

# TORONTO IS AWESOME

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**TORONTO WAS AWESOME: HERITAGE TORONTO AWARDS STOP AND LOOK AT WHAT'S RIGHT WITH THE CITY'S HERITAGE AND HISTORY SCENE**

Our interviews with high profile folks about what makes Toronto awesome.

POSTED SEPTEMBER 25, 2013 BY **JOEL LEVY** CATEGORY: **TORONTO WAS AWESOME SERIES**

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Heritage Toronto is a charitable arms-length agency of the City of Toronto established in 1949 to promote a greater appreciation for the city's rich architectural, cultural, archaeological and natural heritage. Through partnerships with local community groups and volunteers, Heritage Toronto provides city-wide programs and services.

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Photo: Papermill Tower – After

By Nicole Wetmore

Preserving Toronto's unique heritage and history has been a difficult task – from the uncertain fate of the Honest Ed's and Sam The Record Man signs to concerns about façadism, rarely do we get a chance to highlight and celebrate all the things that are **right** with our city's heritage and history scene!

On Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, **Heritage Toronto** takes a moment to look at exactly that – the things that are

**CATEGORIES** ▼

 LOCAL BUSINESS	 THE ARTS	 SPORTS
 FASHION	 FOOD	 HEALTH
 HIP HOP	 ELECTRONIC MUSIC	 INDIE & ROCK
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**ARTS**  
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going right in our city's heritage and history scene – at the **39 Annual Heritage Toronto Awards & William Kilbourn Memorial Lecture**. This event celebrates the books, short publications, media, architectural work and community heritage volunteer efforts which have made our city a better place today while ensuring to tell the story of its past.

This year's William Kilbourn Memorial Lecturer is sure to be a treat as well: Gail Dexter Lord, co-Founder and co-President of **Lord Cultural Resources**, has advised governments, museums, and other organizations in Toronto and around the world on innovative approaches to culture and heritage.

The evening begins with the Nominees' Reception at 6:00 pm and ends with a post-reception for all in attendance. Both receptions are catered by **Daniel et Daniel**. The Awards and Lecture begin at 7:30 pm. Ticket prices start at \$15 and can be purchased online at [performance.rcmusic.ca](http://performance.rcmusic.ca), by phone at (416) 408-0208, or in person at the **Royal Conservatory box office**. Visit [heritagetoronto.org](http://heritagetoronto.org) for more information or see the categories below from Toronto Is Awesome's round-up of this year's nominees:

- Community Heritage Nominees
- Media Nominees
- Book Nominees
- Short Publication Nominees
- William Greer Architectural Conservation and Craftsmanship Nominees

**2013 Heritage Toronto Awards  
Community Heritage Nominees**

Community groups are undertaking interesting and thought-provoking programs and developing respect and appreciation for heritage in their respective communities. One of these groups, the **Cabbagetown Preservation Association**, has developed rich local history programming since its inception in 1989. Most recently, its *Cabbagetown People Program* has documented the lives of more than forty influential Canadians who once called Cabbagetown home. That research has been developed into a comprehensive series of plaques that recognize each individual at the site of their former residence, as well as walking tours, teacher and student resources integrated into the curriculum (and also produced in French), and a promotional DVD.



*Photo: Riverdale Historical Society*

Established ten years later in 1999, the **Riverdale Historical Society** continues to work to preserve and celebrate the history of the Riverdale neighbourhood. Community outreach includes public lectures, heritage plaque installations, walking tours, and various publications including a quarterly newsletter and sponsorship of two historical books on Riverdale. In addition, the Society has provided community input into the redevelopment of the Don Jail site and the relocation and restoration of the St. Matthew's Clubhouse, and has undertaken research and survey work essential to plans for a Queen Street East Heritage Conservation District.

Another community went ahead and started up its own physical museum! The Real Canadian Portuguese Historical Museum was established in 1986 to promote research about, and appreciation of, the heritage of the Canadian Portuguese community. The organization has been powered by volunteers who have gathered a large collection of artifacts and created on-site education programs and exhibitions to share Portuguese Canadian culture. The museum and library contain a number of books and documents for research and learning. In June 2013, the organization produced a video documentary (in Portuguese and English) featuring interviews with pioneering members of the community to celebrate sixty years of Portuguese emigration to Canada.

