighbourhood.

10th Anniversary Award

Halles de la gare (1998) (cd - photo 2; Photo: Jean-François Lenoir)

895 De La Gauchetière West

(514) 399-5430

Design: CAMDI Design, (514) 845-3000

and CDID Design, (514) 842-4321

A huge and user-friendly food fair in the midst of arrivals and departures, the Halles de la Gare brings together a variety of businesses while allowing them to retain their individual identities. There's something for every taste, and merchants compete with each other to entice passers-by. The unified feeling comes from the lighting treatment and the very successful ceiling-mounted signage, along with traffic zones marked on the floor. It's a delightful sunny interlude at the junction of the railways and underground Montréal.