

# Opus 8

by Stacey Carefoot

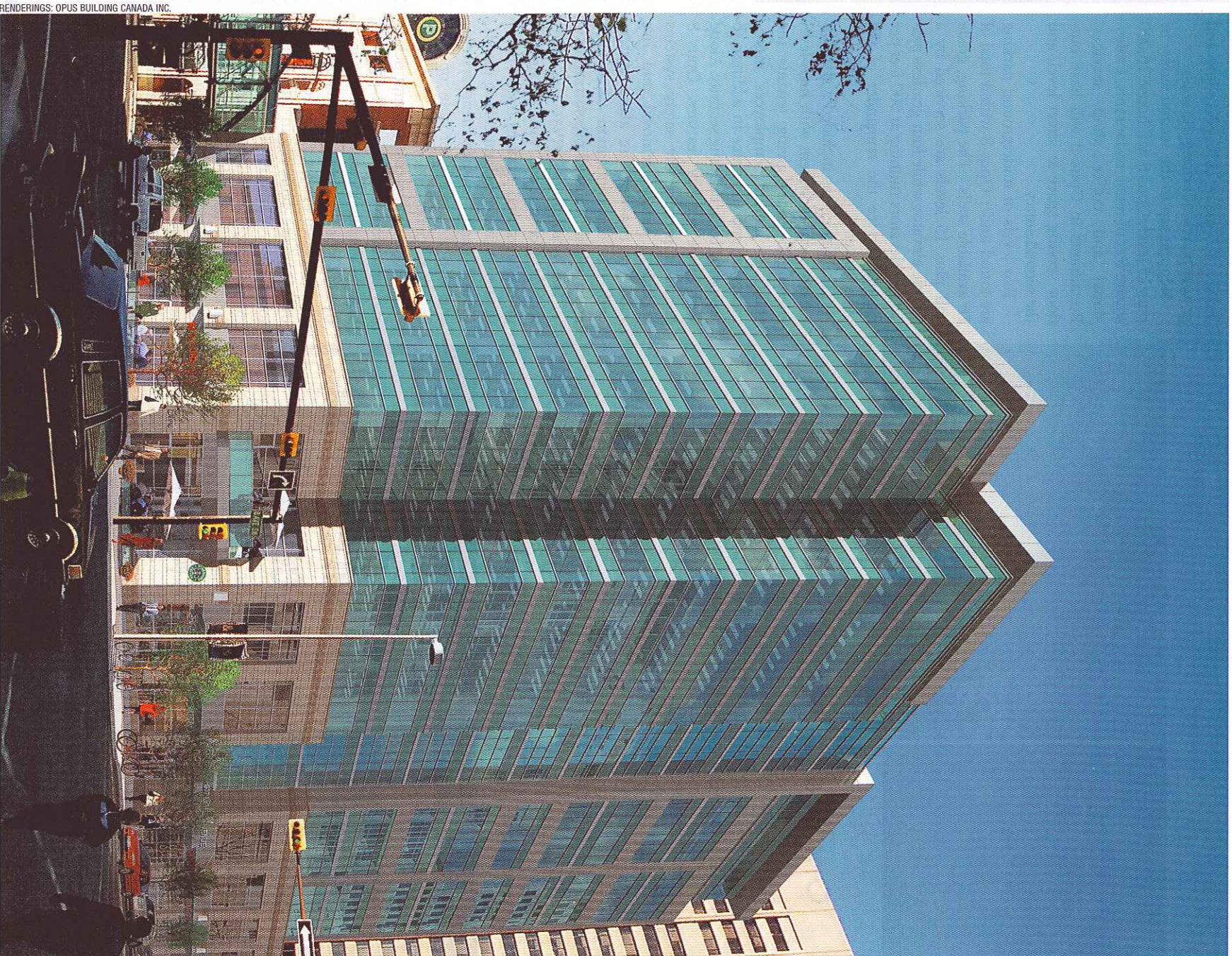
**W**ith more than two decades of experience and nearly 25 million square feet of project success, Opus Building Canada Inc. (OPUS) decided it was time to spread its wings and venture into Calgary, Alberta's red-hot downtown office market. With national and international projects such as Calgary's Silver City, Famous Players 16-screen multiplex theatre and the 125,000-square-foot Telus Advertising Services Inc. building, OPUS has a sturdy portfolio that will now include their first downtown Calgary office building, Opus 8.

**WITH A TOTAL OF 262,154 SQUARE FEET, OPUS 8 BECAME THE FIRST NEW OFFICE TOWER BEING BUILT DOWNTOWN SINCE 2001.**

OPUS, a pioneer in the design build method, has followed the same collaborate process it has come to be known for in the creation of Opus 8. By streamlining communication, allowing design, engineering and construction to happen simultaneously instead of step by step, the design build method is accredited with saving not only time but cutting down on costs as well. Prior to the purchase of the land on which Opus 8 is located, OPUS set out with a list of requirements that it felt would add to the marketability of their office tower.

