



← Phase one of the new faculty, designed by NADAAA of Boston, will restore the turreted Gothic Revival edifice. In 2015, students will move in as the extension nears completion.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

University of Toronto, John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design / Toronto / undergraduate to doctoral programs / 1,030 students / 90 faculty / \$6,040
daniels.utoronto.ca

NEW SCHOOL: UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

“Cracking the cloister” is how Richard Sommer, dean of the architecture school at the University of Toronto, characterizes the expansion and relocation of his faculty at One Spadina Crescent. He is referring to both the renovation of the site’s Gothic Revival building (which in its day served as a theological seminary), and his big plans to enrich the school’s offerings dramatically. The new facilities – designed by NADAAA of Boston – will restore the turreted edifice to its original U-formation and add a wing to the north,

establishing 9,290 square metres altogether for studios, a fabrication lab, a public hall, a library and an art gallery. By the fall of 2016, the school will host bachelor’s, master’s and Ph.D. programs, as well as new graduate studies dedicated to architecture and public health.

The first crop of students is expected to move in by the end of next year, after the heritage structure is restored. As part of their education, they will witness the construction of the addition first-hand as it goes up, and afterward they will observe, monitor and adjust the advanced renewable energy systems, engineered by Transsolar of Germany.

The \$50-million development received a Holcim Award in September for the innovative restoration and modernization. It will also serve as a pedagogical tool for the city, with green-roofed pavilions installed into the landscape around the main building. These offshoots (partially open to the public) will house the current RAD responsive architecture lab, along with a facility dedicated to public health. With a terrace and woonerf-like paving linking it to the surrounding downtown campus, the new school will connect to the city, and the city to the research that comes out of it.



↑ Although the campus is now under construction, the first 10 students enrolled at La Confluence in September. Paris architects Odile Decq and Matteo Cainer founded the school.

NEW SCHOOL: LA CONFLUENCE, LYON, FRANCE

With her punk rock persona, French architect Odile Decq often bucks convention. Her portfolio includes the award-winning Opera Garnier restaurant in Paris, a vibrant red and white interior she created by enclosing an outdoor space – where aristocrats once parked their horse-drawn carriages – with an undulating glass curtain. A teacher for the past 22 years and former director at École Spéciale d’Architecture, Decq finally decided to launch a new kind of school, in Lyon, France, liberated from institutional traditions.

“I hope they will build a new world,” she says of La Confluence’s future graduates. Named after a revitalized district of Lyon where such brash buildings as Jakob + MacFarlane’s Orange Cube have reanimated the Rhone and Saône Rivers in recent years (Decq’s own Dark Point building is down the street), the institute’s bilingual program focuses on five themes: neurosciences, new technologies, social action, visual art and physics. As at other architecture schools in France, students will graduate from a five-year program in two diploma cycles of three and two years, as well as an advanced research cycle.

What makes La Confluence unique is how it merges theory and hands-on learning in a dynamic program, where students experiment in architecture, visual arts, film and myriad other disciplines. They also participate in internships and form associations to conduct research and

network with architecture programs around the world, either virtually or in situ.

Situated in a retrofitted marketplace, with Decq’s own design for new residences now under construction, La Confluence includes a fabrication lab that is open to the public on Saturdays, “to be more inserted in the city,” says Decq. These facilities are supplemented by local masterpieces: the inaugural class of 10, which arrived this fall, took in classes at Le Corbusier’s La Tourette, a Dominican priory in Éveux. Eventually, Decq hopes to increase enrolment to 200 students.

One of the main reasons she founded La Confluence, along with co-director Matteo Cainer, was to engage students with the social and technological aspects of their field, and nurture a generation of architects who can provide the world with much-needed architectural thinking. “Design is superficial. Architecture is much more powerful. It’s outside and inside, and it deals with questions of complexity and different scales,” she says. “The duty of architects is to help people live better – and they have a lot of work to do.” Decq and Cainer have already attracted an impressive faculty, including Alfredo Brillembourg of Urban-Think Tank; architect Jenny Sabin; and sustainable technology innovator Sheila Kennedy.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

La Confluence, Institute for Innovation and Creative Strategies in Architecture / Lyon, France / undergraduate program / up to 200 students / 12 faculty, including Odile Decq, Sheila Kennedy, Jenny Sabin, John Fernandez and Luca Galafaro / \$12,700 per year
confluence.eu