



from the archives of la Société Jean-Drapeau

**FIGURE 1**

PHOTO FROM SERIES VUES AÉRIENNES DE TERRE DES HOMMES (AERIAL VIEWS OF MAN AND HIS WORLD), APRIL 29, 1968. SOURCE: VILLE DE MONTRÉAL ARCHIVES (VM94,EX64-003)

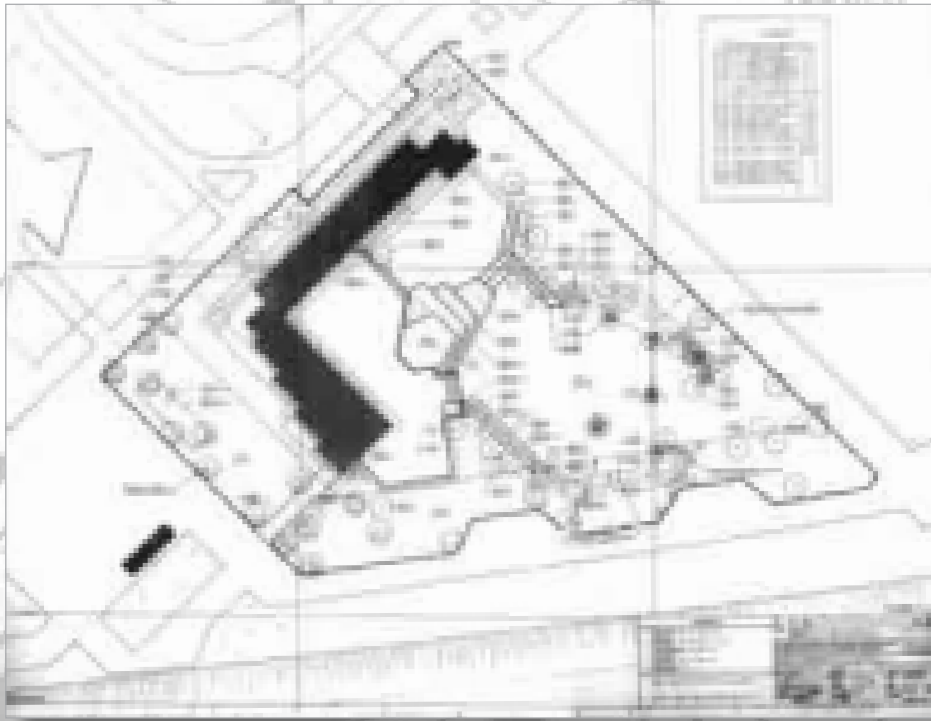
# EXPO 67:

NICOLE VALOIS

## A WATERSHED FOR CANADIAN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

**THE 1967 INTERNATIONAL AND UNIVERSAL EXPOSITION** in Montreal – Expo 67 – left indelible marks on Quebec and Canadian society and culture by opening a window on the world and helping advance Canadian expertise, particularly in the construction field. The construction of the pavilions and infrastructure, islands in the St. Lawrence and the Expo sites involved a large number of professionals from all over Canada, who worked together in a unique collaborative spirit.

While there remain only a few vestiges of the event, Expo 67 was historic for the planning and development professions, including landscape architecture. Landscape architects' involvement is well known, and some of them are still with us to reflect on the experience. But just what was the nature of their involvement? At what phase did they get involved? Who created the site plans? Those are the questions addressed by this research project, funded by the LACF, of which select results are presented in this article.<sup>1</sup>



