

Blanche Lemco van Ginkel (1923-) Planner + Architect Extraordinaire

Presentation to:
**Canadian Institute of Planners
2019 Convention in Ottawa**

Presentation by:
John van Nostrand, FRAIC, FCIP

July 2019

BY 1950

At the age of **27 years** Blanche Lemco had graduated in both Architecture (**McGill 1945**) and Planning (**Harvard 1950**) and she had already:

- Worked for **Le Corbusier** in Paris on the roof design of his famous **Unite d'Habitation in Marseille**
- Worked with **Eugene Faludi** on Development Plans for **Windsor + Regina**
 - Joined CMHC as one of its first City Planners



1941


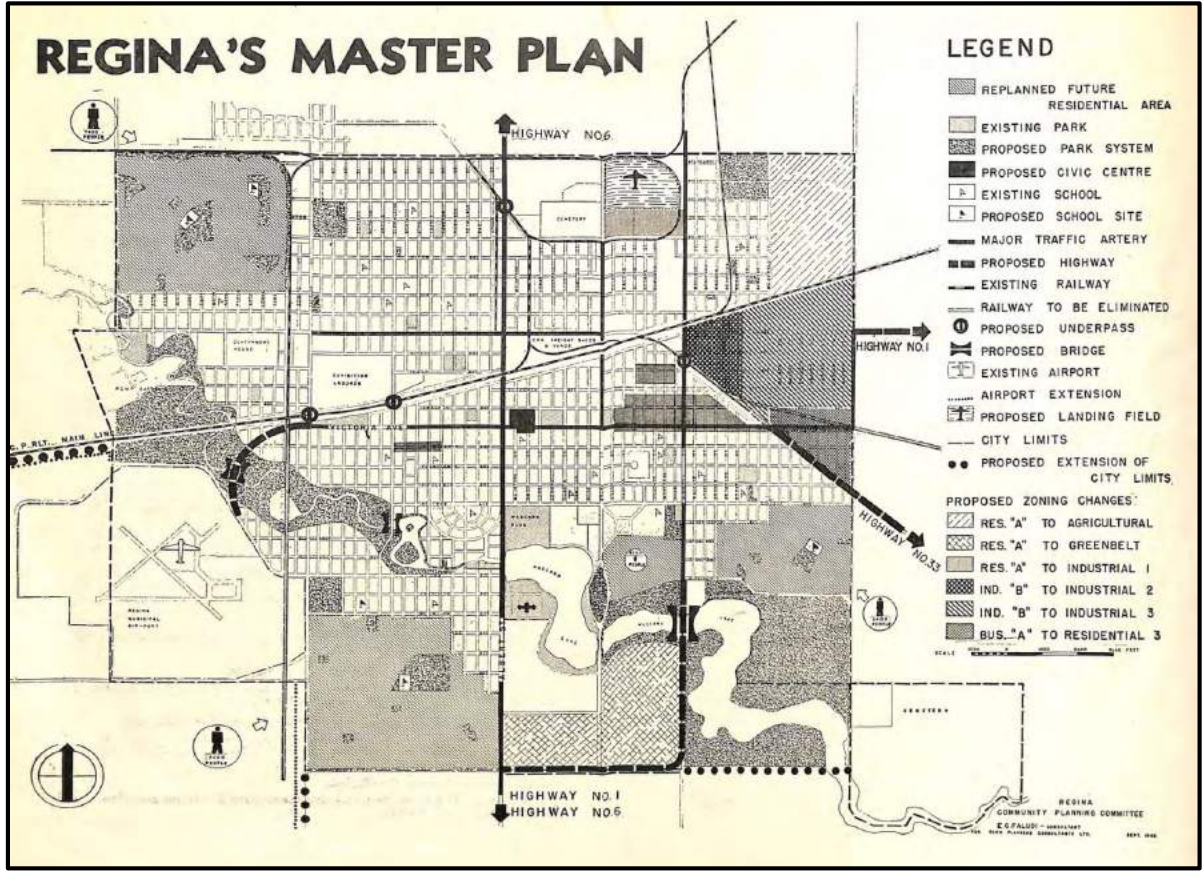
NAC 6830 Reg
A THIRTY YEAR PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPMENT

HARVARD LAND, ARCH. & REGIONAL PLANNING LIB.

