

## **778 King Street West - Notice of Intention to Designate a Property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act**

**Date:** March 1, 2022  
**To:** Toronto Preservation Board  
**From:** Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning  
**Wards:** Spadina - Fort York - Ward 10

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate the property at 778 King Street West under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The property at 778 King Street West comprises a two-storey brick building with stone trim, located on the north side of King Street West, just west of Tecumseth Street. It is a representative example of a mid-twentieth-century industrial headquarters, demonstrating the influence of the Streamlined Moderne style. Designed by Leo Hunt Stanford, the building was constructed in 1947 for the York Mending Wool Company. It was subsequently the location of Uniforms Registered, the notable Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation gallery (1988-2012), and is currently a real estate office. The property reflects the redevelopment of King Street West for textile-related manufacturing during the first half of the twentieth century, as well as the area's later period of adaptive reuse and cultural regeneration.

Heritage Planning staff have determined that the property at 778 King Street West meets Ontario Regulation 9/06 – the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act – for its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values.

In June 2019, the More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019 (Bill 108) received Royal Assent. Schedule 11 of this Act included amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act. The Bill 108 Amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act came into force on July 1, 2021, which included a shift in Part IV designations related to certain Planning Act applications. Section 29(1.2) of the Ontario Heritage Act now restricts City Council's ability to give notice of its intention to designate a property under the Act to within 90 days after the City Clerk gives notice of a complete application.

In November 2021, the City received an application for a Zoning By-law Amendment to facilitate the redevelopment of the site for an 18-storey mixed-use building with a non-

residential gross floor area of 714 square metres, and a residential gross floor area of 24,126 square metres. The building at 778 King Street West is proposed to be demolished as well as the adjacent existing buildings located at 780, 782, 786, and 788 King Street West.

The development application currently under review was deemed complete on January 14, 2022, following the new legislation coming into force. This Notice of Intention to Designate report must be considered by City Council before April 14, 2022.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required for all development applications that affect listed and designated properties and will be considered when determining how a heritage property is to be conserved. An HIA was not submitted for this application. Designation also enables City Council to review proposed alterations or demolitions to the property and enforce heritage property standards and maintenance.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council state its intention to designate the property at 778 King Street West under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the Statement of Significance: 778 King Street West (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 3 to the report (March 1, 2022) from the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning.
2. If there are no objections to the designation, City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the Bill in Council designating the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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There are no previous decisions in regards to this property.

## BACKGROUND

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### Heritage Planning Framework

The conservation of cultural heritage resources is an integral component of good planning, contributing to a sense of place, economic prosperity, and healthy and equitable communities. Heritage conservation in Ontario is identified as a provincial interest under the Planning Act. Cultural heritage resources are considered irreplaceable and valuable assets that must be wisely protected and managed as part of planning for future growth under the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020). Heritage Conservation is enabled through the Ontario Heritage Act. The City of Toronto's Official Plan implements the provincial policy regime, the Planning Act, the Ontario Heritage Act and provides policies to guide decision making within the city.

Good planning within the provincial and municipal policy framework has at its foundation an understanding and appreciation for places of historic significance, and ensures the conservation of these resources are to be balanced with other provincial interests. Heritage resources may include buildings, structures, monuments, and geographic areas that have cultural heritage value or interest to a community, including an Indigenous community.

The Planning Act establishes the foundation for land use planning in Ontario, describing how land can be controlled and by whom. Section 2 of the Planning Act identifies heritage conservation as a matter of provincial interest and directs that municipalities shall have regard to the conservation of features of significant architectural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest. Heritage conservation contributes to other matters of provincial interest, including the promotion of built form that is well-designed, and that encourages a sense of place.

The Planning Act requires that all decisions affecting land use planning matters shall conform to the Growth Plan and shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, both of which position heritage as a key component in supporting key provincial principles and interests.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>

The Provincial Policy Statement provides policy direction on land use planning in Ontario and is to be used by municipalities in the development of their official plans and to guide and inform decisions on planning matters, which shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. The Provincial Policy Statement articulates how and why heritage conservation is a component of good planning, explicitly requiring the conservation of cultural heritage and archaeological resources, alongside the pursuit of other provincial interests. The Provincial Policy Statement does so by linking heritage conservation to key policy directives, including building strong healthy communities, the wise use and management of resources, and protecting health and safety.

Section 1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development states that long-term economic prosperity is supported by, among other

considerations, the promotion of well-designed built form and cultural planning, and the conservation of features that help define character. Section 2.6 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology subsequently directs that "significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved". Through the definition of conserved, built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscape and protected heritage property, the Provincial Policy Statement identifies the Ontario Heritage Act as the primary legislation through which heritage conservation will be implemented.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020>

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) builds on the Provincial Policy Statement to establish a land use planning framework that supports complete communities, a thriving economy, a clean and healthy environment and social equity. Section 1.2.1 Guiding Principles states that policies in the plan seek to, among other principles, "conserve and promote cultural heritage resources to support the social, economic, and cultural well-being of all communities, including First Nations and Metis communities". Cultural heritage resources are understood as being irreplaceable, and are significant features that provide people with a sense of place. Section 4.2.7 Cultural Heritage Resources directs that cultural heritage resources will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, particularly in strategic growth areas.

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/place-grow-growth-plan-greater-golden-horseshoe>

The Ontario Heritage Act is the key provincial legislation for the conservation of cultural heritage resources in Ontario. It regulates, among other things, how municipal councils can identify and protect heritage resources, including archaeology, within municipal boundaries. This is largely achieved through listing on the City's Heritage Register, designation of individual properties under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, or designation of districts under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act gives municipalities the authority to maintain and add to a publicly accessible heritage register. The City of Toronto's Heritage Register includes individual heritage properties that have been designated under Part IV, Section 29, properties in a heritage conservation district designated under Part V, Section 41 of the Act as well as properties that have not been designated but City Council believes to be of "cultural heritage value or interest."

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o18>

Ontario Regulation 9/06 sets out the criteria for evaluating properties to be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The criteria are based on an evaluation of design/physical value, historical and associative value and contextual value. A property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets one or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060009>

The Ontario Heritage Toolkit provides guidance on designating properties of municipal significance, including direction on the purpose of designating heritage properties and information about how the Provincial Policy Statement and the Ontario Heritage Act provide a framework for the conservation of heritage properties within the land use planning system. In June 2019, the More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019 (Bill 108)

received Royal Assent. Schedule 11 of this Act included amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA). The Bill 108 Amendments to the OHA came into force on July 1, 2021, which included, amongst other matters, amendments to the listing and designation processes. Guidance from the Province related to the implementation of Bill 108 Amendments is forthcoming.

[Ontario Heritage Tool Kit \(gov.on.ca\)](https://www.gov.on.ca)

The City of Toronto's Official Plan contains a number of policies related to properties on the City's Heritage Register and properties adjacent to them, as well as the protection of areas of archaeological potential. Indicating the integral role that heritage conservation plays in successful city-building, Section 3.1.5 of the Official Plan states that, "Cultural heritage is an important component of sustainable development and place making. The preservation of our cultural heritage is essential to the character of this urban and liveable City that can contribute to other social, cultural, economic and environmental goals of the City."

Policy 3.1.5.4 states that heritage resources on the City's Heritage Register "will be conserved and maintained consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, as revised from time to time and adopted by Council."

Policy 3.1.5.6 encourages the adaptive re-use of heritage properties while Policy 3.1.5.26 states that, when new construction on, or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register does occur, it will be designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of that property and will mitigate visual and physical impacts on it.

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>  
<https://www.historicplaces.ca/media/18072/81468-parks-s+g-eng-web2.pdf>

## COMMENTS

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In November 2021, the City received an application for a Zoning By-law Amendment to facilitate the redevelopment of the site at 778-788 King Street West for an 18-storey mixed-use building with a non-residential gross floor area of 714 square metres, and a residential gross floor area of 24,126 square metres. The proposal includes 373 residential units. The building at 778 King Street West is proposed to be demolished as well as the adjacent existing buildings located at 780, 782, 786, and 788 King Street West.

