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# SilverScreen



## Autumn 2014

Brought to you by Malcolm Silver & Co. Ltd.

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### The Leaves are Changing!

As the days shorten and the trees change into their autumnal finery, we examine urban in this issue of SilverScreen. Online shoe retailer, Zappos, changes the way communities in downtown Las Vegas will look and operate; Toronto changes the landscape of old industrial lands and Robert Wennett changes the way people experience parking structures. All this and more in this issue.

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## **Toronto's New Developments : The Canary District**

It seems that everywhere we turn these days we see a new condominium tower shooting skyward. Toronto is a rapidly expanding city and developers are finding large tracts of land in the most unlikely places where they are planning to build complete communities. One of these areas under development is the burgeoning West Don Lands - a site bordered by the Don River, King Street, Parliament Street and the rail line adjacent to the Gardiner Expressway.

In the heart of West Don Lands, and named after an historic greasy spoon, sits the Canary District where over 3,000 residents will live, work, play, and eat by September 2016. The Canary District is the second private-sector development in Waterfront Toronto's West Don Lands master plan. It is currently functioning as the site of the Pan Am Games' athletes' village, which will house 10,000 people in the summer of 2015 and then will be converted into a functioning neighbourhood six months afterwards. The Canary District will ultimately comprise eight buildings, including more than 800 condos, 28 townhouses and 12 loft units as well as 253 units of affordable housing. The site will include George Brown College's first student residence and a new YMCA facility.

The district will be very pedestrian friendly with new pathways between buildings and the extension of Front Street will make for a vibrant pedestrian promenade that will establish deep connections between the downtown, the Distillery District, Don River Park and Lake Ontario.

The developer, DundeeKilmer, intends that the retail spaces - over 43,000 square feet

of ground floor space - will be occupied by July 2016. To go along with the pedestrian/fitness vibe, the focus of much of the retail will be on independent stores with a bent towards yoga studios, a cycling shop and other fitness-themed shops, as well as a grocery store..

By the time the Canary District is a neighbourhood there will be plenty of public space. Trees have already been planted along the streets and the 18-acre park space, Corktown Common, opened this spring. Corktown Common, which will also act as a flood plain for the Don River, is still being finished, but it already contains a solar-panel equipped pavilion which is the park's hub. Nearby is a playground, amphitheatre, splash pad and toboggan hill. Outside the pavilion there is an outdoor fireplace, a concrete "banquet table" for big family picnics and another concrete barbecue table. The park has a wetland filled with flowers and bulrushes and bordered by a boardwalk. Corktown Common's several playgrounds are full of swings and seesaws, a splash pad and a giant sandbox. There's also a flexible playing field and a great lawn for concerts or picnics. Public art figures in the space and eventually there will be three major pieces.

Just like Liberty Village to the west, the Canary District is a perfect example of how a contained community can rise out of the ashes of a forgotten and discarded industrial wasteland.

## **All Muscle and No Cloth: 11 11 Lincoln Road**



When Miami developer Robert Wennett bought the 1968-built SunTrust Bank office structure in 2005 for \$24 million, he came to it with a vision to revitalize the western end of the Lincoln Road Mall – conceived by the influential 50s architect Morris Lapidus as one of America’s first pedestrian malls. The site included an adjacent surface parking lot, so instead of completely eliminating the existing structure, Wennett decided to build something next to it of equal height, and he settled on the idea of a parking garage - but not just any parking garage.

Wennett was determined to build a world-class, unique project that would showcase Miami's international prominence as a 21st century destination for art, culture and commerce. He interviewed ten well-known architects around the globe before choosing the Swiss-based architectural firm of Herzog & de Meuron, known for their work at the Tate Modern in London and the Olympic Stadium in Beijing.

Alongside Herzog & de Meuron, Wennett hired Raymond Jungles, a Miami-based landscape architect, to design a lush water garden adjacent to the retail space and, partnering with Art in Public Places - a citizens’ trust that oversees public art in Miami – he commissioned conceptual artist Dan Graham to create artwork for the mall extension. Graham created an elegant, interactive, curved glass sculpture to serve as a focal point for Lincoln Road Mall and attract visitors.

The elegant and breezy 11 11 Lincoln Road opened in 2010 to instant international status and acclaim. Featured in *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and *Vanity Fair*, the structure immediately restored this long-dormant strip of Lincoln Road to its former position as Miami's premier retail location. Better described now as a mixed-use building than a garage, 11 11 Lincoln Road sits at the entrance to the Lincoln Road pedestrian mall.

Wennett's plan for his building to serve as an extension of the mall, rather than a purely utilitarian parking structure, has come true. Joggers scale its stairs and ramps, yoga practitioners take in the expansive view from the seventh floor, and party goers attend events and weddings.

