
Sukkanoe

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The sukkah is a temporary structure and symbolic place of gathering that is deeply rooted in the history and tradition of the Jewish people. Bringing together family and friends, this temporal structure is assembled to provide space for communities to connect with each other and the natural environment. This proposal for Sukkaville envisions the sukkah as a site-specific and site-relevant construct responding to a Canadian context in Toronto. It assumes that the sukkah can act as an ‘agent’ that brings diverse people together for a communal act, and thus, establishes a hybrid identity for the itself. Sukkanoe blends the ancient tradition of the sukkah with a building tradition specific to Canada. Builders of the sukkah participate in a journey that reflects upon the experiences of the Jewish, First Nations, and Canadian people.

Hybridizing First Nations, Jewish, & Canadian traditions, this proposal, Sukkanoe (sukkah + canoe), provides a shelter-vessel designed for Mel Lastman Square in North York, Ontario, Canada. It offers a ‘hybrid’ sukkah design that draws from and combines Jewish, First Nations, and Canadian traditions, both past and present. Sukkanoe transforms the iconic birch-bark canoe. The shape and materials used for this concept are meant to recall the innovation and self-reliance of First Nations peoples, the challenges of European voyageur explorations, and the transience of the Sukkot holiday and Jewish migration to Canada.

Sukkanoe revisits ancient building techniques. A frugal and ‘sustainable’ tool for

human-powered travel, the handcrafted birch-bark canoe was historically made from organic materials and designed to float. This vessel helped First Nations inhabitants, as well as European voyageurs, navigate and populate the waterways and landscapes of the Canadian wilderness. During portage, canoes served as temporary dwellings for users, providing a lightweight shelter from the elements.

Sukkanoe appropriates construction principles of the traditional Canadian canoe, including its ‘skeleton’ (springer and ribs) and ‘skin’ (cladding), in order to create an open yet intimate sukkah. By introducing birch-bark cladding and maintaining exposed structural transparency, this proposal attempts to provide an open yet protected environment for the context of Mel Lastman Square. Sukkanoe rethinks the meaning of the ‘sukkah’ as a temporal vessel-space for Toronto.

Sukkanoe responds as a temporary structure associated with the festival of Sukkot. A sukkah symbolizes protection and perseverance, and so, Sukkanoe seeks to evoke a similar mobility, yet temporal ‘permanence’. By transforming the prototypical canoe placed firmly on the ground, it recalls both the journey of Jewish immigrants to the New World, as well as the identity of subsequent generations who were born in Canada. Sukkanoe reflects this new, hybrid Canadian identity.

Sukkanoe negotiates three different traditions: Jewish, First Nations, and Canadian. Thus, the conceptual and material qualities of its design are meant to remind adult and

children visitors of the challenges that faith and identity pose to our shared journey of coexistence. As a temporal structure embedded with significant spiritual meaning, the sukkah can bridge cultures by offering a common ground to reflect upon space, place, tradition, and spirituality.



sukkanoe Visualizing a Hybrid Spiritual Vessel in Toronto

The sukkanoe is a temporary structure and symbolic place of gathering that is deeply rooted in the history and tradition of the Jewish people. Bringing together family and friends, this temporary structure is assembled to provide space for conversation to connect with each other and the natural environment. This proposal for Sukkanoe Toronto envisions the sukkanoe as a site-specific and site-relevant construct responding to a Canadian context in Ontario. It ensures that the sukkanoe can act as an "agent" that brings diverse people together for a communal act, and thus, establishes a hybrid identity for the sukkanoe. Sukkanoe blends the ancient traditions of the sukkanoe with a building tradition specific to Canada. Builders of the sukkanoe participate in a journey that reflects on the experiences of the Jewish, First Nations, and Canadian people.