REGINA 1946-1976

(CANADA)

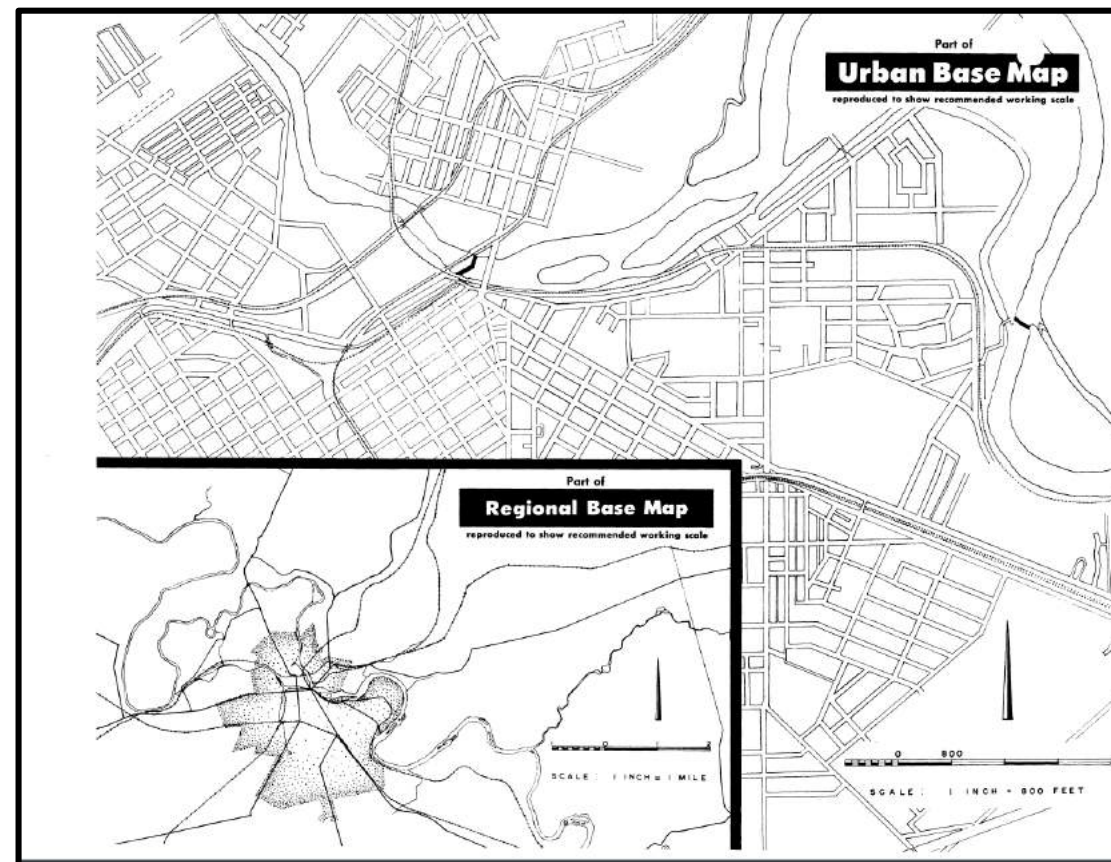
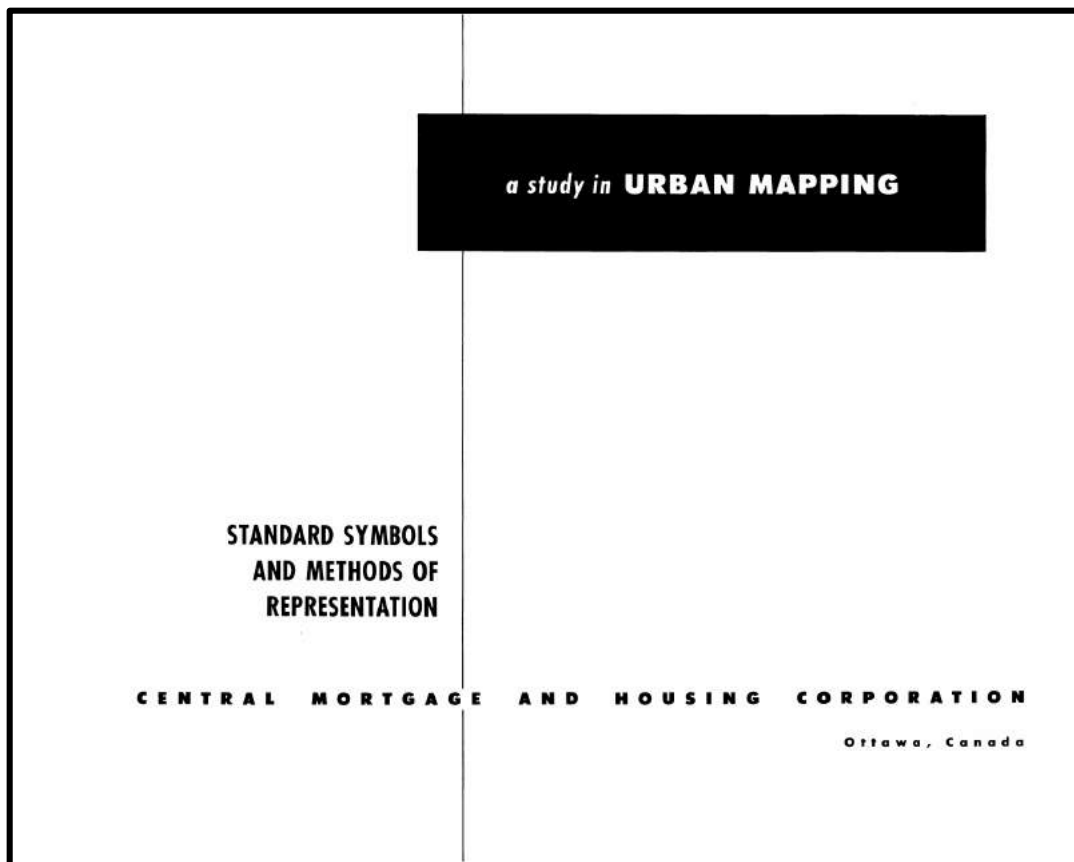
COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Regina Master Plan - Town Planning Consultants (Eugene Faludi); 1946