"Our garage is much more a civic and public space rather than a warehouse for cars". Wennett said, "I think that's what delights people – an activity such as parking your car, which is something quite mundane, has somehow become an interesting experience that they want to share with other people. On the Fourth of July, for example, we had hundreds of people on the seventh floor enjoying the view of the fireworks. We also have people who come to exercise in the garage. Locals bring friends from out of town to show them the incredible views. It's constantly transforming; people are there in that garage for many different reasons".

11 11 Lincoln's unique structure of varying floor heights in dazzling concrete and glass provides a variety of spatial experiences throughout the building. The building encompasses 40,000 square feet for 13 retail concept stores including MAC Cosmetics, Osklen, Coltorti, Alchemist, Nespresso, Taschen Books and Juicy Couture; 110,000 square feet of office space occupied by MTV and Nickelodeon Latin America, and other creative businesses; a 300-space multilevel parking facility that is as much aesthetic as it is functional; three restaurants, one on the roof top with ocean and bay views; and an event space

for concerts and art openings.

## Zappos



I recently took my family on a vacation to Las Vegas. Before we arrived we were all excited to experience the casinos and hotels, the food, the shows and the sunshine. The adage about Sin City goes: “What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas”, but we discovered something off the tourist track that was too good to keep to ourselves.

My wife and I have two daughters, so you might assume that shoes figure predominantly in our household. Imagine my family’s delight when they heard that the mother of all online shoe stores has recently located to Las Vegas and offer tours of their facility!

It might have been the attraction of the shoes for the women, but for me it was to see the fruits of an incredible business story I’d been following for the last few years. Tony Hsieh is a young, Harvard-educated techie who struck it big when he sold his company, LinkExchange, to Microsoft for \$265 million at the tender age of 24. Hsieh went on to become CEO of Zappos – a company he helped

nurture from the ground up. In less than ten years Zappos has grown to see sales of almost \$1 billion a year.

Until 2012 Zappos was headquartered in Henderson, Nevada, where the call centre was rapidly outgrowing its facility. When Hsieh got word that the Las Vegas city government was about to move from their downtown City Hall building he negotiated to take over the building. In 2010, together with the Resort Gaming Group he purchased the building as well as seven acres of land to the east of the site. In 2012 Zappos moved his 1000 plus call centre employees into the renovated City Hall.

Zappos is so proud of its operation that it will pick you up from your hotel or from the airport to take you to tour the facility. We piled into the minivan and headed for the Zappos campus. I was amazed how impressive the place was! The campus spans some 276,500 square feet across 11 stories and includes a variety of features, including a state-of-the-art cafeteria and kitchen, roof terrace, game rooms, product-specific meeting rooms, coffee shop, yoga studio, gym, and genius bar. There are even touch screen video games in elevators throughout the building. The employees work in open plan offices and are encouraged to move desks every so often to get to know other people in the company.

While the Zappos operation is impressive, what fascinates me even more are the plans for a whole community that Hsieh is planning to build called the Downtown Project. He oversees this project, quite literally, from a palatial suite made up of three apartments at the Ogden – a renovated apartment building just a few blocks from City Hall – where he has also leased 30 suites for visiting entrepreneurs.

Hsieh is investing over \$350 million of his own money into the Downtown Project, which will not only promote his ethos of 'serendipitous interactions' - much like the Zappos culture of offices without walls – but at the same time make Las Vegas even more attractive to would-be Zappos employees. As well, the

development next to the Fremont Street area, would help revitalize the community, which is still struggling to rebound from the economic crash in 2008. The Downtown Project is hoping to draw 10,000 upwardly mobile professionals in the next five years and the Project has already broken ground on 16 construction projects and has bought 15 existing buildings. The \$350 investment breaks down as \$200 million to real estate acquisition, \$50 million to small businesses and \$50 million to education.

An additional \$50 million is earmarked for supporting start up companies. Every day Hsieh is approached by entrepreneurs who are seeking seed money. If entrepreneurs accept seed money from the \$50 million VegasTech Fund, they are expected to relocate to Las Vegas and become an active part of the new community. Instead of an ROI for his loan, Hsieh expects something he initially called 'ROC' – Return on Community. Through this scheme Hsieh is leading by human capital, rather than by laying down structures. Hsieh recently replaced the tag ROC with a statement that says : “Our internal goal and purpose at Downtown Project has remained essentially the same: to help make downtown Vegas a place of Inspiration, Entrepreneurial Energy, Creativity, Innovation, Upward Mobility, and Discovery, through the 3 C's of Collisions, Co-Learning, and Connectedness”.

