

CANADIAN ARCHITECT

In Memoriam: Shannon Bassett

Shannon Bassett recently passed away at the age of 52.

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Canadian-American architectural and urban designer Shannon Bassett passed away peacefully with family members by her side at the General Hospital in Ottawa on December 26, 2024, at the age of 52.

Bassett was a tenured professor of architecture at McEwen School of Architecture, Laurentian University, in Sudbury. Her research, teaching, writing and practice operated at the intersections of architecture, urban design and landscape ecology.

Bassett's writing on China's explosive urbanization and changing landscape, as well as shrinking cities and the post-industrial landscape in North America, have been published in *Topos*, *Urban Flux*, *Landscape Architecture Frontiers Magazine*, and *Canadian Architect*. Her design work and research has been exhibited nationally and internationally, including at the Hong Kong Shenzhen Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism and Architecture in 2012. Her architectural and urban design practice included designing an urban masterplan for the Village of the Arts in Bradenton, Florida, as well as a series of speculative design studies for the City of Tampa Riverwalk. Prior to arriving at Laurentian, Bassett had taught at the University at Buffalo, the University of South Florida, and Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston. She has lectured in countries including China, India, South Korea, and the US. She has run design research studios in China, and for many years served as an invited professor each summer in Busan, South Korea.

A consummate collaborator, until her passing Bassett was actively collaborating with the Delhi School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) on the conservation and urban redevelopment of the old walled city of Delhi. She was also collaborating with colleagues at Toronto Metropolitan University on a symposium examining the state of women in Canadian architecture, a topic she also advanced as a co-founder and advisory member for the organization Building Equality in Architecture North. At Laurentian University, Indigeneity became a vital part of Bassett's teaching and spirituality. "It is with heavy hearts we reflect on the passing of our colleague Shannon Bassett," writes Laurentian University McEwen School of Architecture director Tammy Gaber. "Shannon joined the McEwen School of Architecture as a faculty member in 2018, having studied architecture at Carleton (B.Arch) and urban design at Harvard University (MAUD). While at MSoA, Shannon enthusiastically taught a range of courses in the undergraduate and graduate programs and supervised M.Arch thesis students."

"Beyond the classroom, Shannon actively mentored students in several international design competitions and was one of the co-founders of the Building Equality in Architecture North—BEA(N) group, which continues to have a growing membership," adds Gaber. "She will be deeply missed by our community."

“Shannon Bassett was a critical member of the Building Equality in Architecture (BEA) collective, which aims to promote and support gender equity in architecture across Canada,” write Building Equality in Architecture Toronto (BEAT) Executive Chair Jennifer Esposito and Advisory Chair Heather Dubbeldam. “Co-founding BEA North in 2020, she played a key role in supporting the growth of BEA from a Toronto-based grassroots group to one with a national presence. Shannon was an advocate for gender equity and diversity in the profession, particularly in northern communities. She was also a committed educator, sharing her expertise and enthusiasm with the next generation of architects through her roles in academia. Kind, generous, and courageous in her beliefs, Shannon’s contributions to education, research, and advocacy will leave a lasting impact.”

The family has requested donations to the [Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada](#).