In Scarborough, the **Friends of the Guild Park and Gardens** was recently established in 2012 to increase public awareness of the Park's history as the home of the Guild of All Arts and the Guild Inn and to promote the revitalization of the site. The organization quickly recruited well over 100 members, built an effective Facebook page, and has coordinated volunteer-led walking tours that have attracted many new visitors to hear the story of the area.

This year also saw the centennial of one of Toronto's most well-known neighbourhoods, Leaside. **The Leaside 100 Committee** was established in 2012 to plan a series of events with the community in celebration of the neighbourhood's incorporation as a town in 1913. The centennial celebration in April 2013 included walking tours, a commemorative plaque unveiling, school events, scavenger hunts and a Gala. At the centre

 <b>COMMUNITY &amp; CULTURE</b>	 <b>UNPLUGGED</b> OUTDOORS	 <b>THE TERMINAL</b> TECHNOLOGY
 <b>REELTALK</b> FILM	 <b>TOUR TO</b> TOURISTS	 <b>WANDERFUL</b> NEIGHBOURHOODS
 <b>THE PROOF</b> ARTIST PROFILES	 <b>flickr awesome</b> DAILY PHOTO	 <b>CHARITABLE CHOICES</b> CHARITY
 <b>PRINT MATTERS</b> LITERATURE	 <b>Toronto Was Awesome</b> HISTORY	 <b>BUILDING BLOCKS</b> ARCHITECTURE & DEVELOPMENT
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 <b>YOUR DOGS</b>	 <b>THE QUEERIST</b> QUEER ARTS & CULTURE	 <b>THE COMIC BOX</b> COMICS
 <b>CHECK-IN T.O.</b> HOTELS	 <b>THE VEGGIE OPTION</b> VEGGIE	 <b>UNDRUGGERY</b> COOL JOBS

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of the activities was an archival exhibit – “The Layers of Leaside” – which traced the history of the Town’s industrial and railway roots through six key historical layers of settlement. Originally presented at the Leaside Public Library, the exhibit has since travelled to other venues, and is available on the Leaside 100 website at [leaside100.ca](http://leaside100.ca).

### 2013 Heritage Toronto Awards Book Nominees

These books range from autobiographical recollections of events to explorations of the built heritage and military history of Toronto.

One of the autobiographical nominees, **28 Seconds: A True Story of Addiction, Tragedy, and Hope**, revolves around former Attorney General of Ontario Michael Bryant’s involvement in the death of cyclist Darcy Allan Sheppard on August 31, 2009 in Toronto. The book is both a story of Bryant’s personal journey, including his battle with alcoholism, and an examination of the realities of the Ontario justice system which he had administered before facing.

Another autobiographical selection and a memoir defined by music, **1982** recounts Jian Ghomeshi’s life as a 15-year-old “Persian-Canadian New Waver” growing up in Thornhill. Through personal stories of the songs and largely music-related events that changed his life, Ghomeshi tells of his adolescence as an Iranian-Canadian living in a changing Greater Toronto Area.

The last autobiographical nominee is **My Canada includes Foie Gras: A Culinary Life**, written in a very personal style by long-time food columnist, restaurant critic, and cookbook writer Jacob Richler. He profiles the development of restaurant scenes in a number of Canadian cities, including Toronto, and explores key Canadian dishes through recipes and the stories of the chefs who brought them to life.

Several of the nominees in this category deal specifically with built heritage, including *Full Frontal T.O.: Exploring Toronto’s Architectural Vernacular*, which provides a visual history of ordinary Toronto streetscapes over three decades. At its heart are about 400 photographs taken by Patrick Cummins. Shawn Micallef profiles and contextualizes the subjects, commenting on how the photographs document aspects of the city’s built form and cultural development since the 1970s.