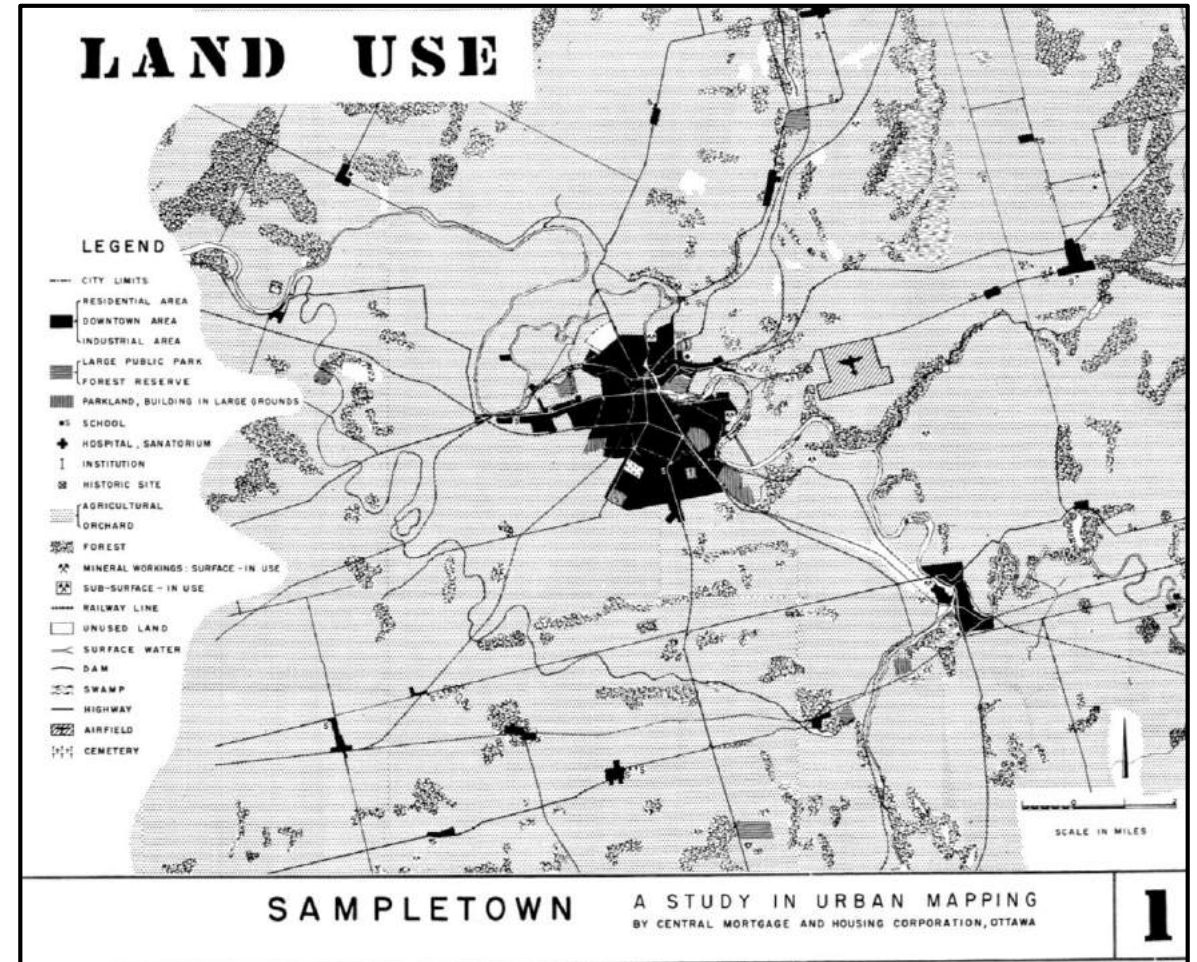
The Roof of Le Corbusier's Unite d'Habitation, Marseilles



