

The Canadian design guru



Invisible, subtle, transparent and virtually hidden are keywords in the newspaper design of the future.

The prospect is interesting for Lucie Lacava, who is going to compete with

three other "top guns" in designing newspaper pages in connection with the SND Guru Night. She is not at all unfamiliar with newspaper design, though. Lacava is a newspaper architect. She began her career in 1982 at The

Gazette in Montreal where she held a number of increasingly senior positions over a period of ten years. In 1992 she took part in redesigning Montreal's prestigious French language daily paper *Le Devoir*. In 1994 she redesigned *Le Soleil* of Quebec City, and a year later she worked on a Southam project, which was the conversion of sixteen broadsheets to the narrower 50" Web width. This involved changes in the editorial grid, headline and text fonts, as well as the implementation of a set of common stylesheets to facilitate page sharing within the chain. In the last couple of years she has either redesigned, or been a consultant to, several publications in Canada.

The Society of Newspaper Design named three of the papers she redesigned - *Le Devoir*, *Le Soleil*, and this year *The National Post* - as being among "the best designed newspapers in the world." She has received over fifty national and international awards in her career, including the SND Best of Show Award, the Judge's Special Recognition along with numerous gold and silver medals.

The central demands in terms of design to which newspapers must live up in the future, she describes the following way:

- As readers are becoming

more sophisticated, literate and demanding than previous generations, the design of newspapers is going to be invisible, subtle, transparent and virtually hidden. Readers will see right through any attempt to entice them with a masquerade. At first glance, newspapers will appear unaffected by the design revolution. Design will come across as simple and effortless. On closer inspection, however, the design will prove to be even more present, though in a supporting role. Absolute perfection and flexibility are keywords. Words and pictures will be in the lead. Headlines will be carefully crafted, and photography will be the star.

- It will be in-your-face, larger and more present, with colour on every page. The silent witness feeding voyeuristic instincts. There will be more demand on photographers to deliver poignant pictures that can stir the emotions. There will be even more compartmentalisation. Grouping a dozen pages under the heading of NEWS will no longer suffice. Readers will have less patience. They will demand clarity and organisation, and expect to find within that, the unexpected.

CV:
Lucie Lacava holds a B.F.A. in design from Concordia University, Montreal.