The Downtown Project has its own website ([downtownproject.com](http://downtownproject.com)) which tracks the progress of the renovations, construction, companies and even has a job creation ticker – so far almost 900 jobs have been created.

Zappos employees seem to be amongst the happiest on the planet. Each year Zappos publishes a 'Culture Book' chocked full of quotes from their over 1000 employees, which is given away to visitors. Steffany B says, “The Zappos Culture is all about balance. It's basically a place that allows you to be yourself. It has managed to successfully strike a balance between autonomy and structure. Allowing the company employees to be themselves, in return, gets them to

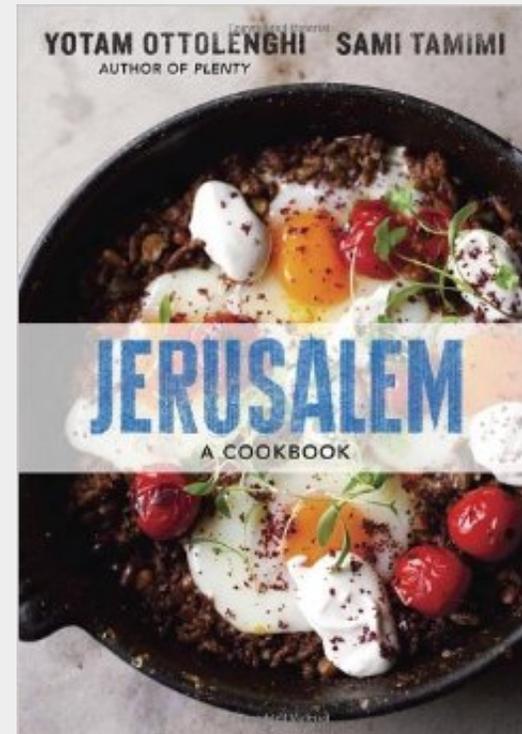
perform great work. Zappos has managed to create a strong foundation and belief in its core values. By accomplishing this, by allowing people to freely fall in love with the company as a whole, the end result is a bunch of people who care about each other and the company”.

I can't wait for my next visit to Las Vegas and another chance to check out the Fremont Street area and the Downtown Project.

## Book Reviews

***Jerusalem: A Cookbook by Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi – Appetite by Random House***

Here they go again – the odd couple of Ottolenghi, the Jew and Tamimi, the Arab. *Jerusalem* is a collection of recipes exploring the flavors of Jerusalem from the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Plenty*. In *Jerusalem*, Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi explore the vibrant cuisine of their home city--with its diverse Muslim, Jewish, and Christian communities. Both men were born in Jerusalem in the same year - Tamimi on the Arab east side and Ottolenghi in the Jewish west. This stunning cookbook offers 120 recipes from their unique cross-cultural

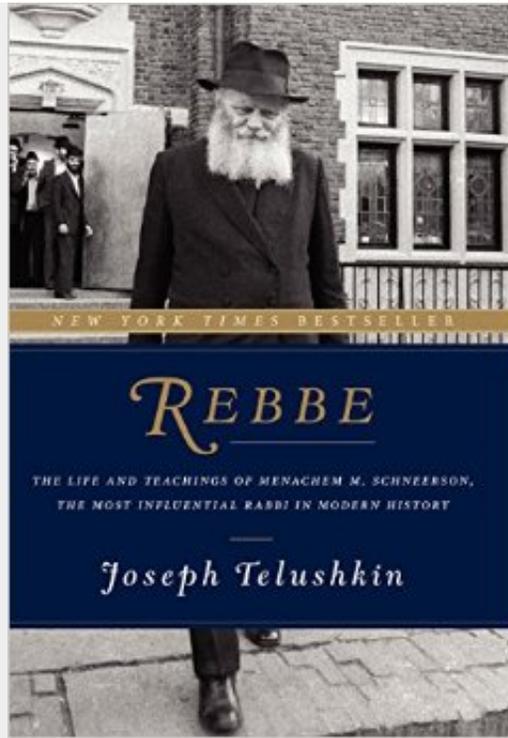


perspective, from inventive vegetable dishes to sweet, rich desserts. With five bustling restaurants in London and two stellar cookbooks, Ottolenghi is one of the most respected chefs in the world; in *Jerusalem*, he and Tamimi have collaborated to produce their most personal cookbook yet.

The photographs of the food are gorgeous and Jerusalem, the city, is fabulously captured – the photographs reflect the real city, rather than the tourist experience. I was excited to jump in and try the recipes as soon as the book arrived. The dishes are amazing with explosive and complex flavours. The recipes are straightforward to follow – but can take time to make – and most ingredients are found locally. My favourite dishes so far are the chicken with caramelized onions; fried cauliflower with tahini and pan-fried sea bass with harissa.