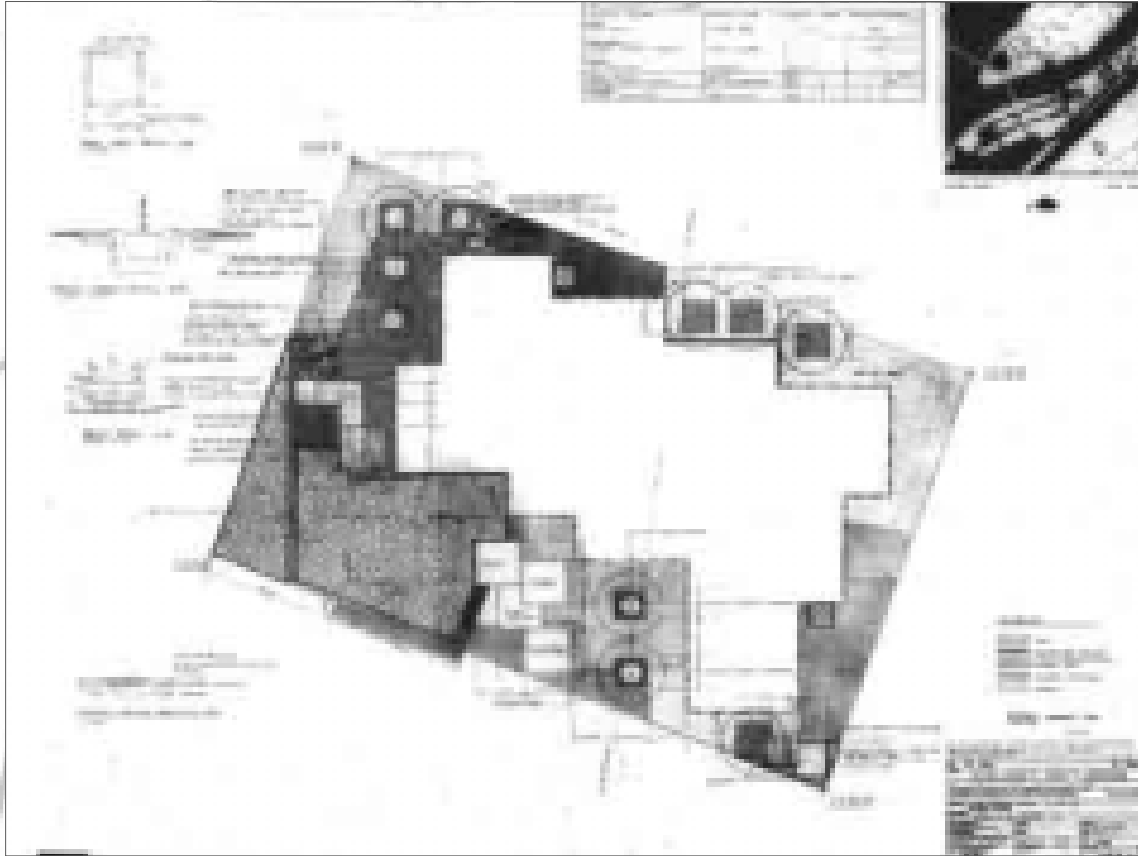
**FIGURE 2**  
 ARCHITECTURAL PLAN: VARIOUS PAVEMENTS, ÎLE NOTRE-DAME, PLACE DE LAS AMERICAS, PROJECT PLANNING ASSOCIATES CONSORTIUM © GOVERNMENT OF CANADA. REPRODUCED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA (2012). SOURCE: LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/CANADIAN CORPORATION FOR THE 1967 WORLD EXHIBITION/ REEL M-1503, REF. [100-70N, PROJECT D](#)

...The construction of the pavilions and infrastructure, islands in the St. Lawrence and the Expo sites involved a large number of professionals from all over Canada, who worked together in a unique collaborative spirit.

#### FOUR FIRMS, FOUR SITES

Interviews with key players, along with archival research, allowed us to confirm the involvement of four groups of professionals, comprised mainly of landscape architects, in the preparation of the master plans for four sites.<sup>2</sup> In general, their contribution began after the master plan prepared by the Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition received government approval in 1963. Our research shows that these landscape architects do not seem to have contributed significantly to the design of the islands, whose layout is more the result of technical constraints than deliberate aesthetic choices.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, each site was built according to its respective master plan:

**Master plan for the pavilions on Notre-Dame and Sainte-Hélène islands** by the **Project Planning Associates Consortium (PPAC)**. PPAC comprised Project Planning Associates Limited, Justin Floyd and Dunnington Grubb & Stensson. They were involved from the very start of planning, studying seven potential Expo sites before the islands were chosen in 1963. Their main contribution was the drafting of the master plan featuring the plans for the canals and lakes and the integration of the buildings as construction progressed. They also created public spaces, landscape designs for spaces outside certain pavilions and typical details.



