

INNOVATIVE CONSTRUCTION DETAIL PRESERVES MILESTONE BUILDING TECHNOLOGY

Montreal based firm **MIGUEL ESCOBAR Architects / Urban Planners** was recently a recipient of the 2001 **Quebec Building Envelope Council (QBEC)** award for innovative construction technology in building envelope design, for a corrective measure to an existing curtain wall design.

The firm was mandated to find a solution to occasional water infiltration in the curtain wall of a 12-story Montreal office tower dating to the 1960s, the *615 René-Lévesque*. This building, situated within a protected zone, has a heritage quality of its own being one of the earliest glass curtain wall structures erected in Montreal – a milestone in building technology. Therefore it was essential that the architectural intervention did not affect the original design of the building envelope.

Georges Halo, senior technologist with the firm, responded to the challenge by devising a detail consisting of the insertion of an aluminum plate on the expansion joint, between structural mullions. Applying a flexible sealant at the rear joint and screwing the plate to the base of the upper mullion, so as not to hinder contraction and expansion movements of the elements, achieved this simple system. Work was carried out in-situ without the necessity of dismantling the curtain wall.

The system is not only discreet in appearance, its water tightness has been put to the test under fierce summer storms over the past four years with no water infiltration detected. At a cost of \$125 per unit, this permanent solution has eliminated the cost of curtain wall repairs that were previously a recurring expense in the building owner's budget.

The Quebec Building Envelope Council's mission is to present reliable construction technology toward architectural excellence, and to facilitate the transfer of technology to the construction industry. Their annual competition presents awards for outstanding achievement in building envelope details.

Established in 1992, Miguel Escobar's team of urban planners, architects, engineers, and interior designers offer comprehensive real estate planning services to building owners and managers. They work closely with their clients throughout all phases of their project to develop imaginative design solutions that meet functional and financial objectives.

Miguel Escobar has professional registration in both Quebec and Ontario, as well as partnership with Gertler Wenté Kerbeykian of Manhattan, to better serve his U.S. clientele.

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