

## ARCHITECTURE

## Warming stations

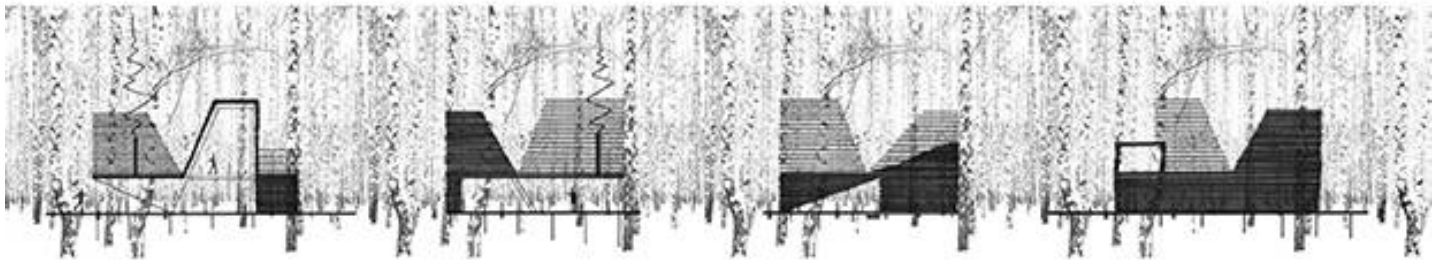
As temperatures drop, you could dream of flying south. Or you could conceptualize a dream retreat in the snow. That's what **Kristina Ljubanovic** asked five architects from across Canada to do. The result: a diverse lineup of cozy abodes that embrace the cold

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**KRISTINA LJUBANOVIC**  
SPECIAL TO THE GLOBE AND MAIL  
PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 23, 2017

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### Guertin Cottage by 5468796 Architecture



5468796 ARCHITECTURE

**5468796 Architecture**, a 10-year-old, Winnipeg-based practice founded by Johanna Hurme and Sasa Radulovic, offers up a "sculptural wooden tent" as their idealized winter dwelling. Guertin Cottage is located in Northwestern Ontario, on the snowy banks of Lake of the Woods in Rainy River District.

"Perched on top of a rocky hill, this quiet winter retreat appears above the treeline," the firm, which operates as a collective, wrote in a statement about the structure. The roof, stretched over a timber frame, descends to form an insulated skin – "a warm, blanketed refuge" for its inhabitants in deep winter.

"In contrast to its exterior, the inside of the cottage has a white palette that reflects the winter landscape, made bright with natural light, and with uninterrupted views out over the sloped property. Built for rest, the cottage draws guests to its central fireplace, a warm and quiet space from which to take in the surrounding lake and forest."

### Slope House by Lateral Office



LATERAL OFFICE

Lola Sheppard and Mason White of **Lateral Office**, based in Toronto, have a particular interest in northern architectures. The team collaborated with Canadian schools of architecture and Nunavut-based organizations on their contribution to the 2014 Venice Biennale of Architecture, titled *Arctic Adaptations*.

For their Slope House, a speculative prototype for a winter abode, the architects were inspired by the geological formation of the cuesta, with its steep escarpment on one side and a long, gentle incline on the other. "It transforms the roof into an iconic, extended slope ideal for sledding and playing and is oriented so that snow accumulates on the slope side," say Sheppard and White. The wedge-shaped construction is clad in timber, the striated planks separating at the entrance and porch where "wood for the fireplace, skis and other cottage gear can be stored, but also celebrated."

A large bay window and chimney project out to reveal what's inside. "The Slope House plays with degrees of interiority and exteriority and offers new ways to experience the Canadian winter landscape."

