

Art Museum  
University of Toronto  
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Justina M. Barnicke Gallery  
University of Toronto Art Centre

7 Hart House Circle  
Toronto, Ontario M5S 3H3  
artmuseum.utoronto.ca

# Art Museum

**On the occasion of Canada's 150th anniversary, the Art Museum presents  
an exhibition that challenges basic assumptions about Canada's  
relationship to nature.**

*It's All Happening So Fast*  
*A Counter-History of the Modern Canadian Environment*

May 3 – July 15, 2017

Curated by Mirko Zardini, Director of the Canadian Centre for Architecture  
(CCA)

Organized by the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA)

Co-presented with Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival

In an age of unprecedented human impact on the planet, certain countries stand out for their privileged positions and the complexity of their relationships with regard to land. Canada's stories follow the discovery and appropriation of vast and varied natural resources, yet today, the country's environmental record is one of the poorest among the wealthy nations. It is a fact that suggests ambivalence and the actions of competing interests, which are most often exposed through disasters – moments of disorder, and disregard for the unexpected consequences of managing the country's seemingly endless bounty.

The exhibition's narratives span a history of Canada's relationship with the land since 1945 to expose complex connections among different interests, competing cultural myths, and evolving legal context, changing ideas of environment risk, resurgent Indigenous Peoples, and the impact of the environmental movement. As a call for action, the project illustrates the necessity to take positions in the face of the climate crisis, from radical efforts

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like David Suzuki's *Carbon Manifesto* to more contemporary and diverse engagements by architects, landscape architects, urban designers, artists, and activists.

*It's All Happening So Fast* goes beyond traditional historical exhibition and employs a multitude of materials to create intersecting narratives by multiple voices – including protagonists of the modern project, Indigenous Peoples, environmentalists, lawyers and judges, artists and photographers, and architects of alternative energy visions. Each of the exhibition's narrative sequences includes environmental disasters representing six organizing themes: the failure of the modern project; resource exploitation in Canada's northern territories; development of energy infrastructures; nuclear contamination; water and air pollution; and industrial fishing and forestry operations.

The exhibition features, among others:

- historical photographs of idyllic landscapes by William Notman and Alexander Henderson, as well as northern landscapes by Richard Harrington and Robert Frank, 1960s industrial activity by George Hunter, and sites of nuclear production by Sam Tata
- contemporary photographs illustrate active radar stations in Labrador and Nunavut by Donovan Wylie and Margo Pfeiff, areas of nuclear contamination and production by Blake Fitzpatrick and Robert Del Tredici, views of the Great Lakes by Robert Burley, logging operations by Lorraine Gilbert, the 1993 Clayoquot protests by Ian Wallace, and Cornelia Hahn Oberlander's landscape design in Yellowknife by Etta Gerdes
- a series of Slogans for the Twenty-First Century by Douglas Coupland from which the exhibition title is inspired
- projects such as a 1981 solar house by Pierlucio Pellissier and Giovanni De Paoli, the PEI Ark built for the New Alchemy Institute in 1976, proposals by Ralph Erskine and Van Ginkel Associates for settlements in northern Canada, designs by OMA and Bruce Mau Design for Downsview Park in Toronto, variations on normative

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practices of camping by Lateral Office, Cornelia Hahn Oberlander's landscape design of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly Building, and Peter von Tiesenhausen's *Lifeline Fence*

The exhibition is accompanied by the publication *It's All Happening So Fast*, edited by Lev Bratishenko and Mirko Zardini, co-published by the CCA and Jap Sam Books, and designed by Christian Lange.

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### **Opening Reception**

Wednesday May 3, 2017, 7:00-9:00pm  
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### **Curatorial Talk with Mirko Zardini, Director of the Canadian Centre for Architecture**

Thursday May 4, 2017, 6:00pm  
University of Toronto Art Centre

### **Collateral Programming**

Future Environments: Art & Architecture in Action

May 3, 2017, 5:30-7:00pm

Presented by the University of Toronto, John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, and Science and Engineering Engagement

University of Toronto, Convocation Hall

Featuring: Mason White, Charles Stankieveh, Mitchell Akiyama, Liat Margolis, Brady Peters, Barbara Fischer

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The exhibition is presented at the Art Museum, in partnership with Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival and with the support of the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design.

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