



## KAREN MARLER

For her architectural education, **Karen Marler (B.Arch.84)** drew on a variety of experiences, beginning with the University of Alberta's Industrial Design program. The program included a two-week European tour of leading graphics and industrial design firms and offered Karen her first exposure to design. Her growing interest in design led her to the University of Manitoba, where she obtained a Bachelor of Environmental Design. She credits her motivation as an architect to the unique opportunities that the Technical University of Nova Scotia offered students through the co-op education and selected studies programs.

The Architectural Association in London was her choice for an alternate learning environment for selected studies. The unit masters directing the various programs were a virtual "Who's Who" in architecture: Will Alsop, Zaha Hadid, Rem Koolhaas, Nigel Coates, Chris Macdonald, and Charles Jencks were just a few of the leading mentors teaching at the time. Karen joined the unit of the highly regarded British architects Peter Cook and Jeremy Dixon, where she developed a greater appreciation for construction detailing as a critical component of strong conceptual architectural design.

Karen's work experience was equally spirited, having joined Ahrends Burton Koralek Architects of London following their competition win for London's National Gallery extension and leaving just two weeks prior to Prince Charles touring the office and declaring ABK's design a "giant carbuncle on an old friend." At ABK, Karen was part of a team of three, whose sole responsibility was the design, development, and detailing of the building envelope for the new St. Mary's Hospital on the Isle of Wight.

Following graduation from TUNS and equipped with international design experience, Karen traveled west to join the Vancouver-based firm Roger Hughes Architects. It was here that she would devote the next 20 years to working on a wide variety of landmark projects. Pivotal projects in Karen's development as an Architect include: Expo 86 Monorail Stations, Vancouver (BC Lieutenant Governor Award 1990); Rogers Elementary School, Vancouver Island (competition winner 1989 and RAIC Governor General's Award 1992); Centennial Library Competition, Winnipeg 2002; HCMA Office Renovation (LEED Certified Silver 2005); University of British Columbia, University Boulevard (competition winner 2005 with Moore Ruble Yudell Architects, Santa Monica, California).

In 1998 Karen became a principal with the firm – now Hughes Condon Marler: Architects. She continues to be motivated by the complex integration of architectural ideas – and the ongoing collaboration of client, contractors, users, consultants and the HCMA team – to achieve design excellence.

"I think the role of the architect continues to be the artful and appropriate integration of context, function, form, environment, and the coordination of available technologies," says Marler. "Well-designed buildings have a sense of craft if the architect understands the role and availability of technology and uses it to create true value for money within schedule and budget constraints. To quote one of my past professors of architectural theory, "Design is a wicked problem – there is no right or wrong answer, but there is a best solution."

HCMA strongly supports the Faculty's co-op education program and encourages the best and the brightest to contact [karen@hcma.ca](mailto:karen@hcma.ca) or visit the firm's website at [www.hcma.ca](http://www.hcma.ca).