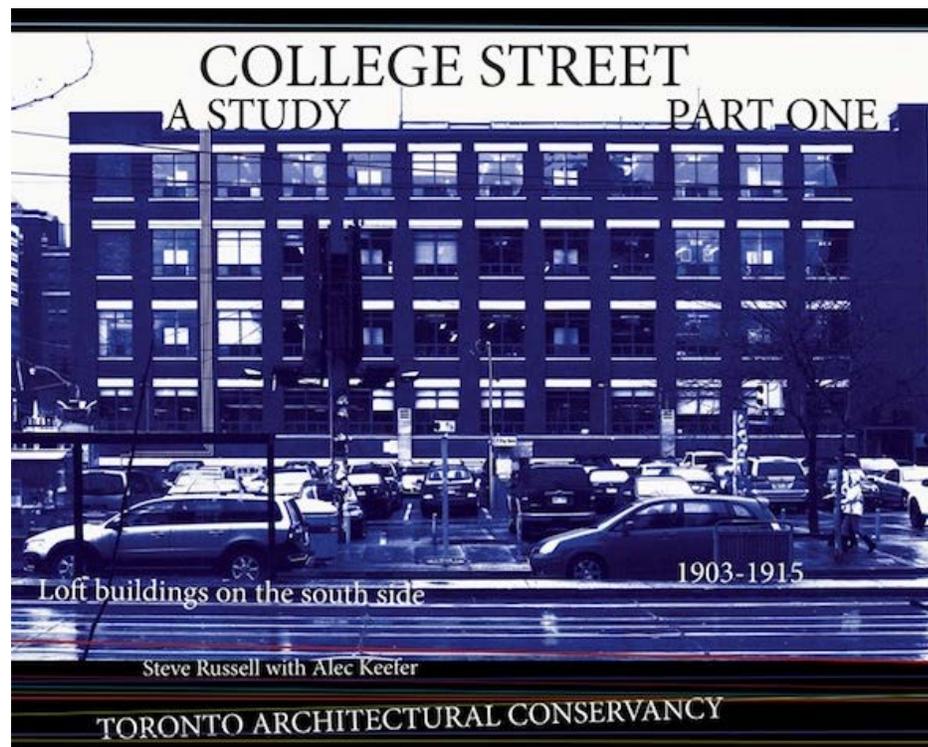


Photo: College Street Book

Another built heritage book nominee, **College Street, A Study: Part One, Loft Buildings on the South Side 1903-1915** is illustrated with contemporary and archival photographs and architectural drawings and examines twelve loft buildings along ten blocks of College Street. The buildings are each recognized as unique heritage assets through their materials, design, and historical context. They are also considered together to underline how the style and versatility of Edwardian lofts have shaped our city on College Street and beyond.

A nominee that deals mainly with military history, **Redcoated Ploughboys: The Volunteer Battalion of Incorporated Militia of Upper Canada 1813-1815** tells the story of the formation of the Volunteer Battalion of Incorporated Militia of Upper Canada during the War of 1812. It follows the Battalion through training and early successes to the Niagara Campaign of 1814. Incorporating diagrams, maps, and photographs, the author discusses the role of the Incorporated Militia in key battles that shaped the War of 1812 in North America.

Gillian McCann traces a unique aspect of Canada’s religious history in **Vanguard of the New Age: The Toronto Theosophical Society, 1891-1945**. Through a study of this Society, founded by Albert Smythe in 1891, McCann illustrates how and why a small group of influential Torontonians – including some **Group of Seven** artists – adopted a new religion imported from England and America that blended elements of Hinduism, Western occultism, and enlightenment science.

## 2013 Heritage Toronto Awards Media Nominees



Photo: *Curse of the Axe* – Still

Nominees in the Media category are varied and unique. ***Curse of the Axe***, a video documentary written and directed by Robin Bicknell and produced by Elliott Halpern and Elizabeth Trojian, all of **YAP Films, Inc.**, traces a groundbreaking investigation of a mysterious iron object which was buried in a Huron-Wendat village 100 years before European contact. Cameras follow the archaeologists who discovered the object while excavating a 500 year-old village site as they consult with experts around the world, and as they explore the meaning of the object with contemporary members of the Huron-Wendat Nation.

Another video documentary, ***Explosion 1812***, tells the story of the destruction of Fort York's munitions magazine during the Battle of York (1813), and explores the influence of that explosion on subsequent events of the War of 1812. The film uses dramatic recreation, interviews with experts, archaeological investigation, 3D digital animation, and eye-witness accounts to reconstruct the explosion and to illustrate its significance.