"Strong site attributes, good exposure and access to transit made sense," says Brad Krizan, director of leasing for OPUS. "We were looking for land that was close to other recognizable projects like Banker's Hall and TD Square," says Krizan when referring to the rationale for purchasing a former parking lot on the corner of Fifth Street and Eighth Avenue S.W.

The plan to garner the attention of groups growing out of their existing accommodations proved to be an early success after an anchor tenant was secured. The lessee, who will be relo-



RENDERINGS: OPUS BUILDING CANADA INC.

cating from Banker's Hall, will occupy the top five floors of Opus 8 taking up close to 100,000 square feet of office space.

With a total of 262,154 square feet and 14 storeys (unlucky 13 has been removed) Opus 8 became the first new office tower being built downtown since 2001. Located on the fringe of the arts and entertainment district, the structure was designed to stand out among the other more mono-toned buildings in the area. The exterior consists of a glazed curtain wall system with regatta-blue spandrel panels and azure-blue coloured glass,

giving the building an aqua-type shade. Bands of composite metal panels add an extra stripe to the building's floor lines while the inclusion of vertical elements add height.

Those elements include concrete strips that travel from the second storey up to the roof while angled cut-outs also create the allusion of elevation, making the building asymmetrical. The buildings' glazing consists of double-glazed, tinted, low-E sealed units featuring six-inch-high windows on the north and east elevations.

The roof, which is encased in a warm metallic colour, features a five-foot overhang that adds to the modern

design of the building. The rooftop mechanical room is completely enclosed and capped with silver-toned metal panel. A balcony can be found on the roof that is enclosed by frosted glass and stainless steel posts.

The two-storey pedestal of Opus 8 is a striking blue-grey limestone marble, a departure from the reflective granite prevalent in Calgary's downtown. The tower is recessed from the base, creating yet another distinctive feature. A prominent steel and glass canopy leading into the foyer covers the main entrance, which is both welcoming and revitalizing with its atrium





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feature, 9.5-metre coffered ceiling and granite panels adorning the walls. Stepping up to the second storey or plus 15 level, Opus 8 will house 26,000 square feet of retail, restaurants, professional and coffee shop services. Restaurants in Opus 8 will have outdoor serving space at street level, and the second storey.

Two levels of underground parking are found under Opus 8 with a total of 76 available stalls. The parking, grade and plus 15 levels are serviced by a shuttle elevator while four gearless passenger elevators running at 500 feet per minute service the remainder of the office tower.

The builder has included a state-of-the-art security system with high-level encryption codes giving tenants the ability to monitor employees' movements around the space in addition to providing basic building security. Along with these security features, Opus 8 boasts impressive life safety systems including smoke removal and fire valves, a two-step fire alarm system with full communication capabilities and available stairwell pressurization.

The building's HVAC systems include a central and variable air volume system and heating from space-saving hot water radiant ceiling panels. Central energy management systems and digital controls provide optimal energy efficiency.

Rising building costs, permit delays and encroachment issues all plagued, but did not significantly stall, the erection of Opus 8. Accustomed to building in more open spaces, OPUS found it a tight squeeze building in the downtown core. Without much room for marshalling the builder became familiarized with its tight quarters and in short order began to assimilate to its surroundings.

Due to its arts and entertainment district location, exterior features of Opus 8 have been designed to reflect its environment. The concrete around the building is stamped with a filmstrip



**LOCATION**  
607 Eighth Avenue S.W.  
Calgary, Alberta

**OWNER/DEVELOPER/GENERAL CONTRACTOR**  
Opus Building Canada Inc.

**ARCHITECT/STRUCTURAL/MECHANICAL/CIVIL CONSULTANT**  
Stantec Consulting

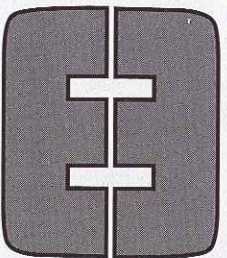
**INTERIOR DESIGN**  
Taipale Design Inc.

**TOTAL AREA**  
262,154 square feet

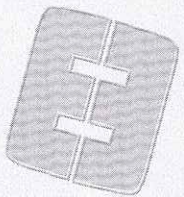
**TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST**  
\$100 million

motif and outside walls depict a subtle Hollywood-type theme. "The major tenant had an image they wanted to maintain so OPUS had to come up with something that is new and exciting, yet satisfactory to the tenant," says Jacques Gauthier, project manager for Stantec.