Dating to 1947, this former industrial headquarters and factory reflects a period of substantial redevelopment along King Street West, east of Niagara Street. For over 70 years, the former York Mending Wool Company building, later Uniforms Registered and the notable Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation gallery, has been physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings, initially as a contributor to King Street West for textile-related manufacturing during the first half of the twentieth century, as well as to the area's later period of adaptive reuse and cultural regeneration.



The regeneration of the formerly industrial streetscape of King Street, particularly closer to Spadina Avenue and in the neighbouring King-Spadina area, accelerated in the 1980s and 1990s, introducing new cultural and commercial uses to existing buildings. The subject property is located two blocks west of the proposed King-Spadina Heritage Conservation District, which is currently under appeal.

**778 King Street West**

**Research and Evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06**

While the research and evaluation of the property referenced above is, in staff's determination, sufficient to support the designation of the property at 778 King Street West, it should be noted that the City of Toronto Archives remained closed during the preparation of this report due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and that new and additional relevant information on the subject property further expanding on its heritage value may be forthcoming following public access to these archival records and may provide further information to be incorporated in the final version of a Part IV designation by-law.



Figure 1: 778 King Street West (Heritage Planning, 2022.)

## 1. DESCRIPTION

778 King Street West	
ADDRESS	778 King Street West
WARD	Spadina - Fort York - Ward 10
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	778: PLAN 126 LOTS 2 TO 4 PT LOT 5
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Niagara
HISTORICAL NAME	N/A
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1947
ORIGINAL OWNER	Harold A. Kidd
ORIGINAL USE	industrial building for York Mending Wool Co.
CURRENT USE*	real estate office for Brad J. Lamb Realty Inc.
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	Leo Hunt Stanford Architect
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	brick, stone detailing
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	vernacular/Streamlined Moderne
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	1987-1988: alterations for conversion from storage warehouse to artist's studio and gallery (Lett/Smith Architect) 2013: exterior alterations to the south elevation, and interior alterations to existing ground floor for conversion to office space
CRITERIA	design/physical, historical/associative, contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	NOL
RECORDER	Heritage Planning: Tatum Taylor
REPORT DATE	March 2022

## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation section of the report describes the history, architecture and context of the subject property at 778 King Street West and applies evaluation criteria as set out in Ontario Regulation 9/06, under the headings of historical/associative, design/physical, and contextual value, to determine whether it merits designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets one or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest. The application of the criteria is found in Section 3 (Evaluation Checklist). The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in the Conclusion of the report. Maps and Photographs are located in Attachment 1. The archival and contemporary sources for the research are found in Attachment 2. The Statement of Significance is contained in Attachment 3.

## i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
	The area now known as the City of Toronto is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit (1805), and the Williams Treaties (1923) signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.
1793	John Graves Simcoe, Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, established the Town of York as Upper Canada's capital.
1834	The City of Toronto was incorporated, by which time its western boundary had been extended to Bathurst Street.
1889	The Goad's Atlas shows that the location of the subject property had been developed with wood-frame housing by 1889.
1939	An aerial photograph shows that the portion of the lot where the subject property is situated had been cleared by 1939.
1947	Construction took place on the property at 778 King Street West, designed by Leo Hunt Stanford Architect.
1948	The property at 778 King Street West first appeared in the 1948 municipal directory, occupied by York Mending Wool Co; it remained through the 1958 municipal directory.
1959	The 1959 municipal directory identified Uniforms Registered at this location; it remained until the 1980s.
1988	The Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation gallery opened in the renovated property at 778 King Street West. The gallery closed in 2012.
2013	The property at 778 King Street West underwent alterations related to new use as an office building by Brad J. Lamb Realty Inc.
2021	A Zoning By-law Amendment application was submitted to the City to facilitate the development of an 18-storey mixed-use building at 778-788 King Street West.

## ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The following section outlines the history and facts related to the property that are the basis for determining "Historical and Associative Value" according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

In 1834, the Act of Incorporation for the City of Toronto extended the boundaries of the Town of York to Bathurst Street in the west. Following a survey in 1837, the former Military Reserve lands, referred to as the "New Town Extension," were laid out with a street grid organized around four open squares: West Market Square, McDonnell Square, Victoria Memorial Square, and Clarence Square. The site of the subject property was located on Lot 29 of a plan surveyed by William Hawkins in 1837. As industries expanded in the City, spurred by the establishment of transcontinental



railways, the subdivided lands in this area were developed, largely to accommodate housing for a growing population.

By 1889, this portion of King Street West and the majority of the block to the north was occupied by housing, primarily semi-detached residences. The western portion of the block along Niagara Street included a school, a lumberyard, and a factory, and continued to be built out with larger-footprint industrial buildings over the turn of the twentieth century. By 1913, brick industrial buildings had been constructed at 784-786 King Street West, just west of the subject property, and across the street at 785-793 King Street West. Several of the earlier wood residences on the north side of King Street West had been removed by the time of the 1924 Goad's Atlas. A 1939 aerial photograph appears to show that all of the original housing here had been demolished prior to World War II, including at the subject property; most of these lots remained vacant at the time of the photograph. In stark contrast, a 1954 aerial photograph shows the entire north side of this portion of King Street West had been redeveloped with industrial and commercial buildings, reflecting a degree of economic recovery after the war's end in 1945.

Land registry records document Harold A. Kidd's association with Plan 126 Lots 2, 3, 4 – location of the subject property – as early as 1945. Kidd purchased the property on behalf of the York Mending Wool Company, a manufacturer of woolen yarn. The company announced its intention to expand through a new building in the *Globe and Mail* in 1946. By 1948 it was listed in the municipal directory at 778 King Street West, where it remained through 1958.

For the building's design, the York Mending Wool Company engaged architect Leo Hunt Stanford, son and business partner of Joseph Hunt Stanford. The elder Stanford was trained in England and established his own firm in Toronto in 1904; he specialized in private houses and walk-up apartment buildings. Leo Hunt Stanford joined him in partnership in 1922. Upon his death in 1970, the younger Stanford's obituary in the *Toronto Daily Star* identified him as the senior partner of Stanford and Wilson, and named his firm's key designs as the Canadian National Institute for the Blind headquarters on Bayview Avenue, and the Crippled Children's Centre on Rumsey Road.

The building at 778 King Street West next served as a factory for Uniforms Registered, a company which manufactured uniforms for nurses and other professionals, and sold them through retail outlets such as Eaton's. Uniforms Registered remained at this location until the 1980s, during which period it was carrying a collection by the noted Canadian fashion designer Hugh Garber.

In 1987, artist and curator Ydessa Hendeles purchased the building to house a non-profit private art gallery, the Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation. The daughter of Jacob and Dorothy Hendeles, Holocaust survivors who had immigrated to Canada from Poland, Hendeles was the heiress to a fortune amassed by her father's real estate business. She achieved success in her own right first as curator of the commercial Ydessa Gallery on Queen Street West, which opened in 1980 and, according to *The Globe and Mail*, "rapidly became Toronto's key new gallery of advanced contemporary

art."<sup>1</sup> She closed this first gallery to establish the Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation, which would be "Canada's first privately-financed showcase of contemporary international art."<sup>2</sup> Exhibiting artwork that Hendeles collected from Europe and North America, the gallery would be open to the public at no charge.