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***Rebbe: The Life and Teachings of  
Menachem M. Schneerson, the Most  
Influential Rabbi in Modern History*** by  
Joseph Telushkin - *Harperwave*



In this enlightening biography, Joseph Telushkin offers a captivating portrait of the late Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, a towering figure who saw beyond conventional boundaries to turn his movement, Chabad-Lubavitch, into one of the most dynamic and widespread organizations ever seen in the Jewish world. At once an incisive work of history and a compendium of Rabbi Schneerson's teachings, *Rebbe* is the definitive guide to understanding one of the most vital, intriguing figures of the last centuries.

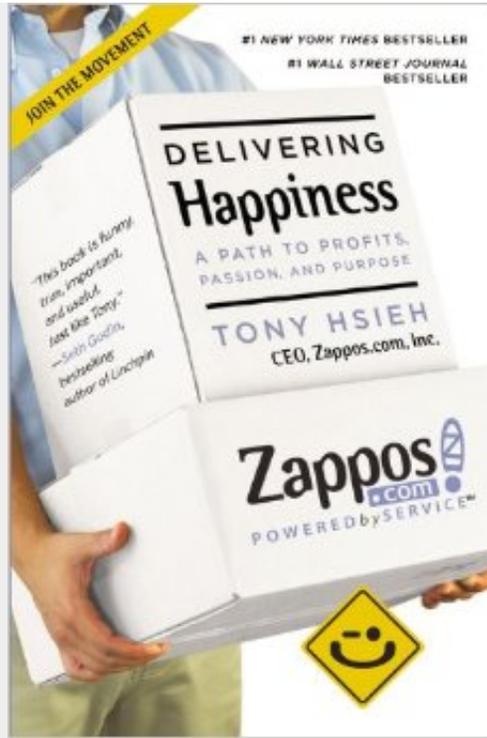
From his modest headquarters in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, the Rebbe advised some of the world's greatest leaders and shaped matters of state and society. Statesmen and artists as diverse as Ronald Reagan, Robert F. Kennedy, Yitzchak Rabin, Menachem Begin, Elie Wiesel, and Bob Dylan span the spectrum of those who sought his counsel. *Rebbe* explores Schneerson's overarching philosophies against the backdrop of treacherous history, revealing his clandestine operations to rescue and sustain Jews in the Soviet Union, and his critical role in the

expansion of the food stamp program throughout the United States. More broadly, it examines how he became in effect an ambassador for Jews globally, and how he came to be viewed by many as not only a spiritual archetype but a savior. Telushkin also delves deep into the more controversial aspects of the Rebbe's leadership, analyzing his views on modern science and territorial compromise in Israel.

Until I read *Rebbe* I knew just a little about Chabad-Lubavitch, and almost nothing about Schneerson, especially his education at two of the best universities in Paris and Berlin. His vision and ability to inspire people and encourage them to become missionaries is remarkable. The book resembles a Harvard business school study. Although Schneerson rarely left New York and never went to Israel he was a true visionary. *Rebbe* is an excellent read!

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***Delivering Happiness: A Path to Profits, Passion, and Purpose*** by  
**Tony Hsieh - *Business Plus***



Zappos CEO Hsieh offers a compelling account of his transformation from callow Harvard student entrepreneur through his years as a dot-com wunderkind to the creator of a formidable brand. Interest might flag as Hsieh, fresh off selling his Internet company LinkExchange to Yahoo in 1999 for \$265 million, kvetches about lacking fulfillment. But as the tech boom bursts, and Hsieh confronts his dwindling investments, his story comes alive. As the funding for his incubator companies dries up and one of his most promising startups, Zappos.com, a shoe retailer, seems doomed, Hsieh blossoms into a mature businessperson, slashing expenses and presciently making customer service the essence of the company's brand. The story becomes suspenseful as Hsieh recounts the stress of operating in survival mode, liquidating his assets to fund the company in its darkest days and seeking out an 11th-hour loan. By the time Zappos is acquired by Amazon for more than \$1.2 billion in 2009, Hsieh and his team had built a unique corporate culture dedicated to employee empowerment and the promise of delivering happiness though satisfied

customers and a valued workforce. This is an uplifting tale of entrepreneurial success, personal growth, and redemption.

## Malcolm in the Media

It's been a busy time for Malcolm, and there's been no time for media appearances. But Toronto is making news in the glossy magazines! Vogue's September issue highlighted 15 of the world's hippest neighbourhoods and Toronto's Queen Street West came in second! Find the article [here](#):



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