Hybridizing First Nations, Jewish, & Canadian traditions, the proposal, Sukkanoe Toronto, envisions a structure designed for Met Toronto Square in North York, Ontario, Canada. It offers a hybrid sukkanoe design that draws from and combines Jewish, First Nations, and Canadian traditions, both past and present. Sukkanoe creatively transforms the iconic birch bark canoe. The shape and materials used for this concept are meant to recall the expedition and self-reliance of First Nations peoples, the challenges of European voyager explorations, and the transience of the Sukkah holiday and Jewish migration to Canada.

Sukkanoe revisits ancient building techniques. A rigid and "unmovable" roof for human-powered travel, the handcrafted birch bark canoe was historically made from organic materials and designed to float. This vessel helped First Nations inhabitants, as well as European voyagers, navigate and populate the waterways and settlements of the Canadian wilderness. Using portable, canvas served as temporary dwellings for users, providing a lightweight shelter from the elements. Sukkanoe appropriates construction principles of the traditional Canadian canoe, including its "steeple" (hopper and ribs) and "loose" (sliding), in order to create an open yet intimate sukkanoe. By introducing birch bark cladding and maintaining exposed structural transparency, this proposal attempts to provide an open yet sheltered environment for the comfort of Met Toronto Square. Sukkanoe rethinks the meaning of the "sukkah" as a temporary structure for North York.

Sukkanoe responds as a temporary structure associated with the festival of Sukkot. The sukkanoe symbolizes protection and perseverance, and so Sukkanoe seeks to evoke a similar mobility, yet temporal "permanence". By transforming the traditional center placed firmly on the ground, it recalls both the journey of Jewish immigrants to the New World, as well as the identity of subsequent generations who were born in Canada. Sukkanoe reflects this one hybrid Canadian identity. Sukkanoe negotiates three different traditions: Jewish, First Nations, and Canadian. Thus, the conceptual and material qualities of its design are meant to reveal adult and children voices of the challenge. As a temporary structure embedded with layered spiritual meaning, the sukkanoe can bridge cultures by offering a common ground to reflect upon space, place, tradition, and spirituality.



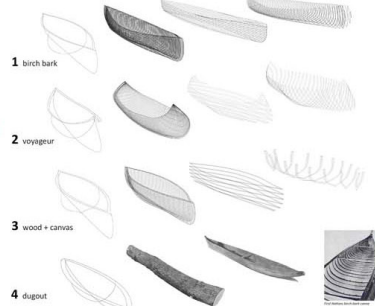
Of Natural Materials...
Natural materials offered an ecological "logic" to generate the formal emergence of this concept. Birch bark provided sheltering opportunities and constraints, its shape and directional organization of its lines for a primarily undirectional container. Harvested locally using ancient techniques, birch bark cladding will aid in sheltering the interior from sun and rain while enhancing the aromatic and ambient qualities of the Sukkanoe interior space.

Of Traditional Methods...
Traditionally, ancient First Nations building techniques were informed by sukkanoe construction methods based on Jewish law. Three methods converged to reveal several shared principles. Unconcerned common methods in Jewish and First Nations cultures allowed an uniquely "Canadian" sukkanoe to emerge from research.



An ecological building strategy: birch bark
In context: Met Toronto Square, North York, Ontario

Recasting tradition.
Rethinking vernaculars.
Remembering Sukkot.



Canadian traditions: First Nations culture, Jewish identity, and Regional design. Recasting the historical migration of First Nations people and Jewish culture – a convergence of the historical journey. This project combined the meaning of "community" through a form of Jewish culture, First Nations and Jewish, and contemporary Canadian society. As an historical documentation device, the sukkanoe form recalls the temporary constructs of First Nations people. This conceptual and material quality of a pure Canadian structure logic informed the development of this scheme. Seen from a historical and engineering lens, Sukkanoe refers to the "hand-craft" application of Jewish sukkanoe building logic, interwoven with a First Nations, uniquely Canadian perspective. The sukkanoe is made "new".

Canadian tradition of 'making'



First Nations inspirations blended with the Jewish Sukkah.