Hendeles hired Peter Smith of Lett/Smith Architect to lead the renovation at 778 King Street West. Smith had previously undertaken the renovation of a 1926 powerhouse to become The Power Plant at the Harbourfront Arts Centre, as well as Harbourfront's du Maurier Theatre Centre. The adaptive reuse scheme at 778 King Street West included the creation of ten separate gallery rooms, envisioned as minimalist spaces that took advantage of the existing industrial architecture. As Hendeles explained to Christopher Hume of the *Toronto Star*, "I wanted rooms without the intrusions of mechanical equipment and ductwork...The idea was to make spaces really simple, to get back to floor, walls and ceiling. I also wanted to leave things the way they were as much as possible."<sup>3</sup> Occupying the building from 1988 until 2012, the Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation was a ground-breaking gallery that played a significant role in forging connections between Toronto and the international contemporary art scene.<sup>4,5</sup>

In 2013, the property was sold and underwent renovations, including removal of the Uniforms Registered signage, removal of the metal door and metal awning over the entry, lowering of the window openings at the ground storey, removal of the glass blocks and window glazing on the primary façade, and their replacement with single-pane windows. The building has since served as a realty office for Brad J. Lamb Realty Inc.

### iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The following section provides an architectural description and analysis related to the property which will establish the basis for determining 'Design and Physical Value' according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The property at 778 King Street West, constructed in 1946-1947, represents a mid-twentieth-century industrial headquarters. It demonstrates elements of the Streamlined Moderne style, a later variant of Art Deco architecture, which had first grown popular in Toronto during the 1920s and 1930s. After the Great Depression, the more extravagant Art Deco approach gave way to Moderne buildings with fewer storeys, a compositional emphasis on horizontality instead of on bold heights, and more accessible materials such as brick instead of stone. While 778 King Street West does not include the banded

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<sup>1</sup> John Bentley Mays, "Great Canadian Talent-Drain Tale, with twist," *The Globe and Mail*, 3 Oct. 1987, P. C17.

<sup>2</sup> John Bentley Mays, "Showcase for contemporary international art," *The Globe and Mail*, 25 Nov. 1988, P. D8.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher Hume, "Ydessa's idea puts T.O. on top of art world," *Toronto Star*, 25 Nov. 1988, P. D3.

<sup>4</sup> See for example: <http://ccca.concordia.ca/c/writing/f/feinstein/fei001t.html>

<sup>5</sup> Additional records related to the building's adaptive reuse as the Ydessa Hendeles Foundation art gallery are held at the City of Toronto Archives (Fonds 520, Series 2332, File 235) and the Archives of Ontario (Series F 446-180), but could not be accessed at the time of this report due to restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

windows and curved corners that are typical of Streamlined Moderne buildings, the property clearly reflects the influence of the late Art Deco period in its composition, material palette, and detailing.

A two-storey form with a flat roof, the building is faced in red-orange brick with stone trim. The west end of the primary (south) façade consists of an entry bay, clad in stone on the ground floor, with tiered brick pilasters and stone coping at the upper storey. The recessed door is a glazed replacement of the former metal entrance. To the east, the façade is organized into four bays with stone belt courses emphasizing horizontality, small stone geometric motifs below the roofline, and stone coping. While the primary elevation's glazing was altered in 2013, the building retains the original horizontal rhythm of fenestration. A vertical glazed panel is situated above the entry, formerly including glass block, and each additional bay features a wide opening at the lower and upper storey, originally each with a twelve-light window and now with single-paned glazing.

The building's east elevation, which is visible from the public realm due to the presence of a side alley, remains intact and retains its large panels of glass block at the upper storey.

Previous alterations, designed by architect Peter Smith, took place in 1987 to convert the building from a factory to an art gallery, and were primarily confined to the interior. The extent to which these alterations have been retained through the building's subsequent use as a real estate office is unconfirmed, but the large skylight added by Smith, running horizontally across the building's centre, remains present.

#### **iv. CONTEXT**

The following section provides contextual information and analysis related to the property which is the basis for determining 'Contextual Value' according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The property at 778 King Street West is located on the north side of King Street West between Niagara and Tecumseth streets. Dating to 1947, this former industrial headquarters and factory reflects a period of substantial redevelopment along King Street West, east of Niagara Street. Between the turn of the twentieth century and the 1950s, with a general pause during World War II (1939-1945), much of the early housing in this area was gradually demolished and replaced with larger-footprint industrial and commercial buildings.

From 1945 to 1948, the textile industries in Canada increased their production. As of a 1949 national report on the woollen textile industry, the subject property was one of three manufacturers of woollen yarn products on King Street West in the two blocks between Niagara and Bathurst streets. Directories show that the properties immediately west of 778 King Street West included a die maker (780 King Street West), a cloth finishing company (786 King Street West), and upholstering and wool sorting companies (788 King Street West) in the 1950s.

The regeneration of the formerly industrial streetscape of King Street, particularly closer to Spadina Avenue, began in the 1960s and accelerated in the 1980s and 1990s, introducing new cultural and commercial uses to existing buildings. The Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation at the subject property reflected this pattern of adaptive reuse.

Since that time, the block that includes 778 King Street West has evolved, particularly with the 2013 construction of Minto 775 King Street West, a large condominium designed by Hariri Pontarini Architects and located directly across the street. The subject property remains an important reflection of the area's history, defined by industrial development and adaptive reuse.

### 3. EVALUATION AND APPLICATION OF O.REG 9/06 CRITERIA

The following evaluations apply Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, and the City of Toronto also uses these criteria when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register. There are three categories for a total of nine criteria under O. Reg 9/06. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets one or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

The evaluation table is marked "N/A" if the criterion is "not applicable" to the property or "√" if it is applicable to the property, with explanatory text below.

#### DESIGN OR PHYSICAL VALUE

Design or Physical Value	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	√
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	N/A
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	N/A

*Rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method*

The property at 778 King Street West is a representative example of a mid-twentieth-century industrial headquarters, demonstrating the influence of the Streamlined Moderne style in its material palette, detailing, and horizontal emphasis.

The building retains its red-orange brick exterior, tiered brick pilasters above a stone-clad entry, stone detailing such as belt courses and geometric motifs, and horizontal rhythm of fenestration on the primary (south) elevation, despite the lowering of the ground-floor window openings, as well as intact architectural details on the east elevation such as the glass block panels.

## HISTORICAL OR ASSOCIATIVE VALUE

Historical or Associative Value	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	✓
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	N/A
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	N/A

*Direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community*

Constructed for the York Mending Wool Company in 1947, the subject property has direct associations with the redevelopment of King Street West for manufacturing. The property was one of a number of buildings in the immediate vicinity on King Street West that represented textile-related industries.

The property also reflects the later period of cultural regeneration along King Street West, and has associative value as the location of the Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation Gallery from 1988 to 2012. After artist and curator Ydessa Hendeles hired architect Peter Smith to renovate the building, she operated a celebrated non-profit centre for exhibiting international contemporary art in Canada.

Peter Smith of Lett/Smith Architect led the property's successful adaptive reuse and renovation at 778 King Street West. Smith had previously undertaken the renovation of a 1926 powerhouse to become The Power Plant at the Harbourfront Arts Centre, as well as Harbourfront's du Maurier Theatre Centre.

## CONTEXTUAL VALUE

Contextual Value	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	N/A
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	✓
iii. landmark	N/A

For over 70 years, the former York Mending Wool Company building, later Uniforms Registered and the notable Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation gallery, has been physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings, initially as a contributor to King Street West for manufacturing during the first half of the twentieth century, as well as to the area's later period of adaptive reuse and cultural regeneration.

## CONCLUSION

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Heritage Planning staff have determined that the property at 778 King Street West meets the Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria, prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, for its heritage value. As such, the property is a significant built heritage resource, and staff recommend that City Council state its intention to designate the individual property at 778 King Street West under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The building located on the property at 778 King Street West holds heritage value as a representative example of a mid-twentieth-century industrial headquarters, demonstrating the influence of the Streamlined Moderne style. The property reflects the redevelopment of King Street West for manufacturing during the first half of the twentieth century, as well as the area's later period of adaptive reuse and cultural regeneration. The Statement of Significance (Attachment 3) for 778 King Street West comprises the Reasons for Designation, which is the Public Notice of Intention to Designate.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Mary L. MacDonald, MA, CAHP  
Senior Manager, Heritage Planning  
Urban Design, City Planning

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1 – Maps and Photographs  
Attachment 2 – List of Research Sources  
Attachment 3 – Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation): 778 King Street West



**778 KING STREET WEST  
MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS**

**ATTACHMENT 1**



Figure 2: Location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow. Note: This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown. North is located at the top of the map. (City of Toronto mapping.)



