

Harlyn Thompson Lecture Series

MARCH 16 SABINA ALI GRAEME STEWART

6pm Lecture
Eckhardt-Gramatte Hall
The University of Winnipeg

Modern Tower Blocks and the 21st Century City: Research, Policy and Action

Tower block urbanism is one of the most prolific and contentious global forms of the 20th Century. Yet despite the seeming homogeneity of the type, one size does not fit all, and the Canadian experience of the tower block is in many ways unique. Graeme Stewart and Sabina Ali will discuss the case of Toronto - a region where a built legacy of nearly 2,000

modernist tower blocks defines the urban landscape. Through a program of research, policy development and on the ground action, a process of 'Tower Renewal' is emerging, shifting our conception of these towers, the vast communities that call them home, and their role in meeting the challenges of 21st Century urbanism.



Sabina Ali is the chair and one of the founding members of Thorncliffe Park Women's Committee, a group of local residents who came together with a vision of transforming their public space into a place that builds and enriches the community and their neighbourhood. She has been instrumental in revitalizing the local park and creating a healthy, engaged and inclusive community. She is engaged in empowering and building the capacity within the residents, especially women and connecting the community with the rest of Toronto.

Sabina has been an invaluable asset to TPWC. Under her leadership, TPWC attained recognition throughout Toronto. She has been successful in connecting Thorncliffe to the other neighbourhoods in the city by participating in the Doors Open Toronto, Community Festival and the Winter Fest at Evergreen Brick Works, Toronto Mela, YIMBY Festival, Halal Food Fest, Big on Bloor, Scotiabank Nuit Blanche, Harbourfront Fest, City of Toronto's Tasty Thursdays, Toronto Fringe Festival and Food & Wine Festival.

Graeme Stewart OAA MRAIC RPP MCIP CAHP is a Principal at ERA Architects, and co-founder of the not for profit research organization the Centre for Urban Growth and Renewal (CUG+R). Graeme was a key initiator of the Tower Renewal Project. This initiative in modern heritage and community reinvestment examines the future of Toronto and Canada's remarkable stock of modern tower neighbourhoods in collaboration with municipalities across Ontario, the Provincial and Federal Government, Universities across Ontario and NGOs, such as Evergreen and United Way. This collaborative initiative engages in research, policy development and action toward reimagining our modernist landscapes for the 21st Century.

Graeme is also the co-editor of Concrete Toronto: A Guidebook to Concrete Architecture from the Fifties to the Seventies. In 2010, he was recipient of an RAIC National Urban Design Award for his ongoing research and design work related to Tower Renewal, and in 2014 received the Jane Jacobs Prize.

Graeme has studied architecture in Canada and Germany and received his Master of Architecture from the University of Toronto.

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