The final video documentary in this category is ***Uncle Bob and His Vietnamese Children***. This 12 minute documentary by Sue Chun tells the story of Robert Sargent, aka "Uncle Bob," and his effort to help integrate Vietnamese immigrant families into Toronto. Presented through interviews with Mr. Sargent and Paul Nguyen, whose family Mr. Sargent assisted, the documentary recounts the challenges faced by refugees fleeing the Vietnamese War during the 1970's and the ways in which "Uncle Bob" helped a number of families adjust to their new home in Toronto.

The last two nominees are multifaceted online publications that explore specific and unique aspects of Toronto's heritage. An online digital archive/website, ***Italian Canadians as Enemy Aliens: Memories of WWII***, was launched in 2012 by the **Columbus Centre of Toronto** to raise awareness of a previously little-known event: during World War II, 30,000 Italian Canadians were designated as "enemy aliens", and around 600 were interned in remote camps. The website features a collection of over 1300 items including photos, documents, and objects. It also contains 86 oral interviews and 591 internee bios. The website is available in English, French and Italian.

The final nominee in the Media category is a website and mobile application called **TXTilecity**. Launched by the **Textile Museum of Canada** in 2012, this website and free mobile app for Android, BlackBerry, and iOS devices presents the significance of textiles in shaping the city's social, cultural, economic and architectural heritage. At the heart of each of the 67 entries are many original stories, presented through audio and video recordings, which are often told directly by those involved. Content has also been adapted to make it widely accessible through **[murmur]**, and through a program of walking tours supported by the **Ontario Trillium Foundation**.

## 2013 Heritage Toronto Awards Short Publication Nominees

This year's nominees in this category consist of several booklets, online articles, and blog posts that deal with many different topics regarding Toronto's heritage.

*Commemorating the Battle of York: The War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemorative Booklet* by Robyn Posner was published as a part of the **St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA's** commemorations of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the War of 1812. This illustrated booklet presents a brief introduction to the War of 1812, to the Town of York (now Toronto) during the War, and to the Battle of York and its impact on the town. The booklet also features a map of historical sites in Old Town Toronto that remain an integral part of the city's heritage landscape.

There's also another booklet up for an award: ***Historical Walking Tour of North York Centre: Celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of North York Central Library, 1987-2012*** by Mary Ann Cross, Geoff Kettel and

Barbara Myrvold. It was produced for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the **North York Central Library** by the **Toronto Public Library** Board in partnership with **North York Historical Society**, North York Community Preservation Panel and **Gibson House Museum**. The booklet provides a detailed walking tour of the surrounding neighbourhood, highlighting ten stops and twenty sites that tell stories about everything from Aboriginal settlements to modern office towers, and encourages people to take in public art work and green spaces along the way.

**Torontoist.com** is nominated twice this year in this category. The first short publication, ***Historicist: The Telegram Sets, the Sun Rises***, is a blog post written by Jamie Bradburn recounting the end of the *Toronto Telegram* newspaper in 1971 and the subsequent founding of the *Toronto Sun*. The illustrated article explores the impact of labour unrest on the *Telegram*, and places the birth of the *Sun* in the context of public opinion, political circumstances, and the competitive newspaper industry.

The second nominee from **Torontoist.com** is ***Historicist: The "Manifest Destiny" of North Toronto*** written by David Wencer. Published on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the annexation of North Toronto, this illustrated article traces North Toronto's history from the merging of the villages of Davisville and Eglinton in 1889 to the annexation of North Toronto by the City of Toronto in 1912. It explores the political debates concerning the need for and costs of new infrastructure for North Toronto that were at the heart of the annexation question.



Photo: J Cooper Mason Battle of Paardeberg

The final nominee for this category is a blog entry by Adam Bunch, published on **The Toronto Dreams Project Historical Ephemera Blog**. In ***J.Cooper Mason and the Great Boer War***, author Adam Bunch tells the story of Canadian involvement in the Great Boer War (1899-1902) through the eyes and photography of J. Cooper Mason. Mason, the son of a wealthy Toronto family, brought his portable Kodak camera with him when he went to serve on the front lines. Bunch explores the horrors of the war and chronicles Mason's work right up until his death in Toronto in 1923.

### **2013 Heritage Toronto Awards William Greer Architectural Conservation and Craftsmanship Nominees**

This year there are a record number of nominees for the William Greer Architectural Conservation and Craftsmanship Award. These nominees represent some of the finest work completed in the architectural conservation and craftsmanship field over the past year.