Figure 3: William Hawkins survey plan, 1837; future location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.





Figure 4: 1889 Goad's Atlas of the City of Toronto; future location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.



Figure 5: 1903 Goad's Atlas of the City of Toronto; future location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.



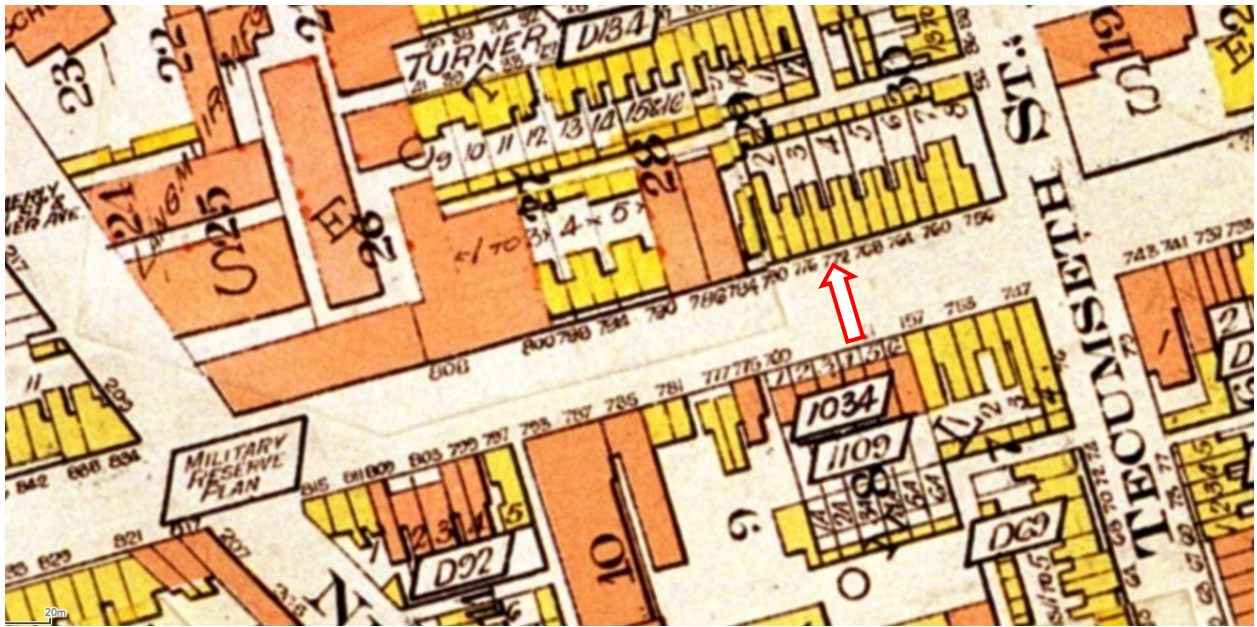


Figure 6: 1913 Goad's Atlas of the City of Toronto; future location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.

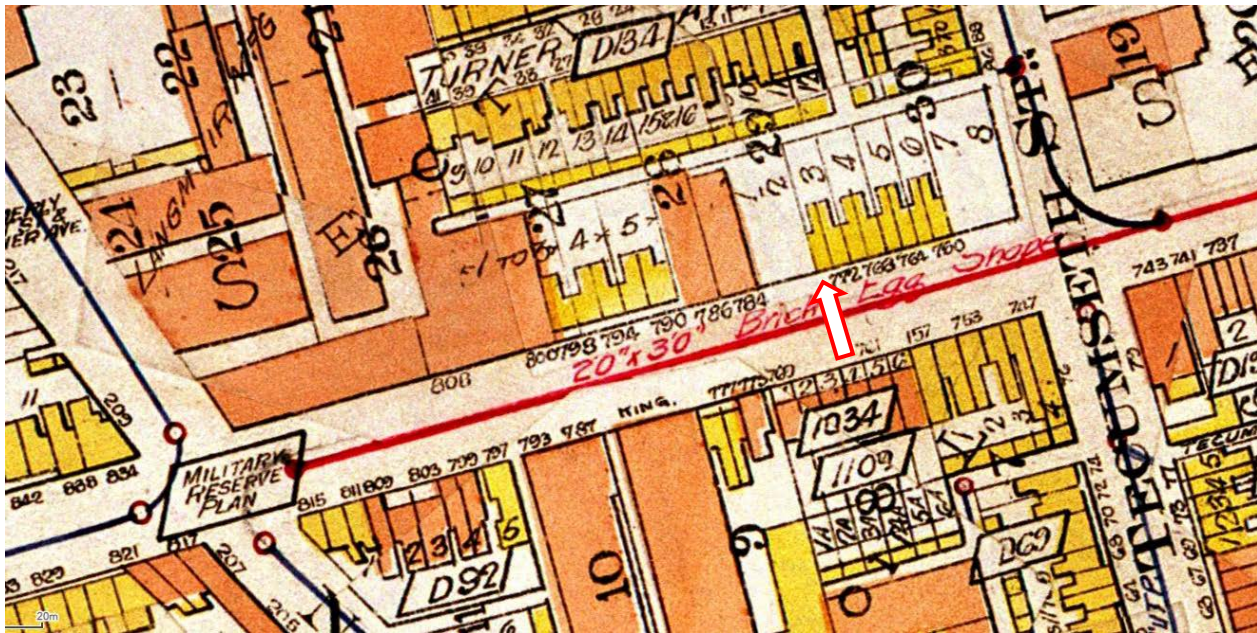


Figure 7: 1924 Goad's Atlas of the City of Toronto; future location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.



Figure 8: 1939 aerial photograph; future location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.



Figure 9: 1954 aerial photograph; location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.





Figure 10: 1965 aerial photograph; location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.



Figure 11: 1978 aerial photograph; location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.

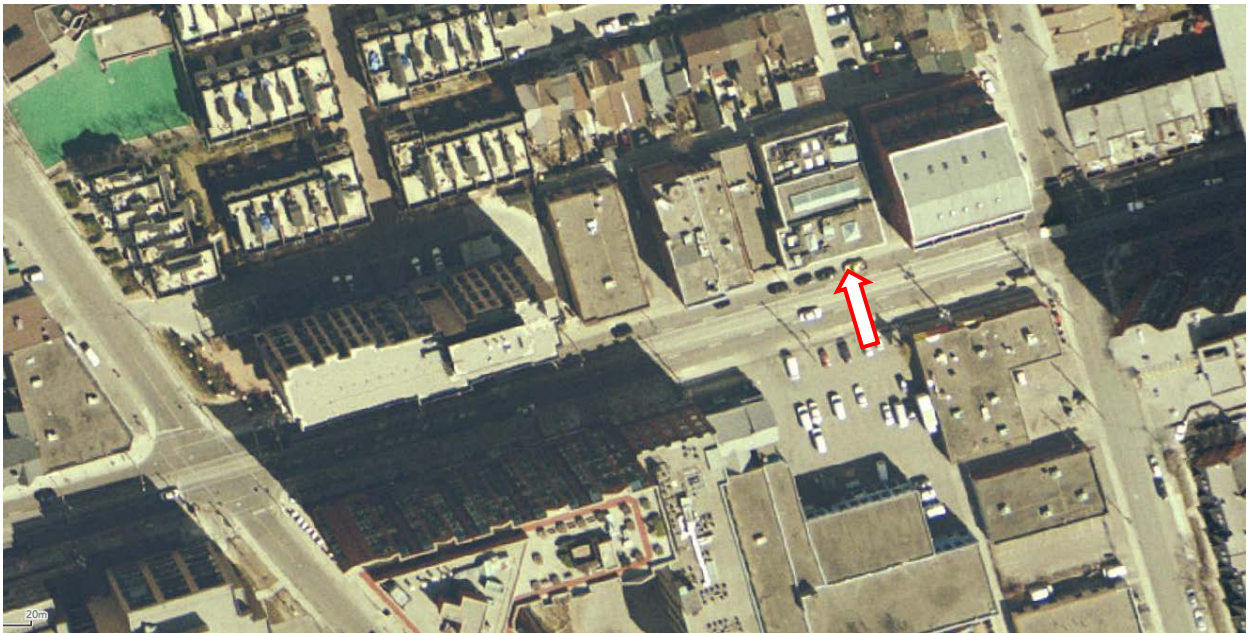


Figure 12: 2005 aerial photograph; location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.