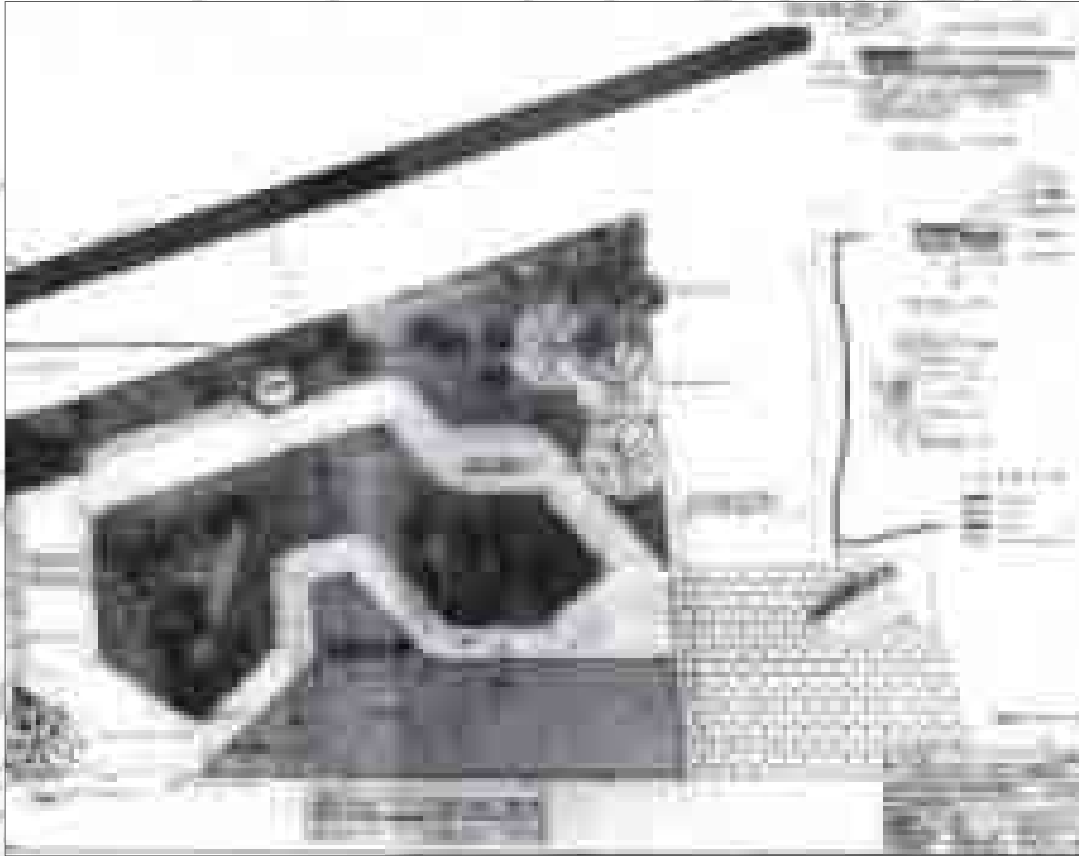
**FIGURE 3**  
 ARCHITECTURAL PLAN: INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE, LANDSCAPE DESIGN, PLANTATION, 1966, HARPER-LANTZIUS CONSORTIUM, DASTOUS-POTHIER ARCHITECTS, GOVERNMENT OF CANADA. REPRODUCED WITH THE PERMISSION OF PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA (2012). SOURCE: LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/CANADIAN CORPORATION FOR THE 1967 WORLD EXPOSITION FONDS/BOBINE M-1518, RÉF. 200-15, PROJET T

**Cité du Havre** landscape designs by the **Harper Lantzius consortium**. Comprised of Doug Harper and John Lantzius, the consortium designed the majority of layouts and construction details surrounding the pavilions in the site entrance zone. Among them are the Administration, Photography, Welcome and the Man the Creator pavilions.

**La Ronde master plan** by **Sasaki Strong & Associates - James Secord Consortium, Landscape Architects and Site Planners**. This office was set up by Canadian Richard Strong and American architect Hideo Sasaki. La Ronde is an amusement park consisting of thematic recreational areas such as the entrance area, the fountain square and Children's World (designed by John Schreiber). As well as planning the layout of these areas, the group drew up construction plans for several of them.

**D.W. Graham & Associates** drew up plans for the **Lac des Régates vicinity, known as parc Sud-Ouest, on île Notre-Dame**. The firm designed Expo 67's most "natural" site, intended for strolling and relaxation and lacking pavilions. The park, with its sampling of typical Canadian landscapes, is distinct from the others owing to its organic shape language, preponderance of vegetation and the use of the path.

Landscape architects' contribution was significant, giving aesthetic unity to the entire site and connecting the pavilions with rest areas, small squares and parks. This period helped assert the importance of landscape architects to major projects and coincided with the emergence of multidisciplinary and the founding of new university programs in landscape architecture, as confirmed by the individuals interviewed. Undoubtedly, this period represents a watershed in the history of the profession.



**FIGURE 4**

ARCHITECTURAL PLAN: MISCELLANEOUS PAVING, LOT 4048, ÎLE NOTRE-DAME, PROJECT PLANNING ASSOCIATES CONSORTIUM © GOVERNMENT OF CANADA. REPRODUCED WITH THE PERMISSION OF PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA (2012). SOURCE: LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/[CANADIAN CORPORATION FOR THE 1967 WORLD EXPOSITION FONDS/REEL M-1503, REF. 100-70N, PROJECT D](#)

**NOTES:**

Works by Taylor, J. R. (2006), *The Practice of Landscape Architecture in Canada*, LeGeyt, L.M. (1997), *Changing The Face of Canada: profiles of Landscape Architects*, vol. 1 and Paine, C. (1998), *Cinquante ans d'architecture de paysage* have discussed landscape architects' contributions to Expo 67.

Landscape architects also contributed to designing the areas around the pavilions (for example, C. Oberlander and the Canada pavilion), but for feasibility reasons this research looked only at master plans. Our thanks to the following individuals who agreed to answer our questions: Pierre Bourque, Don W. Graham, André Hoffmann, Peter Jacobs, Brad Johnson and Ron Williams.

The construction of islands in the St. Lawrence River radically transformed the river landscape in Montreal. The expansion of île Sainte-Hélène and the creation of île Notre-Dame required more than 35 million tonnes of fill – an effort that would surely be unacceptable today.

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Research team:

Principal researcher: Nicole Valois, landscape architect and associate professor, University of Montréal, School of Landscape Architecture.  
Research associate: Jonathan Cha, landscape architect and instructor, University of Montréal, School of Landscape Architecture.  
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Research findings were presented to the 39<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada, May 23-26, 2012, Carleton University, Ottawa.

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