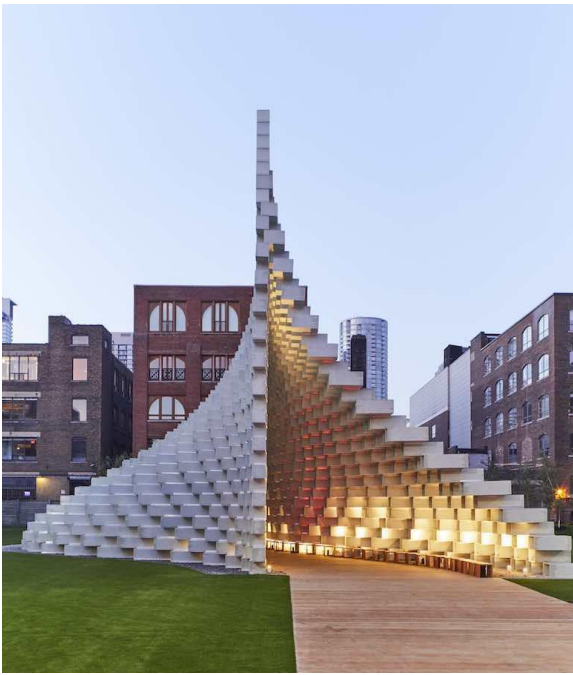




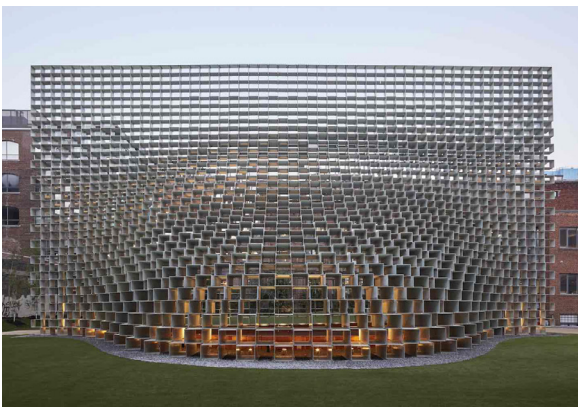
BJARKE INGELS SERPENTINE PAVILION COMES TO TORONTO AS UNZIPPED

SEPTEMBER 13, 2018

Canadian development firm Westbank has reconstructed the 2016 Serpentine Pavilion in downtown Toronto, bringing it back to life in the public realm as it begins a multi-city tour — a first for a Serpentine Pavilion. Designed by one of the world's leading architecture firms, BIG – Bjarke Ingels Group, the temporary structure is located at King and Brant Streets and will open to the public on Saturday, September 15. Unzipped will provide Torontonians and visitors to the city with an exceptional, curated experience making it a must-see destination throughout its fall 2018 run.

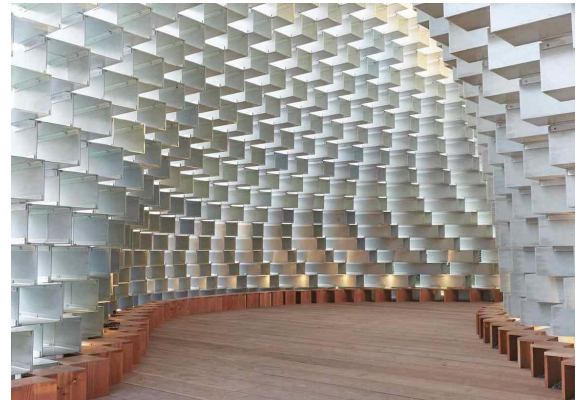


The Pavilion — made of 1802 stacked fibreglass ‘bricks’, stands 14 metres (46 feet) tall at its apex, 27 metres (88.5 feet) long and 12 metres (39 feet) wide — was disassembled in London following its 2016 run by the Serpentine Gallery and transported to North America for re-assembly in Toronto. This is the first time a Serpentine Pavilion has made its way to North America. Here it will play host to Unzipped, Westbank’s newest exhibition. Unzipped will showcase an intimate collaboration between developer and architect, where every element of design is considered in relation to its site, environment and the city in which it will stand.