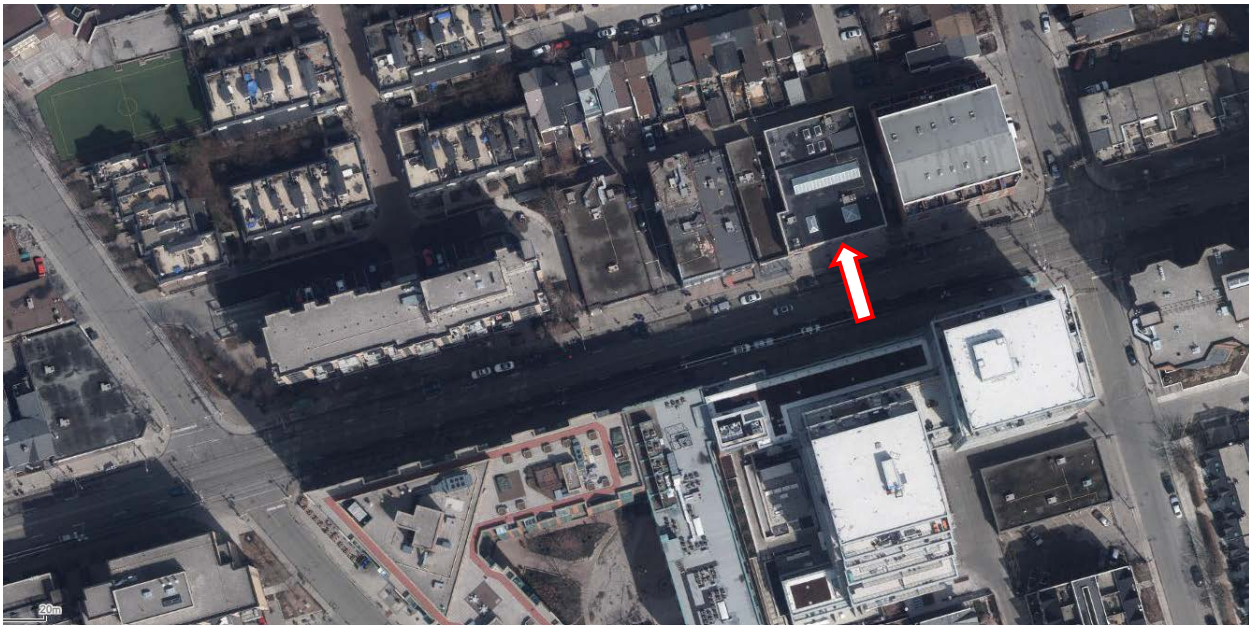


Figure 13: 2015 aerial photograph; location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.





Figure 14: 2020 aerial photograph; location of 778 King Street West indicated by the arrow.

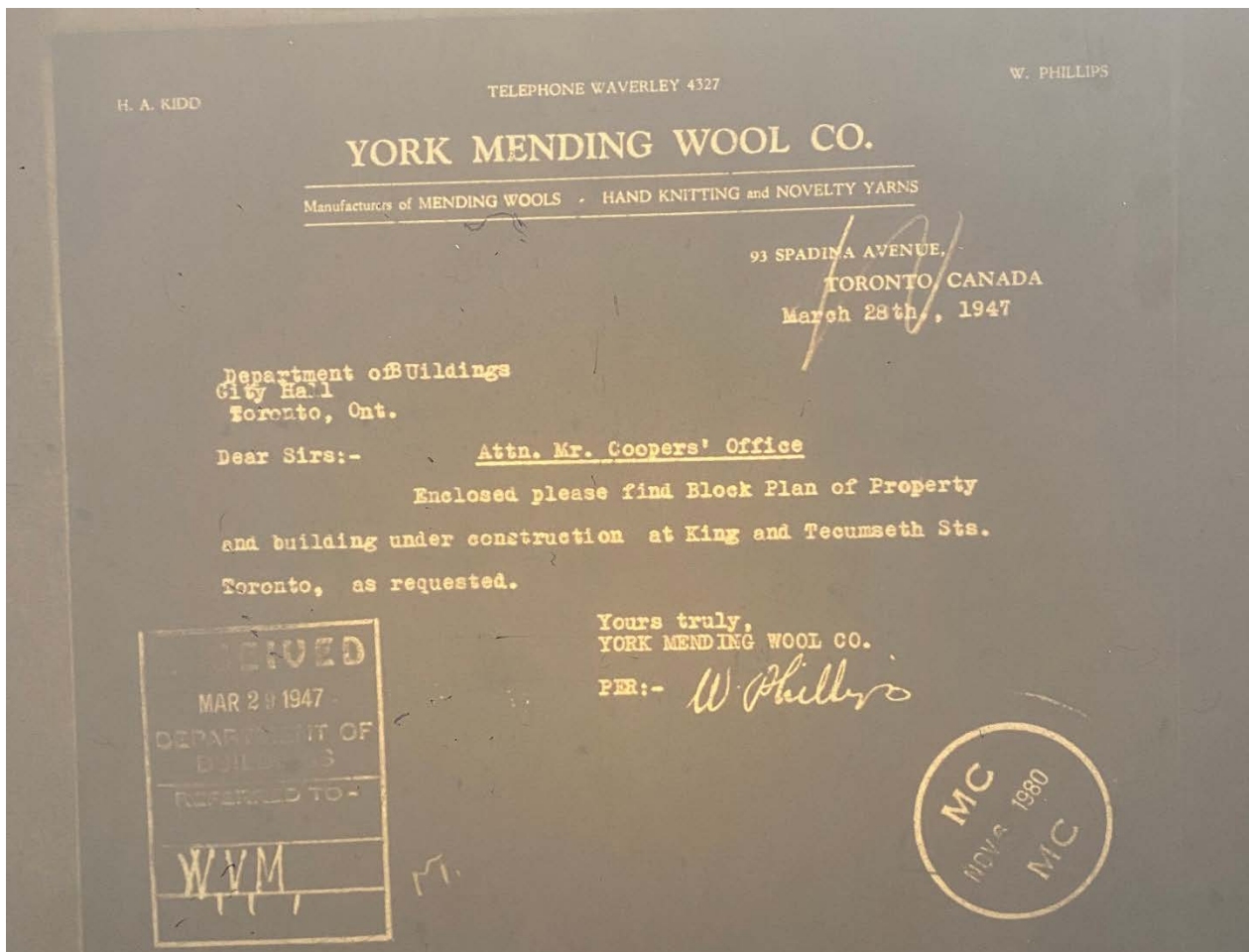


Figure 15: Letter from York Mending Wool Co. re: Block Plan, March 1947.

