

Montreal Complex of Culture and Administration

Montreal, Quebec

Client - Montreal City Planning Department

Design team - dZO, Esther Sperber

Area - 54,000 sq.m.

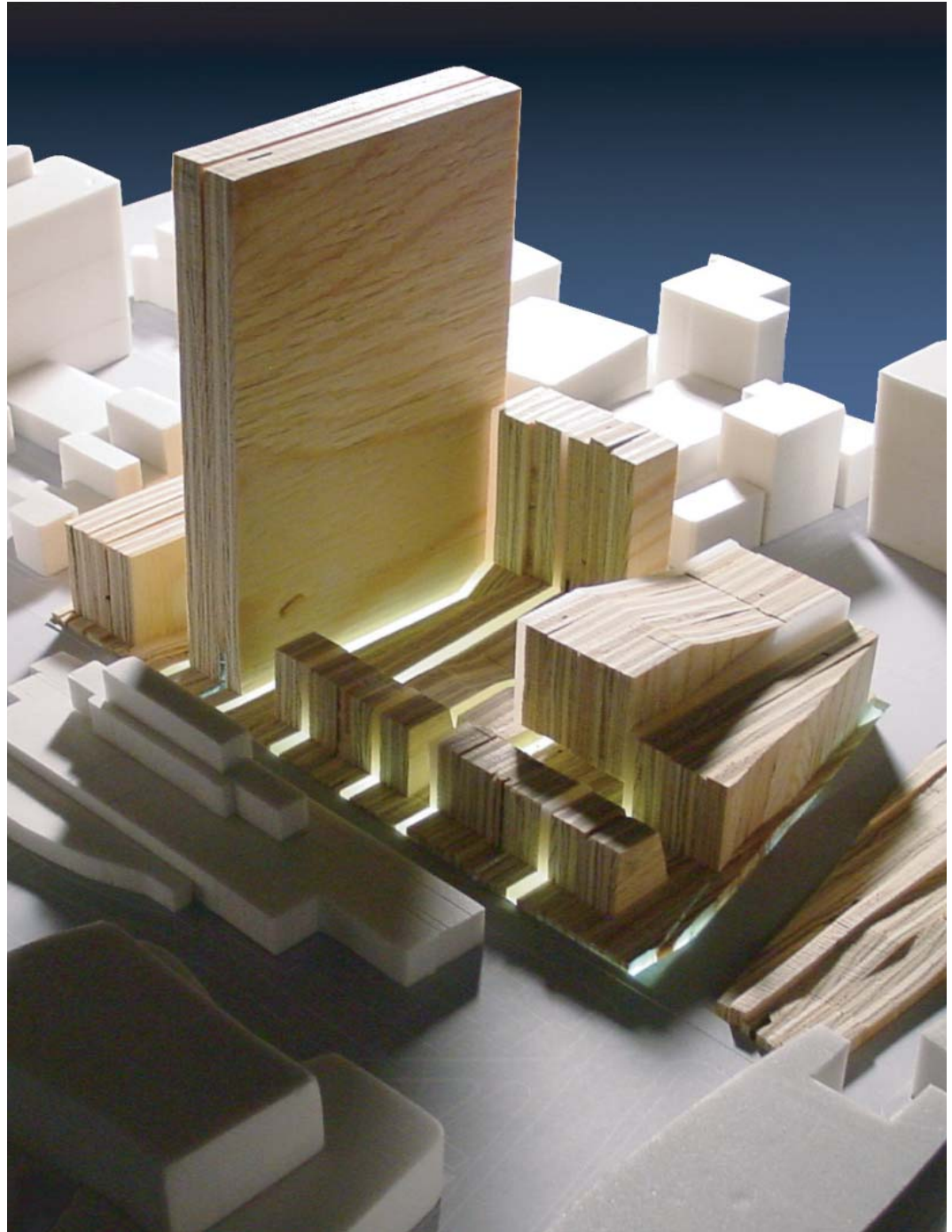
Cost - 281,000,000

Date - December 2002

The competition required placing within a single site three large and very different programs: the Quebec government administration tower, the Montreal symphony hall and a school of dance and music. Our proposed design solution addresses this requirement by using the concept of weaving to join the three programs together and to sensitively reconnect the new buildings back into the urban fabric of the city.

As an expression of that idea and to create an urban language that mitigates the changes in scale and uses on the site, the three programming elements are organized as a system of bands. To highlight the unique identity of each "band" while artfully blending them into a unified whole, we used wood in a variety of way. For the concert hall cladding we designed a dense layering of horizontal wood strips that accentuate the large volume of the halls. At night light "leaks" from the wood cladding creating a shimmering, ambivalent form on the Montreal skyline. On the governmental tower, we employed a double skin facade made of wood and glass, designed to vary the level of transparency and light received by the offices, reception areas and conference rooms.

Woven between the bands are public circulations zones. Joining the different circulation systems of the complex is a courtyard that acts as a civic meeting space for the three buildings. Its' sloped surface is a topography which interfaces with the different elevations along the edges of the site and creates spaces for outdoor theater and urban activities. The form's design also pragmatically addresses the acoustical needs of the underground performance spaces located below it.



site model

program diagram
woven facade
government tower
plan
section

