

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

CITY STILLS #1: Lunch at the Royal Bank

Maurice Amiel · Wednesday, April 2nd, 2014

About CITY STILLS

I wish to present periodically this spring and summer, short, event centered vignettes of social situations mediated by the physical city ... with a touch of humour if at all possible. The feature image will remain unchanged as visual signature.

Lunch at the Royal Bank

Like a flock of birds swarming, pupils from a nearby private school on lunch recess make a run on the local Italian food joint of this small municipality situated west of Montreal proper.

Since there are not enough seats in that venue to accommodate them, the pupils usually make a beeline for the town green next to their school or, better yet since it is closer and therefore helps keep the food warm, for the access ramp retaining wall of the local bank, that they appropriate momentarily and without compunction, as an outdoor mini refectory table.



Not enough of a common practice to warrant a buzz about having “lunch at the Royal Bank,” but spontaneous and curious enough an event to elicit an understanding smile, and quick camera draw from the author to bag the scene in a telling City Still!

Note the urban design feature of the deep sidewalk along the town main street. This feature has allowed the bank to install its access ramp, leading to a projecting entrance landing that has created a small recess away from the city sidewalk proper, but deep enough for the row of children to be out of the way of pedestrian traffic.

Note the double level stainless steel handrail for ease of grasping by walking and wheelchaired clients, the rough granite surface flooring for best traction of rubber tires or soles and, as mentioned above, the deep entrance landing that allows for two wheelchairs to manoeuvre in and out of the bank.

Finally, an older student seems to have joined the school children who are lined up, like birds on a telephone wire, so as to keep their personal bubble at its side-by-side optimal distance (which is much smaller than the front to front one), making for an efficient use of the improvised table top.

Photo and collage credit Maurice Amiel

This entry was posted on Wednesday, April 2nd, 2014 at 11:24 am and is filed under [Architecture](#), [Lifestyle](#)

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