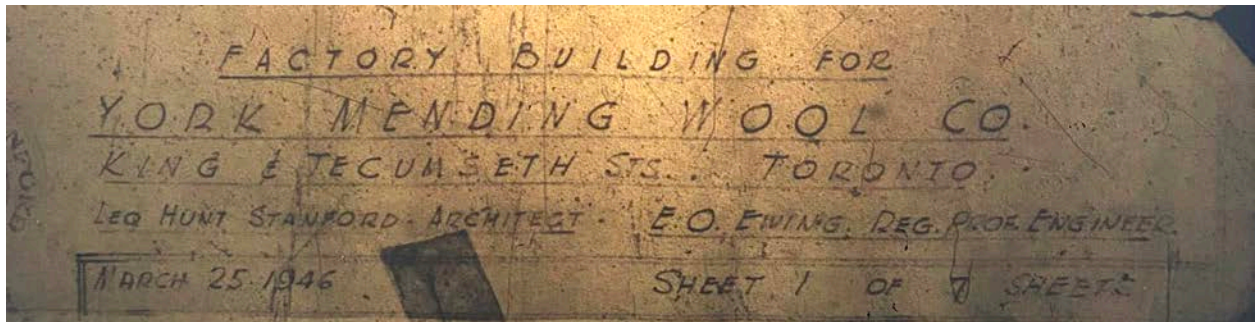


Figure 16: Detail from building plans for 778 King Street West by Leo Hunt Stanford Architect, dating to March 1946.

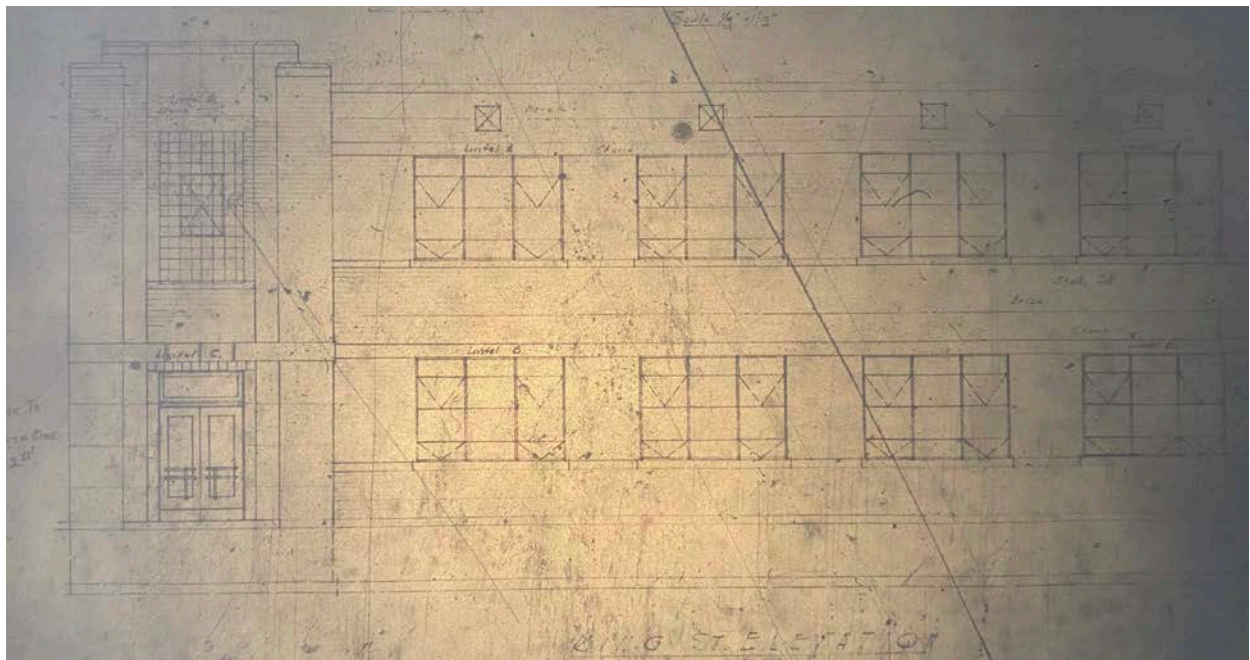


Figure 17: Primary elevation (south, facing King Street West) of the subject property, 1946.

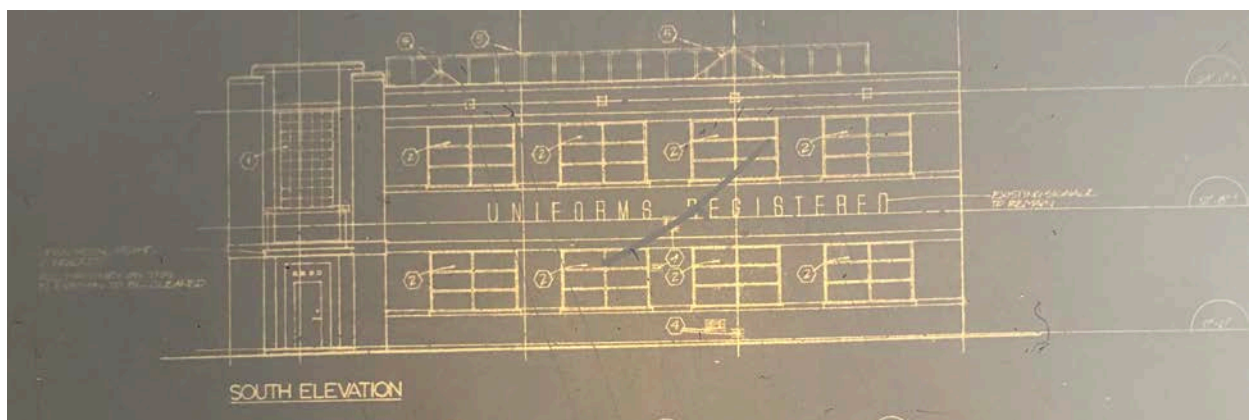


Figure 18: Primary elevation (south, facing King Street West), 1988.





Figure 19: Primary elevation of the subject property, August 2011 (Google Street View).



Figure 20: Primary elevation of the subject property, May 2013 (Google Street View).





Figure 21: Westward view down King Street West; 778 King Street West visible at centre-right (Heritage Planning, 2022).



Figure 22: Northeastward view of 778 King Street West (Heritage Planning, 2022).





Figure 23: Primary (south) elevation of 778 King Street West (Heritage Planning, 2022).

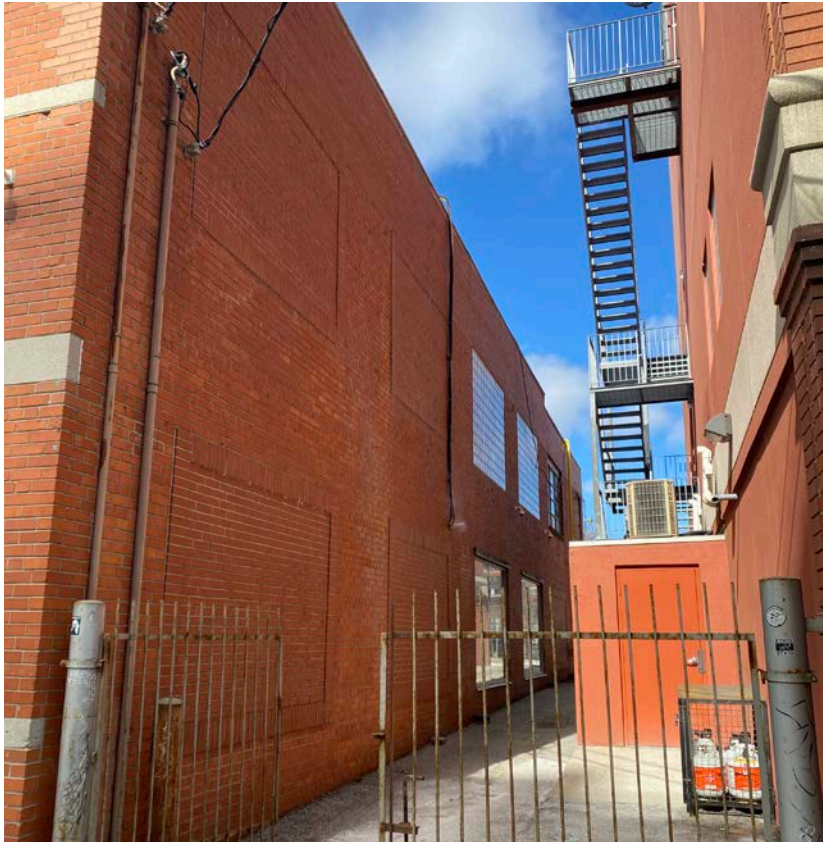


Figure 24: East elevation of 778 King Street West, viewed from the public realm (Heritage Planning, 2022).



