

Carrot City: Designing for Urban Agriculture

Exhibit: February 25th – April 30th 2009 – *Free Admission*

Opening reception: March 3rd 2009

Design Exchange, Toronto

www.dx.org

Exhibition Overview

This exhibition will show how the design of cities and buildings is enabling the production of food in the city. It will explore the role that creative design professionals have in relation to the food system of cities, and the impact that agricultural issues will have on the design of urban spaces and buildings as society addresses the issues of a more sustainable pattern of living. The focus will be on how the increasing interest in growing food within the city, supplying food locally, and food security in general is changing urban design and built form. The exhibition will show projects in Toronto and other Canadian cities, illustrating how they are changing cities and buildings. It will also include relevant international examples to show how ideas from other countries can be integrated into the Canadian experience. The exhibition will contain a mix of realised projects and speculative design proposals that illustrate the potential for future design that focuses on food issues.



Content

The exhibition will explore a number of issues related to the design for urban agriculture, through a series of case studies, and products and systems. These will be works principally in Canada but also including other relevant projects. It will include a balance between selected projects that were recently completed or are currently under way, and visionary speculative ideas projects by professional designers as well as students. In addition to the projects, a range of products will illustrate technologies and systems that are innovating food production approaches in urban contexts. Some of the main themes to be featured include:

- What is the place of food in the city?
- How are “waste” spaces being transformed by food projects?
- What are the implications on materials, technologies and structures?

The content will include boards with images and explanatory text, models, installations, and videos.

Background

The role of architecture in food production, distribution and related issues is a new area of study, despite the historical importance of food in cities. The emerging alternative food movement has only just begun to engage with the possible contributions that designers and the design process can provide to it. The built environment and food policy meet at the point where architects and landscape architects incorporate farmers' markets, greenhouses, edible landscapes, living walls, permeable paving, green roofs, and community gardens into architectural programs. Such examples of the connections between food issues and built form have the potential to transform not only food production and distribution, but basic assumptions about the programming required in the design of buildings and urban spaces.

Urban agriculture and food security have attracted considerable interest recently in Toronto and in other cities. Lectures, presentations, exhibits and publications on these subjects have increased significantly in the last few years. These activities include the Edible City exhibit at the Netherlands Architecture Institute, food-related activities in the London Architecture Festival, and several books such as *Hungry City: How Food Shapes Our Lives* and *Continuous Productive Urban Landscapes*. In addition, the "Actions" exhibition, currently running at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, features gardening as one of its four focus areas. The curators of this exhibition at the DX organized a symposium entitled "The Role of Food and Agriculture in the Design and Planning of Buildings and Cities," held in May 2008 at Ryerson University in Toronto, attracting considerable attention.

Curators

The curators for this exhibition are Mark Gorgolewski and June Komisar from the Department of Architectural Science and Joe Nasr from the Centre for Studies in Food Security at Ryerson University. The project is attracting considerable interest from groups interested in food security and design issues in Canada.

- Dr Mark Gorgolewski – Professor, Department of Architectural Science, Ryerson University – mgorgo@ryerson.ca
- Dr June Komisar – Associate Professor, Department of Architectural Science, Ryerson University – jkomisar@ryerson.ca
- Dr Joe Nasr – Associate, Centre for Studies in Food Security, Ryerson University; and co-coordinator, MetroAg – Alliance for Urban Agriculture – inasr@ryerson.ca



Location - Design Exchange

The Design Exchange (DX) is Canada's design centre and design museum with a mission to promote the value of design, which we achieve by presenting programs such as exhibitions, lectures, workshops, education programs and research. The DX is an internationally recognized non-profit educational organization committed to promoting greater awareness of design as well as the indispensable role it plays in fostering economic growth and cultural vitality. The DX recognizes design and innovation as key elements in the cultural and economic fabric of our lives. The DX is located in the original historic Toronto Stock Exchange building at 234 Bay St., Toronto. More information about current programming, exhibits and membership opportunities can be found on our website at www.dx.org. Contact: Claudine Crangle, Director of Marketing, Sponsorship & Public Relations. 416.216.2134. claudine@dx.org.