Photo: Spadina Museum – Invalid Chair – After

**Spadina Museum Historic House and Gardens** (operated by the **City of Toronto**) is nominated for its comprehensive interior restoration and preservation work. The work, completed between 2010-2012, harmonized the period of interpretation of all the museum rooms to the 1920s and 1930s. The project drew on detailed documentation of the house from that period and included restoration of woodwork, wood floors, linoleum floors, wallpaper, paint, plaster work like cornices and medallions, glass work, the conservation of furniture, and the restoration and opening to the public of the third floor servants rooms.

The **Richmond Adelaide Centre** project involved the partial restoration and rehabilitation of a Modern-style downtown office building constructed in 1954 and designed by architect Peter Dickinson with engineer Morden Yolles. The project involved, among other retrofits, the installation of new double-glazed windows which maintain the original pattern, colour, and profile while significantly reducing heat loss and improving the performance of the building envelope. The exterior limestone cladding and the entrance canopy were cleaned and repaired, while the original interior lobby that had been dramatically altered in the 1980s was restored to its original condition. As a result of this project, the building achieved LEED Gold certification.

Commissioned by the **Toronto District School Board**, the site of **North Toronto Collegiate Institute** was redeveloped from 2007-2010 to include a new secondary school building, two condominium towers, underground parking, and a playing field. Through consultation with a Local School Community Design Team, a Preservation Plan was developed which identified significant heritage elements of the original 1912 school building, such as the Boys and Girls entrances. The selected heritage elements were dismantled, cleaned, repaired and reassembled in a new "heritage courtyard", placed at the centre of the new school building, and in the school library.

Another of this year's nominees involves the adaptive reuse of three connected buildings, originally constructed in 1910-12 as a storehouse and boiler houses at Hinde and Dauch Paper Company Power House. Much of the restoration work focused on brick masonry repairs to the long-neglected buildings, particularly on the two chimney stacks which are landmarks in the area. Large new window and door openings were inserted into three solid brick facades to accommodate new commercial uses, and a new second floor was inserted beneath the restored steel structure and roof deck.



Photo: 85 Laird – BEFORE

Another nominee, the building at 85 Laird Drive, was originally constructed as a Locomotive Shop for the Canadian Northern Railway Eastern Lines in 1918-1919. Vacant for nearly ten years, the building was retained in its entirety and its open interior adapted for use as a grocery store. Brickwork and original multi-paneled steel window frames were repaired, while the roof-top monitor windows, designed for ventilation and lighting, were uncovered and restored. Wooden exterior doors were also repaired or reproduced following original architectural drawings. The development of vacant lands around the building was designed to maintain an important visual connection to the building from Laird Drive.



Photo: 85 Laird – AFTER

The adaptive reuse of Maple Leaf Gardens is also nominated for an award. The **National Historic Site** was constructed in 1931 and remained in continuous use until 1999. The original interior was replaced with new floor levels to accommodate a grocery store at street level and a student athletic centre above. A new ice rink was installed on the top floor, beneath the original arena roof. Restoration work included extensive masonry remediation, steel window restoration and replication, and the restoration of the Carlton Street marquee with replicated elements to follow the original design. Interpretive panels, murals and artwork are also integrated into both spaces to reflect the building's remarkable history.

The **Lassonde Innovation Centre**'s project involved the adaptive reuse of unused attic and rooftop areas of the **University of Toronto's** designated Mining Building that was constructed in 1905. New spaces created included graduate student offices, a seminar room, and a studio divided into study areas by existing masonry walls and heavy timber wood trusses. A new elevator shaft provided street level access, and resolved accessibility issues in the existing building. Restoration work included brick and stone re-pointing and repair, the replacement of select windows with matching metal substitutes, slate roof replacement to match existing roof materials, cleaning, and painting. Throughout the project, state-of-the-art sustainability systems were integrated with heritage resources.

The Victoria Lofts project is a residential conversion of the 1890 Victoria-Royce Presbyterian Church, designed by the architecture firm of Knox and Elliot. Character defining elements such as the "muscular" Romanesque Revival form and masonry exterior were preserved while adapting the interior for residential units. New glazing and mechanical openings were installed in recessed balcony areas placed within existing window openings. The masonry was restored with replacement bricks imported from England, while a mineral stain was used to eliminate patches from previous work throughout the exterior. Stained glass windows and the Casavant organ were donated to other churches, while oak pews were sold for reuse.