A study in URBAN MAPPING; CMHC, 1949

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The Regional Maps	1 LAND USE	Urban uses of land in relation with agricultural areas
	2 SOIL QUALITY	Location of top soil according to degree of fertility
	3 TRIBUTARY AREAS	Extent of area influenced by urban facilities
	4 ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS	Extent and type of local government jurisdictions
	5 COMMUNICATIONS	Network of regional communications
The Urban Maps	6 LAND USE	Distribution of residential, commercial, industrial, etc. uses
	7 POPULATION, living	Distribution of population by place of residence
	8 POPULATION, working	Distribution of population by place of employment
	9 SERVICES	A Sewers and Watermains B Gas and Power
	10 COMMUNICATIONS	Traffic arteries in relation with local street system
	11 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION	Bus and Tramway Routes
	12 EDUCATION	Location, type and capacity of schools
	13 RECREATION	Location and type of recreational open spaces
	14 AGE OF BUILDINGS	Urban development by approximate date of construction
	15 MUNICIPAL BUDGET	Income and Expenditures by source of revenue



A study in URBAN MAPPING; CMHC, 1949

BY 1960

Blanche moved to Philadelphia and founded **Blanche Lemco Architect + Planner**

Taught at the **University of Pennsylvania** in the School of Fine Arts (Planning) + the Department of Architecture

Initiated a **CIAM** Branch (*Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Modern*) in Philadelphia with Robert Geddes

Met her future husband Sandy van Ginkel + helped found **Team Ten**

1958 – van Ginkel Associates (VGA) founded in Montreal - Design for Bowring Park, St John's, Newfoundland a first job

Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) **+ *Team Ten Sessions attended By Blanche Lenco (van Ginkel)***

