

RAIC honours Brian MacKay-Lyons with 2015 Gold Medal

OTTAWA, February 9, 2015 – A Nova Scotia architect, whose internationally acclaimed buildings are grounded in the design and construction traditions of East Coast architecture, is the 2015 recipient of the RAIC Gold Medal.

Brian MacKay-Lyons, FRAIC, is a founding partner of MacKay-Lyons Sweetapple Architects, based in Halifax, NS. He is also a professor at Dalhousie University and the founder of Ghost Lab, an educational program that took place on his family farm during the summers of 1994 to 2011. His work has been recognized by more than 100 awards, 300 publications, and 100 exhibitions.

The Gold Medal is the highest honour the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) can bestow. It recognizes a significant and lasting contribution to Canadian architecture. A five-member jury selected Mr. MacKay-Lyons.

“His work is universally recognized as pure, dignified, poetic and beautiful,” said the jury. “His work comes from an intimate connection with his communities.”

Best-known for houses, Mr. MacKay-Lyons has also designed university and commercial buildings. Projects include the Canadian Chancery and Official Residence in Dhaka, Bangladesh, the Computer Science Building and the Architecture School at Dalhousie University in Halifax, and the Plaza building at Brock University in St. Catharines, ON.

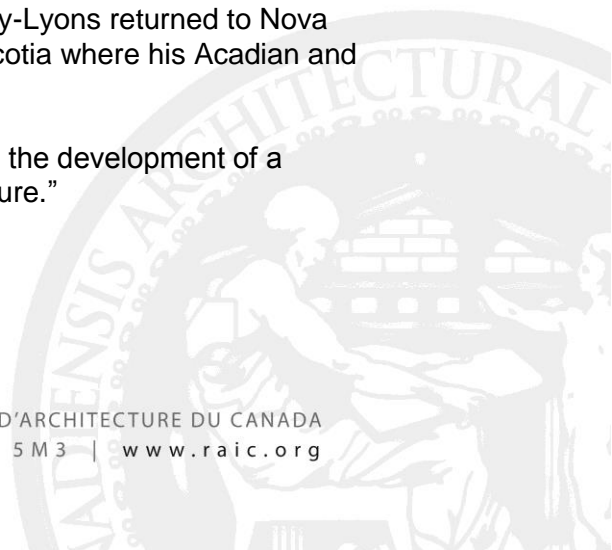
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“It is a great honour to be recognized by one’s peers,” said Mr. MacKay-Lyons. “In an increasingly globalized world it’s nice to reaffirm a way of making architecture about place – its landscape, climate and material culture.

“The RAIC Gold Medal is all the more meaningful because it recognizes a body of work rather than the fashion of the day,” he said.

After studying and working around the world, Mr. MacKay-Lyons returned to Nova Scotia in 1983 to make a cultural contribution to Nova Scotia where his Acadian and Mi’kmaq ancestors have lived for centuries.

The jury called him an “an authentic and original voice in the development of a contemporary expression of traditional regional architecture.”



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Jury members also cited a consistent level of excellence. “He continues as a major influence on current and future generations of architects.”

The Gold Medal will be presented at a ceremony at the RAIC/AAA Festival of Architecture, which takes place in Calgary June 3 to 6.

The jury members were Peter Busby, FRAIC, Past Gold Medalist; Paule Boutin, AP/FIRAC, RAIC Past President; Tyler Sharp, MRAIC, Past Recipient of the Young Architect Award; Siamak Hariri, FRAIC, and Martin Houle, MIRAC, founder of the architecture website Kollektif.net

Biography of Brian MacKay-Lyons

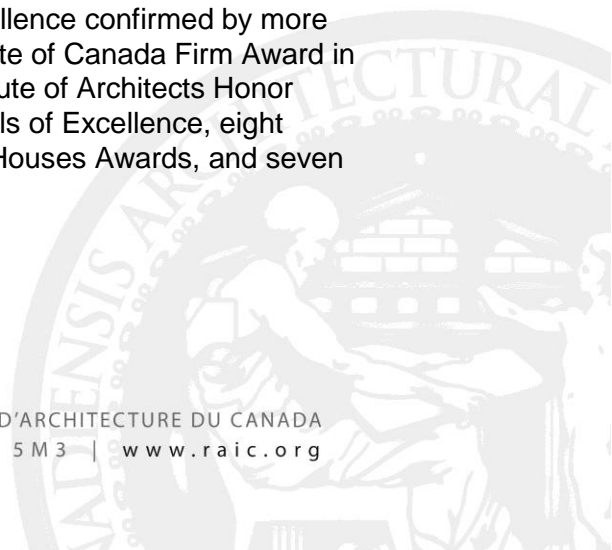
Born and raised in the village of Arcadia in Southwestern Nova Scotia, Brian MacKay-Lyons received his Bachelor of Architecture from the Technical University of Nova Scotia in 1978, where he was awarded the RAIC’s Student Medal. He received his Master of Architecture and Urban Design at the University of California, Los Angeles and won the Dean's Award for Design.

After studying in China, Japan, California and Italy and working with prominent architects Charles Moore and Barton Myers, both of the United States, and Giancarlo De Carlo, of Italy, he returned to Nova Scotia in 1983.

In 1985, he founded the firm Brian MacKay-Lyons Architecture Urban Design in Halifax. Twenty years later Brian partnered with Talbot Sweetapple to form MacKay-Lyons Sweetapple Architects Ltd. The practice works locally and internationally on cultural, academic and residential projects.

In 1994, Mr. MacKay-Lyons founded Ghost Lab on his farm near Lunenburg. It drew architects, historians, critics and writers from around the world who explored through dialogue and hands-on construction the values of regionalism, craft, and design. The annual two-week event ended in 2011.

Mr. MacKay-Lyons has built a reputation for design excellence confirmed by more than 100 awards including the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Firm Award in 2014, six Governor General Medals, two American Institute of Architects Honor Awards for Architecture, 13 Lieutenant Governor's Medals of Excellence, eight Canadian Architect Awards, three Architectural Record Houses Awards, and seven North American Wood Design Awards.



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His work has been featured in more than 330 publications, including six monographs: *Seven Stories from a Village Architect* (1996); *Brian MacKay-Lyons: Selected Works 1986-1997* (1998); *Plain Modern: The Architecture of Brian MacKay-Lyons* (2005); *Ghost: Building an Architectural Vision* (2008); *Local Architecture: Building Place, Craft, and Community* (2014); and the upcoming publication *Economy as Ethic: The Work of MacKay-Lyons Sweetapple Architects*.

A professor of architecture at Dalhousie University, Mr. MacKay-Lyons has taught for over 30 years. He has held 17 endowed academic chairs and visiting professorships, and given more than 200 public lectures.

ABOUT THE RAIC

The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada is a voluntary national association, representing 4,800 members. The RAIC advocates for excellence in the built environment, works to demonstrate how design enhances the quality of life and promotes responsible architecture in addressing important issues of society.

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