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- white pearl buttons to hem.
- 2 pockets, self belt.
- Comfortable "saddle shoulder."
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Figure 25: Eaton's advertisement featuring Uniforms Registered, Toronto Daily Star, April 23, 1957, p. 44; detail at right.



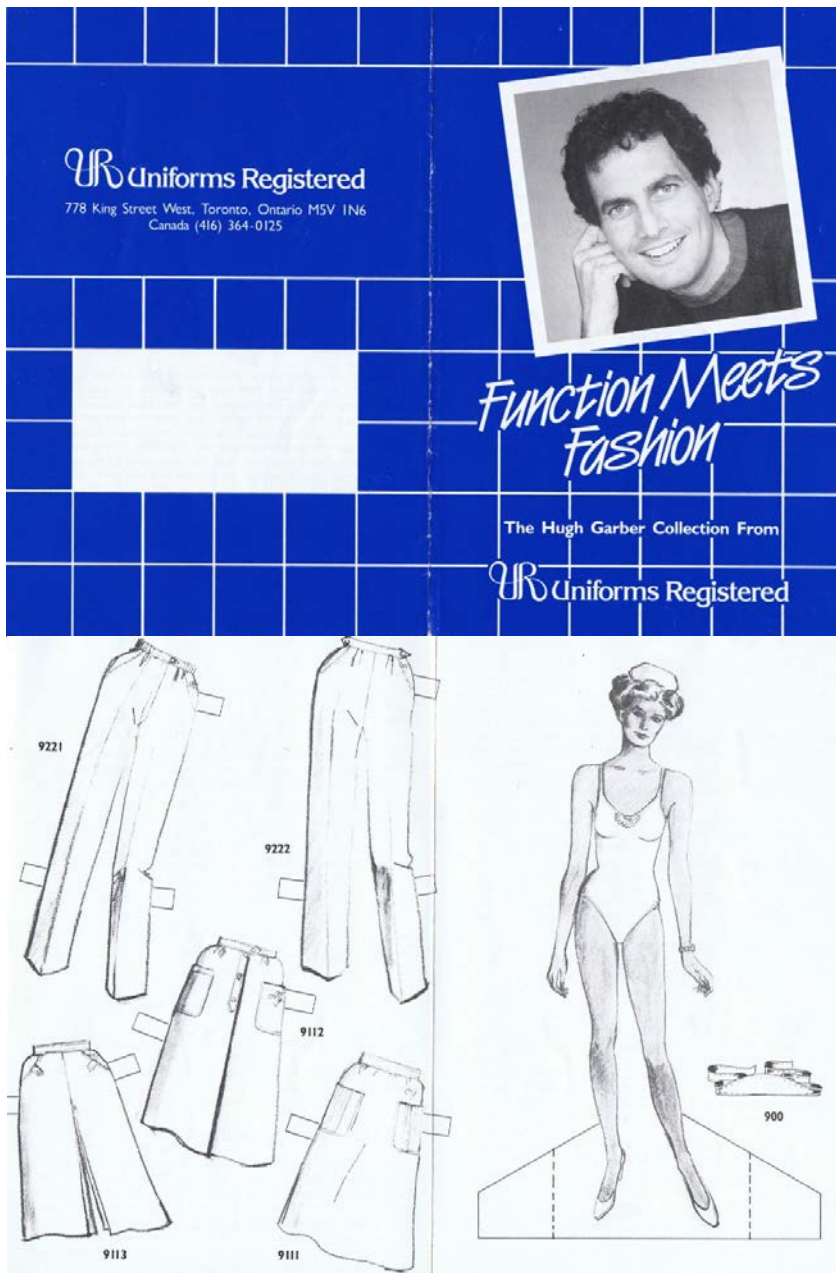


Figure 26: Catalogue of uniform collection designed by Hugh Garber for Uniforms Registered in 1983. <http://www.clothingcanadafashion.com/canadian-designers-hugh-garber/>

## COVER STORY

## Ydessa's idea puts T.O. on top of art world

**F**ROM THE outside, it's just another unassuming industrial building on a stretch of King St. W. that has seen better days.

But appearances are deceiving. This is Ground Zero of the newly formed Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation. Toronto has never seen anything remotely similar.

It is best described as a private museum that will showcase leading-edge art from Europe and North America. Nothing will be for sale, although the foundation will be open to the public — so far, free of charge.

As well as creating the gallery, Hendeles will put together the collection it is intended to display.

It's an ambitious project very few would — or could — undertake. Only in the person of Ydessa Hendeles, 39, did all the right things — confidence, competitiveness, commitment, cash — come together.

The foundation, which opens tomorrow with an exhibition by French conceptual artist Christian Boltanski, is spectacular evidence that the sophistication Toronto likes to claim for itself is actually real.

The fact is that an institution such as this would be remarkable anywhere — New York, London and Paris included. Here, it will be a window on the world unlike any other.

A trained art therapist, Hendeles is best known here for the Ydessa Gallery, which she ran for eight years before closing the door last year. Although her gallery drew raves, little of the art sold.

"I grew to hate it," she admits. "It's demoralizing to work that hard and have that few sales. It led to more and more conflict with the artists."

That's not to say the foundation, or the rigorous modernist art its founder admires so much, are Everyman's cup of tea. Hendeles is uncompromising in her tastes and has the funds to indulge them.

Where that's immediately evident is in the extensive renovations now going on at the *Uniforms Registered* building at 278 King St. W., two blocks west of Batawa St. Hendeles bought the two-storey structure last year and hired Toronto architect Peter Smith to transform it into her ideal gallery. Smith, whose credits include the Power Plant and the old Maurier Theatre at Harbourfront, has done a superb job.

It is still three weeks from completion, which won't affect tomorrow's opening, but already the elegance of Smith's scheme is evident. The aesthetic is minimalist; decoration has been almost entirely eliminated and even electrical outlets are hidden.

"I wanted rooms without the intrusions of mechanical equipment and ductwork," Hendeles says. "The idea was to make spaces really simple, to get back to floor, walls and ceiling. I also wanted to leave things the way they were as much as possible."

That explains the "found concrete" floors and the big "*Uniforms Registered*" sign out front. Although it looks only nondescript from the outside, the building now contains 10 separate



**CHRISTOPHER HUME**  
Art

galleries. They range from small, intimate rooms to one huge rectangular gallery on the top floor highlighted by an immense skylight.

"The challenge was one of architectural craftsmanship," Smith says. "The problems were those of simplicity. I tried to avoid being too modernist or post-modernist."

Not surprisingly, most of Smith's efforts are invisible. The miles of wiring have been routed behind a series of panels built along existing walls. Even the outlets are covered in drywall.

"A gallery requires almost as much technical support as a theatre," the architect says. "We had to ensure easy access to gals wherever possible. It sounds simple, but the effort required to get there is substantial."

When last seen, Smith was down on hands and knees painting where holes in the floor had been incorrectly filled with a white substance that stood out horribly against the old gray cement. No detail is too tiny to escape his attention. Or Hendeles' for that matter.

"This is the most important project of my life," she says ebulliently. "It's time for Canada to have a relationship with the rest of the world... and I want to be a part of that."

Part? Locally, Ydessa is just about the whole kit and kaboodle when it comes to displaying and collecting what's happening beyond our borders.

**T**HE ART Gallery of Ontario gets travelling shows, it's true, and some years ago it hired Italian curator Germano Celant to put together an exhibition of contemporary art from Germany and Italy. But that was the exception rather than the rule.