- 1947, CIAM VI, [Bridgwater](#), England, Reaffirmation of the aims of CIAM
 - 1951, CIAM VIII, [Hoddesdon](#), England, on The Heart of the City
 - 1953, CIAM IX, [Aix-en-Provence](#), France, on Habitat (**met Sandy**)
 - 1954 **Team Ten** (Doorn) – Statement on Habitat (sandy van Ginkel)
 - 1956, CIAM X, [Dubrovnik](#), Yugoslavia (now Croatia), on Habitat
- 1959, CIAM XI, [Otterlo](#), the Netherlands, **dissolution of CIAM by [Team 10](#)**



CIAM IX in Aix-en-Provence, presenting Levittown and seated beside Peter Oberlander, 1953



1960s (Credit: Couzins Films)



Levittown New York + Pennsylvania, 1947-57



Presenting Maquette of Counter-Plan to Levittown (Credit: Couzins Films)



Blanche Lemco + Sandy van Ginkel, married in 1956



CIAM Group at Otterlo, 1959



At CIAM / Team Ten Otterlo, 1959



**Blanche + Sandy's Presenting *Bowering Park (St. John's, Newfoundland)*
at CIAM XI in Otterlo, 1959**

BY 1970

Bowring Park (St. John's Newfoundland) - final planning of expansion from 50 to 200 acres, including bridge design by the "noted modernist architect," Blanche Lemco van Ginkel. in collaboration with Arup Partners

Awarded Massey Medal for Architecture, 1964

VGA (Blanche) hired to develop a Concept for an "the International Universal Exhibition [Expo '67]" located on St. Helen's Island (Montreal)

VGA hired to identify Physical Theme + Planning + Design Guidelines for Expo '67. VGA nominated their student Moshe Safdie as Architect for Habitat '67



Bowring Park, St. John's Newfoundland



Meadowvale Today

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS CONVENTION

January 1963

INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSAL EXHIBITION 1967

"A Concept"

Blanche van Ginkel

Civilization depends on communication
and at one time all roads led to Rome.

A culture develops from the interaction of ideas
from the communion of men
gleaning information
sharpening wits one against the other

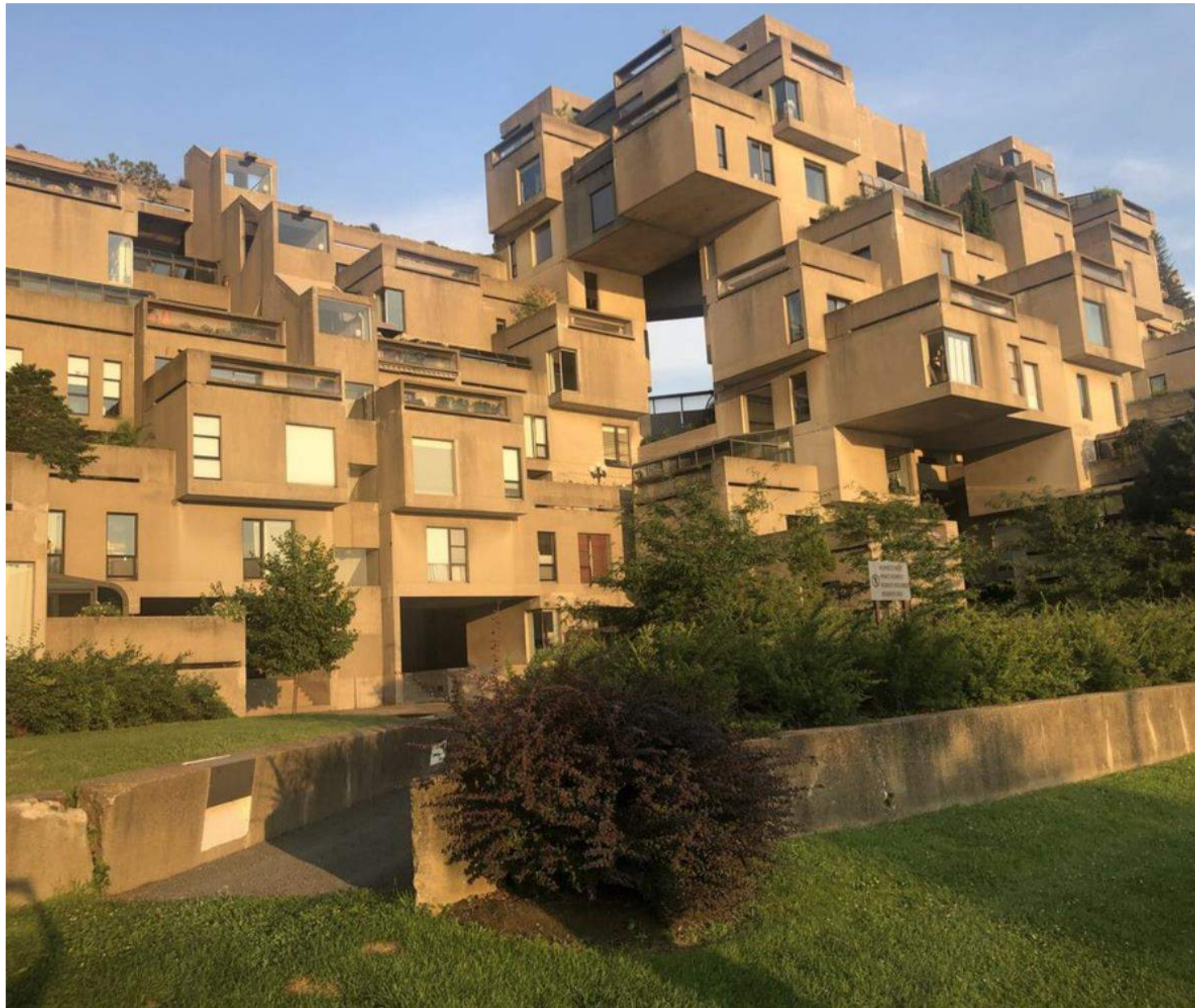
The roots of our culture lie in the Agora of Athens
the meeting place at the heart of the city,
the focus of a seafaring people.

