

2017 WOOD DESIGN AWARDS - WINNER

Institutional Wood Design: Small

Shelley Craig, Urban Arts Architecture, Vancouver

UBC Engineering Student Centre, Vancouver



"A small building with a big impact. Intelligent design using wood as the primary building material results in a lovely building that merges with its surroundings."

- jury comments

Photos – all Courtesy:
Wood Design Awards in BC

High resolution images
available. Please e-mail
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Wood was selected as the primary building material to demonstrate the use of renewable local resources, create warm, healthy and compelling spaces, and to display engineering prowess through the use of a mass timber prefabricated structure.

To condense construction time and to facilitate building in a tight courtyard site, an off-site prefabrication strategy was implemented, including the nail-laminated roof and floor structure, glulam columns and trusses.

The cantilevered NLT (nail-laminated timber) roof and second floor structure address the seasonal sun paths, permitting winter solar gains while limiting solar exposure in the summer, and equally demonstrating the innovative use of the prefabricated nail-laminated roof and second floor structure.

Glulam columns recycled from the former engineering clubhouse are reconfigured as stair treads.

Didactic moments are layered through the project: NLT panels are left visible to reveal their orientation and bearing on the structure, and the lounging platform puts an NLT component at the students' fingertips. The trusses showcase connections and provide a clear structural diagram of how tension and compression forces are carried through the space. The whole rewards the curious with an opportunity to unpack the structural "magic" that makes the upper floor float and the roof soar.