

**A GUIDEBOOK
TO CONTEMPORARY
ARCHITECTURE IN
VANCOUVER**

ABERDEEN CENTRE

This commercial shopping centre deliberately challenges a number of assumptions about the conventional suburban mall, and in doing so successfully creates something of a monument within its surrounding landscape. Most obviously the sinuous, glazed and brightly coloured exterior elevations establish a degree of transparency from street to interior – and vice versa – that is antithetical to the normally opaque presentation of North American malls. This effort to provide light and a sense of open accessibility is further pursued in the interior, with an extraordinary degree of overhead natural light complementing the illumination from the perimeter. Organizationally, the mall consists only of smaller individual merchants supporting the ambition of creating a texture of experience quite different from the traditional logic of primary retail anchors.

Although the conventions of material palette and construction systems differ little from conventional shopping mall typologies, the structure is unquestionably successful in achieving a distinct and memorable identity in a context that remains conspicuously uneventful. In particular, the decision to take the edge of the project to the adjacent sidewalk results in this usually distant building type – habitually absent from urban life – firmly engaged with the emerging experience of the new city of Richmond.

Architect **Bing Thom Architects**
Client **Fairchild Development**
Completed **2004**
Address **4151 Hazelbridge Way**
Transit **Aberdeen**
Access **public**