Material and intellectual riches gathered from the shores of the
Mediterranean,
and in the Agora culled, assimilated,
to produce a new way of life

"Concept for An International Universal Exhibition 1967", 1963



Expo 67



Habitat '67

BY 1980

VGA hired to participate in **Midtown Manhattan Transportation Plan** – creating **Ginlelvan**, Office of the Mayor, New York City 1970-76

Atlas and studies of the **Mackenzie Valley Communities** for Canadian Arctic Gas Study, Ltd; Mackenzie Valley Pipeline + follow-up study on “Building In The North”

Appointed to the **National Capital Planning Committee** (1975-83)

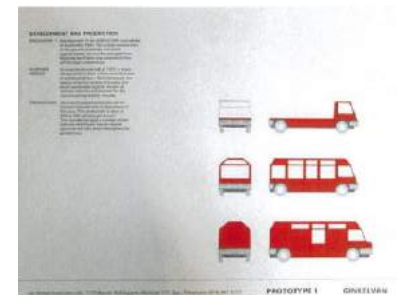
1977 Hired as **Dean, School of Architecture , University of Toronto** – became Faculty of Architecture + Landscape Architecture in 1981

The Ginkelvan, a 20- passenger mini-bus (or maxi taxi) that is no longer than a Cadillac limousine and was designed for crowded city centers, as shown for the first time

Van Ginkel's study proposed a network of pedestrian streets in the midtown area closed to all traffic except for some form of public transport "that would zip people in style, comfort and elegance the short distances they might not wish to walk."



With the *Ginkelvan* + Mayor Lindsay in NYC,
Midtown Manhattan Transportation Plan, 1972 -74





Dean of The School of Architecture, University of Toronto, 1981



Blanche + Sandy, 2007



The Roof of the Unite d'Habitation



2014

Blanche and Sandy van Ginkel exemplify an elusive period in Canadian planning and architecture, when the city building professions worked much more closely together – and much less competitively.

They were thoroughly modern and deeply optimistic in all aspects of their work. They drew no lines between practice, design, anthropology, planning, engineering, teaching, writing, lecturing and sculpting.

When Blanche received her Honorary Doctorate from McGill in 2014, she was described as “a visionary, a mentor extraordinaire and a true citizen of the World.” She is indeed, an extraordinary Canadian.