

January 8, 2007

The Spadina Expressway Affair

One of the most contentious episodes in Toronto's history – the Spadina Expressway affair – revolved around a stretch of highway. From the late 1960s until its cancellation on June 3, 1971, Torontonians fiercely debated the impact of a highway designed to link the suburbs with downtown and surrounding communities. The Spadina Expressway Affair, an exhibit opening at the Market Gallery on March 3, 2007, will explore the competing interests, public demonstrations and community activism that surrounded the Spadina Expressway.

Focusing on actions taken by the various groups involved in the struggle, particularly the Stop Spadina Save Our City Co-ordinating Committee, the Spadina Expressway Affair will investigate the strategies used by activists and lobbyists on both sides through photographs and other materials. Urban activist Jane Jacobs perched on a bale of hay during a demonstration and Premier Bill Davis publicly announcing the cancellation of the expressway – these and other images are iconic of an unusually tumultuous time in Toronto. The posters, buttons, books, song lyrics, artwork and films produced serve as visual reminders of the extent of the anti-Spadina movement, but also hint at its legacy for future generations.

Guest curated by Tim Whalley and with support from Spacing Magazine, the Spadina Expressway Affair will include historical materials on loan from the Clara Thomas Archives & Special Collections, York University and the City of Toronto Archives. The exhibit will be on display through to July 8, 2007.

The Market Gallery is a program of Toronto Culture and presents changing exhibitions dedicated to Toronto's art, culture, history and offers educational programs for school groups and adults. Located in Toronto's oldest neighbourhood, the main gallery occupies the 19th-century city council chamber, which is all that remains from the City Hall that stood on this site from 1845 -1899.

Admission is free. The Market Gallery is located on the second floor of the South St. Lawrence Market, 95 Front St. E. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday noon to 4 p.m.

For more information on museums and art centres in the City's Culture Division, visit www.toronto.ca/culture.

Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of more than 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. In the past three years Toronto has won more than 50 awards for quality and innovation in delivering public services. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and livability for all its residents.

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