

TWENTY + CHANGE

EMERGING CANADIAN DESIGN PRACTICES

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EVOKE International Design Inc.

Vancouver, British Columbia

EVOKE International Design Inc. was formed in 2001 by David Nicolay and Robert Edmonds. The practice combines conceptual thinking, spacial, interior and graphic design to ensure a consistent and coherent environment for each client. Projects have included residences, restaurants, hotels, and retail establishments. EVOKE has successfully branded and opened two restaurants of its own, Habit Lounge and the Cascade Room in Vancouver. The partnership has also launched a line of T-shirts and created concert street posters for Live Nation in Vancouver and New Orleans. Furniture and lighting prototypes are currently in development.

The company's guiding aesthetic principle is that an overall concept must be all-consuming in order to be successful. Corporate identity, signage, and graphics must not only complement, but also challenge and inform the interior/exterior design of an environment. Conversely, that interior design must have the ability to enhance communication between space and object. It is these two aspects that must go hand in hand in the design and execution of a successful branded environment.



W9 Houses

Vancouver, BC

The proposal is a plan for two houses on adjacent standard lots in the Point Grey neighbourhood of Vancouver, an RS-1 “outright approval” zoning district. In RS-1 areas single-family residential projects are, in effect, guaranteed approval because the city wishes to maintain the residential character for the district while preserving outdoor space and views.

The challenge was to create a unique aesthetic for each house, despite the required economy of scale and similar floor plans. In addition, the houses were to be reflective of current design directions and technologies, utilizing green practices and materials. Finally, the objective was a plan that “lives large” despite the restrictive floor area and building envelope allowances.

In many cases, new houses built in this district are designed to mimic the historical aesthetic of the neighbourhood, but with lower-quality materials and detail. Often, two adjacent houses are virtually identical, and are simply “mirrored” on their sites to create a minimal sense of individuality. Evoke International’s approach was to differentiate the façades through the use of materials (zinc, wood panels, stone, and cedar), massing and the placement of the windows. Both houses maintain the streetscape’s scale, landscaping, and privacy. Open planning and a minimum of single-use rooms give the 2,000-square-foot floor plans a sense of spaciousness, and fluidity of movement from inside to outside.

The City of Vancouver’s Building By-law Amendments for Green Homes meant that the W9 design was able to incorporate many green strategies, including sustainable exterior materials (zinc cladding, Prodema wood panels, natural stone, certified red cedar), polished concrete floors, low VOC interior finishes, and plans for the future installation of solar panels and an electric car charging system.



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