"We were trying to erect a building by a developer with a lot of curb appeal using a new style," says Gauthier. "I think we accomplished what we were trying to achieve." ■

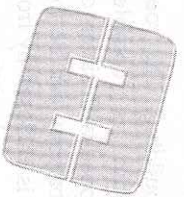


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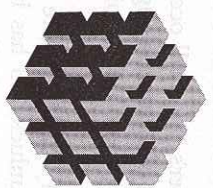
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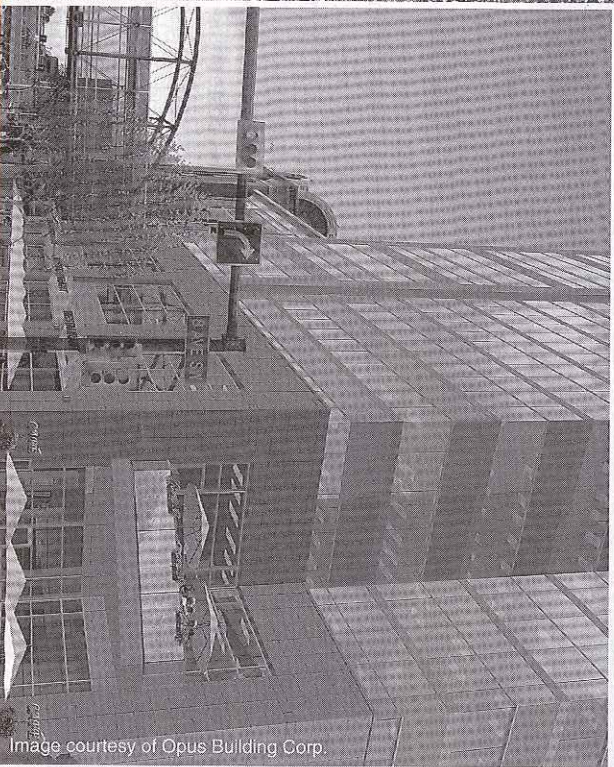
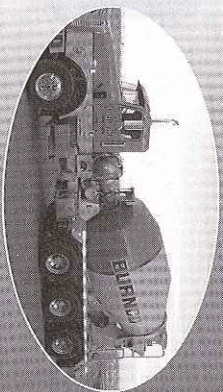


Image courtesy of Opus Building Corp.

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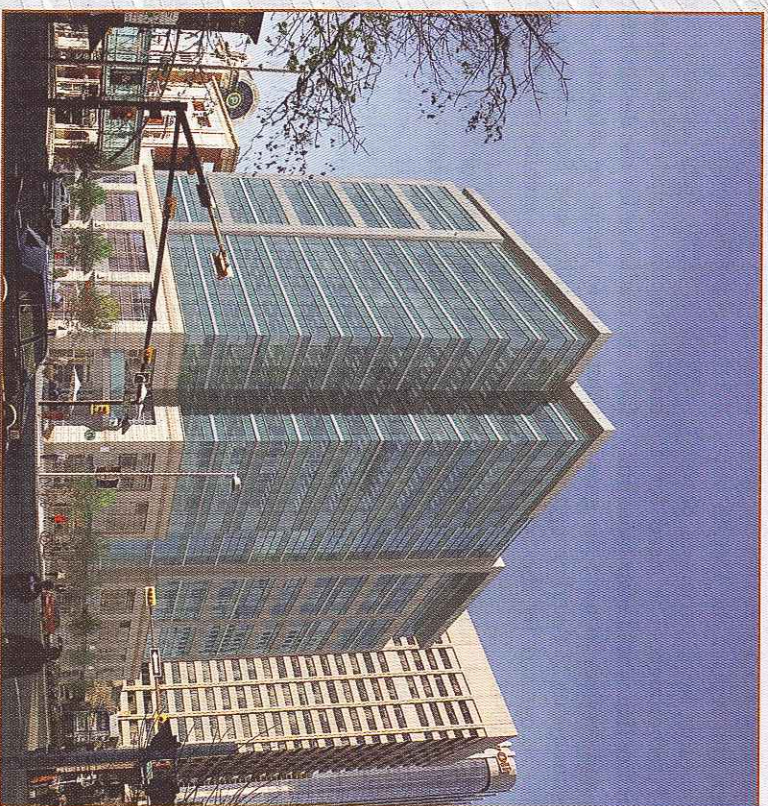
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CONGRATULATIONS TO OPUS:

We are proud to have participated in this exciting project!

OPUS Building Canada Inc.  
wishes to express our  
thanks to all the consultants,  
subcontractors and suppliers  
that helped make OPUS 8  
a huge success.



# OPUS

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