### **Yule Cabin by Acre Architects**



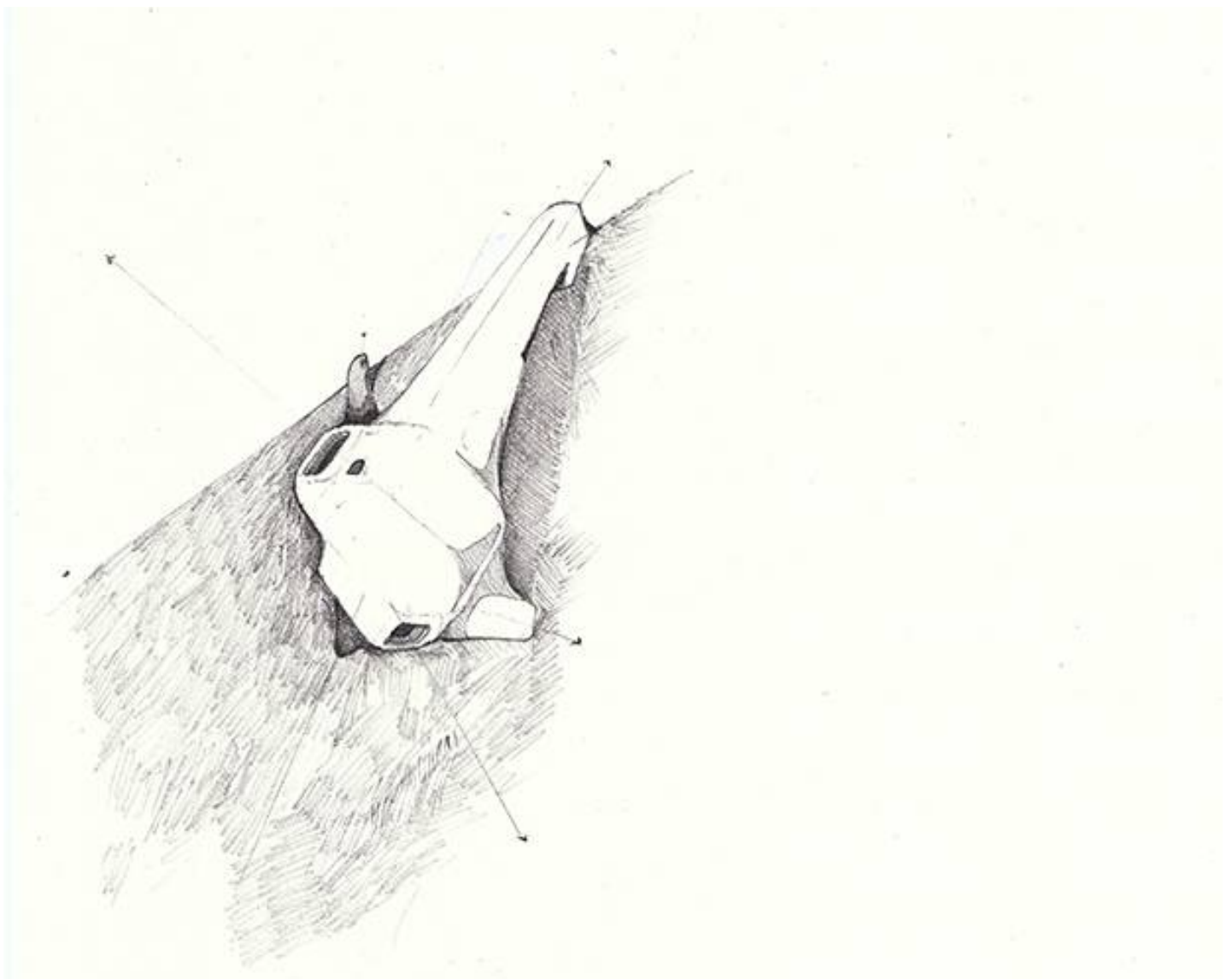
ACRE ARCHITECTS

Saint John, N.B.-based **Acre Architects**, founded by architects Monica Adair and Stephen Kopp, recognize that north of the 45th parallel, winter can be a time of dormancy, "hibernating and counting down the darker days of winter to pass." But they wondered, "Could a winter retreat reconnect us with nature and embrace the magical aspects of being Canadian?"

Their Yule Cabin, the basis for a current project in development on the Kingston Peninsula along the Saint John River, is about being connected and present – to nature and in the moment, frosty as it might be. The stone cabin features "a large, glowing firebox-like opening," the promise of warmth, "luring you home after a winter adventure."

"We feel there is something that is lost when fire is reserved to the living room," Adair and Kopp say. "The Yule Cabin embraces the wilder flames of an outdoor fire." Here, the dwelling is the fireplace; a space where friends can gather, surrounded by crisp air and quiet, "to get the most out of an Atlantic Canadian winter."

### **Nomad by Dominique Cheng**



DOMINIQUE CHENG

**Dominique Cheng**, an architect and illustrator based in Toronto, approached the challenge of an ideal winter weather abode with a softer touch. "This is the antithesis of a conventional 'bricks and mortar' architecture," says Cheng, describing a "soft and malleable structure no larger than a beached walrus," intended for a single occupant's privacy, warmth and comfort.

"Imagine a shapeless vessel insulated with the softest fabrics, with no floor, no ceiling, no furniture and only the bare minimum number of windows," says Cheng. And recognizing that winter's indiscriminate chill affects both rural and urban environments, his soft architecture is adaptable to any context. "It can dangle from the cornice line of an existing building, or simply be planted on a park bench."

### **Weypiskosiweywin III by Jake Chakasim**



JAKE CHAKASIM

For designer **Jake Chakasim**, an ideal winter-weather lodging is as much about mindful dwelling in place as it is about design. Chakasim's construction came to life in 2016, built in collaboration with students at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ont., where he was teaching at the time (he's now at Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Vancouver and part of a team of Indigenous architects and designers responsible for *UNCEDED*, Canada's contribution to the 2018 Venice Biennale of Architecture).

The tepee, typically identified with Cree culture and erected on Ojibwe territory, was – in fact and intent – a space for conversation about truth of place, identity and reconciliation, all while using off-the-shelf materials from Home Depot.

"As First Nations people, we tend to default to these iconic forms, like the tepee or the round room, and that's a question I always ask myself, how can we move that forward?" Chakasim says. "By using contemporary materials, it all of a sudden becomes a hybrid... Can we imagine a

The built artifact came together without heavy machinery or scaffolding, "just a couple of hand drills and a lot of bending of wood, which is very much a part of an Indigenous way of making architecture – everything's informed by the body," says Chakasim. "Your body is the ultimate vessel in terms of how you position yourself in the landscape."

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