

January 3rd, 2011

The Globe and Mail,

The Editors:

The article on architect Jack Diamond's brilliant New Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, clearly shows the value Europe places on a continuity of heritage in design. As so often happens in Canada, heritage is trashed for the latest bit of stainless steel and glass architectural nonsense. Mount Allison University, judged to be among the best in Canada by this newspaper, rejected Jack Diamond's recommendation to save and integrate their classic Memorial Library into a new Fine Arts and Performing Arts Centre. The classic stone design of renowned architect Andrew Cobb was built in honour of 73 Mount Allison students killed in World War One, and to some extent paid for by their parents as a lasting memorial. This building, which has largely influenced the pleasing tonality of the campus, is to be destroyed to allow the construction of a couple of stainless steel and glass boxes in the trendy architectural conceit of the day. So much for heritage. We now live in a time of the 'best before' date, and it applies to both memory and commitment.

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