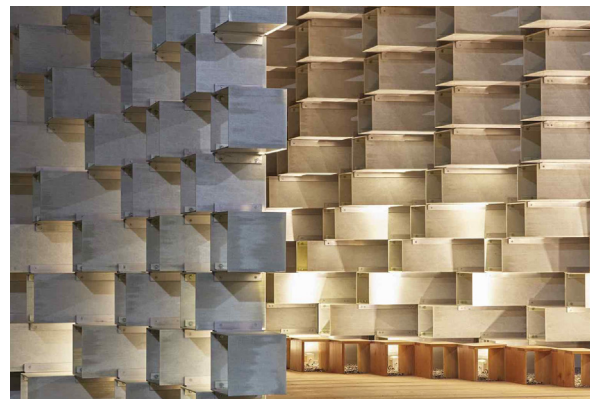


The exhibit exemplifies the shared ideas of Westbank and BIG, drawing a correlation between architecture, culture and city-building. This BIG and Westbank collaboration of patronage and design is also a rare client and architect relationship, where vision and mission seamlessly combine. The partnership which started with the Vancouver House in 2011, offers a fresh approach to where the future of city and building development could migrate.

‘Regardless of the city we’re operating in, we view beauty as an indispensable integral aspect of architecture alongside durability and utility,’ says Ian Gillespie, founder of Westbank. ‘We challenge the thinking that there is not a synergy between architecture and beauty, by infusing accessible art and culture into every project for residents and visitors to experience.

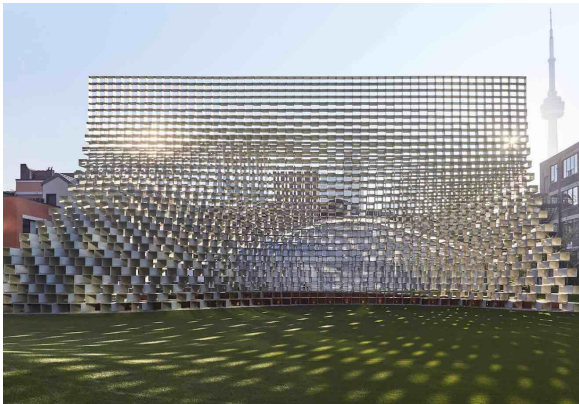


At the entrance of the Pavilion, visitors will be introduced to the concept of Gesamtkunstwerk — or total design — a philosophy re-invigorated and employed by Westbank in all of its projects — and one which BIG models in its own practice. The design philosophy will come to life as visitors wander through the exhibition.



In curating the exhibition, BIG followed the logic of the original Serpentine design while adding a new layer of discovery to the experience of walking through the Pavilion. BIG is using the modular fibreglass frames as shelves for ten projects and locating large scale models along the spine of the sheltered valley interior. The project displays are organized to highlight the design principles and blend with the geometry of the Pavilion, enabling the visitors to experience both the content of the exhibition and the pavilion itself in a symbiotic way. For the Serpentine Pavilion in 2016 located in London's Kensington Garden, BIG designed a structure that embodies multiple aspects that are often perceived as opposites: a structure that is free-form yet rigorous, modular yet sculptural, both transparent and opaque, both box and blob. BIG worked with one of the most basic elements of architecture: the brick wall. Rather than clay bricks or stone blocks – the wall is erected from extruded fibreglass frames stacked on top of each other. When 'unzipped', the straight wall turns into two sine curves that create an interior cavity within it to house the events.

'We liked this idea that, quite often, interesting things happen when you change seemingly incompatible elements and you combine them into a new hybrid,' said Bjarke Ingels, founder of BIG. 'I think we tried to make a structure, that in an effortless way, combines many differences.'



The presence of the pavilion changes as you move around it and through it. The north-south elevation is a perfect rectangle. The east-west silhouette is an undulating sculptural silhouette. Towards the east-west the Pavilion is completely opaque and material. Towards the north-south it is entirely transparent and practically immaterial. Presence becomes absence. Orthogonal becomes curvilinear. Structure becomes gesture.

The Pavilion has now been painstakingly recreated in Toronto, where Westbank and BIG are actively working on the King street residences where the Pavilion currently resides. Toronto is the first stop in what is planned to be a multi-city tour — the first of its kind for a Serpentine Pavilion — before ultimately landing in Vancouver in its permanent home beside Westbank's Shaw Tower on the waterfront. Its re-assembly and activation as an exhibition space is an important moment in architecture for both the Pavilion and Toronto.



A rendering of the King West Project to be built on the site. Image via Westbank

By day, the Pavilion and Unzipped exhibition will be open to the public free of charge and in the evening, the innovative space will be a hub for cultural events and lectures that bring Westbank's commitment to building artistry and community engagement to life.

Experience the unique structure at no cost at 533 King Street West for a limited time between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. from September 15, 2018 to November 30, 2018.