

Fall
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PRESENTATION CENTRE

Monde Presentation Centre, Toronto

Cecconi Simone, Toronto



A presentation centre is where sales associates educate prospective purchasers on the developer's story, the project team, the surrounding neighbourhood and the demographics of those likely to live there. It also displays floor plans, scale models and renderings, along with sample boards showing options for floor, wall and surfacing finishes.

For developer Great Gulf's Monde Condominiums, a mixed-use community envisioned for Toronto's East Bayfront, Cecconi Simone devised a presentation centre that would convey the project's design, by celebrated architect Moshe Safdie. The space also had to convince potential buyers to make a leap of faith and buy into the notion that the neighbourhood, now a seedy former industrial zone, will blossom into a thriving waterfront community as promised.

The 4,200-square-foot Monde Centre generates a refreshing, idyllic, one-with-

nature ambience through the use of extended sight lines, highlighted vistas, layered surface planes and textures, and, most conspicuously, plantings of artificial green walls and manmade forests behind glass.

Simulated vegetation, with lighting positioned to enliven its texture, leads the eye through the centre. In the reception area, a documentary-style video plays across multiple flush-mounted monitors; it profiles members of the development team and describes the project's (soon-to-be) desirable locale.

In the main gallery, tempered-glass panels coated with touch foil show interactive displays of the suites and amenities. These slender objects substitute for real model suites and preserve the openness of the verdant main space.

In this "high-touch" environment, all the materials were selected on the basis of their texture and are presented in their natural state. Green walls and barn doors,

for instance, were assembled from untreated, weathered-pine barn board salvaged from barns throughout Ontario.

A metaphorical rippling stream of crushed glass defines the ground plane. The ceiling and its constellations of LED pin lights evoke starry outdoor skies.

Stone benches and cantilevered ledges, cast in *béton brut* concrete (retaining the marks of the rough wood formwork) offer a perch to contemplate all this faux natural beauty.

Design team: Anna Simone, principal; Jude Thompson, associate; Pauline Ayoub, team leader; Firas Yousif, intermediate designer; Elvis Chan and Ed Remigio, senior CAD technicians

"As presentation centres go, this one's unique. It does the opposite of what's happening in condos now, with interminably clean exteriors and interiors. This one is more like walking into a winery"—MMB

"I like all the spatial depth here"—RK