The AGO's interest in contemporary art is limited to what AGO curator Philip Monk's myopia allows him to see, and that usually doesn't extend much past his friends on Queen St.

By contrast, Ydessa is plugged into an international art network that stretches from Manhattan and Chicago to Germany, Holland and Paris. While even the most knowledgeable Torontonians have barely heard of Christian Boltanski, Ydessa has already purchased a number of the artist's major works and brought them, and him, here for an exhibition.

In this way, the opening show is entirely indicative of things to come. Although Boltanski's work is much more approachable and concerned with its audience than its most conceptual art, it is highly personal and self-referential. But because of Boltanski's fondness for drama, his installations have a connection with real life.

The six pieces on display are meditations on the nature of memory, loss, childhood and death. The works, most of which contain photography, are poignant and theatrical.



**ART PATRON** Ydessa Hendeles helps arrange Christian Boltanski's Canada installation on the walls of her amazing new museum. The public is invited to tomorrow's grand opening.

Wandering through the gallery, one can't help but get involved with these pieces.

The galleries have been darkened and the walls plastered with enlarged photographs, mostly of school children. In one work, *Le Lycée Chasser*, the pictures are of the 1931 graduating class of a Jewish high school in Vienna. Blown-up, the eyes seem dark and sunken and these grainy portraits take on a skull-like quality.

It is a sad work, a haunting

reminder of the Holocaust. For Hendeles, whose parents both survived Nazi death camps, Boltanski's installations have a special significance and deep emotional pull.

Probably the most arresting piece is one called *Canada*. Located in the two-storey gallery, it consists of four walls covered top to bottom in old clothes. The title comes from the word concentration camp inmates used for the room where all their possessions were stored.



**ARCHITECT** Peter Smith designed 10 separate galleries, including huge rectangular space with immense skylight.

"Canada," Hendeles explains, "was seen as the land of milk and honey and so the name was given to the storage area."

Situated at the end of a series of galleries filled with Boltanski's installations, the huge work is overwhelming. It has the effect of previous rooms to the here and now. We feel that these are the clothes shed by the victims whose portraits we have passed on the way.

The presence of death is everywhere in Boltanski's art. Though many of the references are to the Holocaust, the work goes beyond that historical fact and becomes an elegy for both the loss of childhood and of innocence. Even those of us who are allowed to grow up into adulthood, he is saying, must face the loss of childhood.

If the 44-year-old Frenchman hadn't become an artist, he could have been a stage designer. The elements of his art — light, photographs, biscuit tins, candles, clothing — are prosaic, yet able to conjure up powerful images and feelings. This is an emotionally charged exhibition, one that takes its responsibility to the audience seriously.

It's because of this, more than anything, that there are good reasons for being optimistic about Hendeles' project. Despite her desire to be a recognized member of the international art elite, she is capable of being her own woman. She succumbs to trendiness occasionally, but is saved by her sense of mission.

When she bought her Boltanski, she quickly points out, he wasn't

nearly as hot as he is now. Not that he was unknown, either. She first encountered his work at a Paris gallery and responded to it without knowing what was behind it. (Conceptual art, after all, is nothing without its theory.)

Last summer, Boltanski was connecting the images displayed in previous rooms to the here and now. We feel that these are the clothes shed by the victims whose portraits we have passed on the way.

Clearly, Hendeles chose well. After her purchases, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago announced the Boltanski retrospective that opened last May.

"I'm fighting for these works," Hendeles says passionately. "I started a foundation without a collection. This country hasn't been a repository of excellent work. We've got good curators, critics and artists, but we don't have any serious collectors of contemporary art."

In addition to Boltanski, Hendeles has bought pieces by Josay Holzer, Barbara Kruger, Thomas Ruff, Rebecca Kruger, Jeff Wall and others. If her artistic biases are obvious, so too is the intensity of her commitment to the art of today.

"The objective is to advance the cause of contemporary art. I believe in art," she states emphatically. "I believe it's the highest form of sublimation and an important civilizing influence."

If only she were right. **Q** The public is invited to attend the opening of the Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation from 2 to 5 p.m. tomorrow. For more information, call 941-0000.

Figure 27: Christopher Hume, "Ydessa's idea puts T.O. on top of art world," *The Toronto Star*, 25 Nov. 1988, P. D3.

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**778 KING STREET WEST**  
**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**  
**(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)**

**ATTACHMENT 3**

The property at 778 King Street West is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation, under the categories of design/physical value, historical/associative value, and contextual value.

**Description**

Designed by Leo Hunt Stanford, the property at 778 King Street West was constructed in 1947 as the headquarters of the York Mending Wool Company. It was subsequently the location of Uniforms Registered and the notable Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation gallery, and is currently a real estate office. The property is located on the north side of King Street West, just west of Tecumseth Street. A two-storey form with a flat roof, the building is faced in red-orange brick with stone trim.

**Statement of Cultural Heritage Value**

The property at 778 King Street West is a representative example of a mid-twentieth-century industrial headquarters, demonstrating the influence of the Streamlined Moderne style in its material palette, detailing, and horizontal emphasis. The building retains its red-orange brick exterior, tiered brick pilasters above a stone-clad entry, stone detailing such as belt courses and geometric motifs, and horizontal rhythm of fenestration on the primary (south) elevation, despite the lowering of the ground-floor window openings, as well as intact architectural details on the east elevation such as glass block panels.

Constructed for the York Mending Wool Company in 1947, the subject property has direct associations with the redevelopment of King Street West for manufacturing during the first half of the twentieth century. The property was one of a number of industrial buildings in the immediate vicinity on King Street West that represented textile-related industries. The property also reflects the later period of cultural regeneration along King Street West, and has associative value as the location of the Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation Gallery from 1988 to 2012. After artist and curator Ydessa Hendeles hired architect Peter Smith to renovate the building, she operated a celebrated non-profit centre for exhibiting international contemporary art in Canada. A large extant skylight, running horizontally across the building's centre, was added by Smith in 1988 as part of the property's successful adaptive reuse.

For over 70 years, the former York Mending Wool Company building, later Uniforms Registered and the notable Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation gallery, has been physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surrounding context, initially as a contributor to King Street West for manufacturing during the first half of the twentieth century, as well as to the area's later period of adaptive reuse and cultural regeneration.

## **Heritage Attributes**

### **Design and Physical Value**

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 778 King Street West as a mid-twentieth-century industrial headquarters, demonstrating the influence of the Streamline Moderne style:

- The scale, form, and massing of the two-storey, flat-roofed building
- The property's material palette of red-orange brick with stone details
- The primary (south) elevation's compositional organization, with an entry bay to the west and four bays to the east
- The horizontal rhythm of fenestration on the primary elevation, with a glazed panel above the entry, and wide openings at the lower and upper storey of each additional bay
- On the primary elevation, stone cladding at the ground floor of the entry bay; tiered brick pilasters with stone coping at the upper storey
- On the primary elevation, stone belt courses, coping, and geometric motif detailing at the four window bays
- On the east elevation, which is visible from the public realm, the intact composition and details including large glass block panels at the upper storey
- The large skylight running horizontally across the building's centre, dating to its adaptive reuse as an art gallery

### **Historic and Associative Value**

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 778 King Street West, in relation to its associations with the history of manufacturing on King Street West, and with adaptive reuse for the Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation:

- The building's siting and orientation on the north side of King Street West, between Niagara and Tecumseth streets
- The large skylight running horizontally across the building's centre, dating to its adaptive reuse as an art gallery

### **Contextual Value**

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 778 King Street West as a contributor to King Street West for manufacturing during the first half of the twentieth century, as well as to the area's later period of adaptive reuse and cultural regeneration:

- The building's siting and orientation on the north side of King Street West, between Niagara and Tecumseth streets
- The scale, form, and massing of the two-storey, flat-roofed building
- The property's material palette of red-orange brick with stone details