

## FIRST PHASE OF ROBARTS LIBRARY RENEWAL COMPLETED

### Diamond and Schmitt Architects now turn to Pavilion Addition

TORONTO – Robarts Library at the University of Toronto today celebrated the completion of a multi-year revitalization program by unveiling two new porticos for student and public use and provided a look at future development at this major academic research facility on the St. George campus. Diamond and Schmitt Architects is designing both phases of the renewal.

The enclosed porticos on the second floor of the library transform what previously was little-used outdoor space into new arrival halls. A new point of access to the 13-storey library has been added on the south side from Harbord Street with the addition of an outdoor staircase that leads to the South Portico.

“A hallmark of our design brief was to create an architecture on both the exterior and interior that felt like it was always there and at same time to create a strong new identity and focus”, said Gary McCluskie, a principal with Diamond and Schmitt Architects.

Design features include 14 three-metre-long cylindrical pendular light fixtures in each of the new porticos that serve as a beacon to the library, which opened in 1974 and famous for its severe Brutalist form. “Now there is a sense of occasion, of arrival, in the new Robarts Library”, added McCluskie.

Other amenities and services for the 18,000 daily visitors include improved way-finding and orientation in the triangular-shaped building that was notorious to navigate prior to renovations. Touch-screen terminals in the porticos now identify where study space is available throughout the building. More natural light, terrazzo flooring, display cases and additional study space round out the experience of this phase of renewal. Previously renovated were the fifth floor Map & Data Library in 2009, all study areas on floors 9-12 from 2008-2010 and the third floor Media Commons in 2010.

The next phase will be the addition of a five-storey pavilion that will add a new face for Robarts, opening up the west side of the building to the street, bringing a flood of natural light to the lower floors and making the overall environment more inviting, accessible and productive for students.

Diamond and Schmitt Architects ([www.dsai.ca](http://www.dsai.ca)) is a leading Canadian full-service architectural practice and is the recipient of more than 200 awards, including six Governor General’s Awards for Architecture. The firm is recognized for sustainable design expertise in academic and research buildings, the performing arts, healthcare facilities, residential and recreational properties. Current projects include the Montreal Concert Hall, the Faculty of Law at UBC and Bridgepoint Hospital in Toronto.

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Robarts Library Portico