As an industrial landmark highly visible from the Don Valley Parkway, the **Todmorden Mills** papermill chimney has suffered progressive deterioration, likely due in part to its exposure to de-icing salts from the highway. The chimney was built in the late-19<sup>th</sup>-century when the Taylor Brothers mill converted to steam power. Restoration work involved the importing of closely matching brick from England, the replacement of the outer layer of brick in the top five metres of the chimney, the re-pointing of much of the surface below the top five metres, and the removal of unsightly black caulking material. (See Cover Photo)



*Photo: Papermill – BEFORE*

The project to restore and rehabilitate the **Dineen Building**, constructed in 1897 for the W & D Dineen Hats and Furs Company, is also up for an award. Layers of successive interior renovations were removed to reveal original ceiling heights, iron columns, crown moldings, and several historic J.J. Taylor safes. Exterior restoration included cleaning, masonry repairs, replacing deteriorated windows with matching thermally glazed units, reintroducing several missing sandstone balconies, reinstating the cornice, and reconstructing exterior decorative pressed metal elements and iron work.

This next nominee is an adaptive reuse project which involved the integration of a former school building into a new police station, the **11 Division** at 2054 Davenport Road.

The original Carleton Village School, constructed in 1913 in Edwardian Neo-Classical style, was retained while later additions were demolished. The project included the restoration of the brick and stone exterior walls, and the replacement of windows and missing cornices to their original design. The site was redeveloped to maintain the landmark presence of the former school on its corner, with the interior of the building renovated to accommodate community rooms, training rooms and offices.



*Photo: St. Michael's Church by Joel Levy*

One particular nominated project has been in the works for over a decade now, having resulted from a 2002 Renewal Master Plan for **St. Michael's Cathedral**, Toronto's oldest Roman Catholic Church. The Cathedral was designed by architect William Thomas in the Gothic Revival style and built in stages beginning in 1845. Its upper bell tower and spire were added in 1865. Phase IV of the Renewal Master Plan began in 2010 and involved the masonry conservation of the west façade and the 275-foot tower. In order to match the original materials, replacement brick was imported from England. Earlier unsympathetic repairs were reversed and original features including pinnacles, finials, and flying buttresses were re-created to restore the spire and tower to their original appearance. Significant structural deterioration of the tower was addressed with the

concealed use of reinforced concrete and stainless steel anchoring systems.

Another nominee dealt with a very specific task: continuing to maintain the flow of 47% of the GTA's water supply during the extensive restoration of the exterior brick and stone masonry, interior brick and marble, and the wood window and doors of the **R.C. Harris Water Plant**. The building was constructed in 1932 in the Art Deco Style to the designs of architect Thomas C. Pomphrey. Work included partial brick replacement with new matching brick created to specifications. The failing glazed brick walls of the Pumping Station Screen Room were entirely reconstructed, copper roofs replaced, and the Alum Tower chimney partially rebuilt, all to their original design.

**Mjök House** is also nominated for an award. This project involved the restoration of a rare pressed metal commercial façade and the interior renovation of a three-storey, 1889 building in the Junction. Work included the reconstruction in steel of the structure of the oriel window to its original dimensions, the replication of deteriorated metal components and the reconstruction of the façade, including all decorative details, according to the original design. Interior renovations resulted in a new ground floor retail space, and the renovation of second and third floor rental units into a single family home.

The adaptive re-use of the former Lombard Street Fire Hall / Second City Theatre by **Complections College of Makeup Art & Design** is also nominated for an award. The building was designed by architect David Roberts Jr. in the Romanesque Revival style, constructed in 1886, and expanded in 1895. From the 1960s on, it was the home of Second City dinner theatre, and then Gilda's Club. This project involved the adaptive re-use of the building to house the Complections College. Upper floors were repartitioned into classrooms and administrative space. The principal room on the main floor was renovated to accommodate a new retail space, which included the replacement of non-original doors in the two large, round-arched openings with storefront glass within the original wood framing. Exterior brick work was repaired, and the original west entrance hall and three-storey staircase were repainted.



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