

Today's News - Friday, March 20, 2009

- Good news (hopefully): "serious interest in a smarter coordinated approach to housing, transportation and economic policy is surging within both the Obama Administration and Congress" (many useful/interesting links).
- The bad news: a report on how the economic crisis has architects hurting around the world. - Brisbane is feeling the pinch. - The number of British architects putting in for unemployment benefits has risen an astounding 760% (yikes!).
- Gehry's Beekman Tower in Manhattan might be cut off at the proverbial knees (shades of Foster's Las Vegas adventure?).
- Saffron is happy to see "the last of Philadelphia's resistance to glass" is "reflected in the sheen of its skyline" (now if they could only get the street level right).
- Heathcote visits Tully Hall likes what he sees - for the most part: it's "a vast improvement on what was there but it is not perfect."
- SHoP's Pier 15 plan gets a thumbs-up from NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission (continuing hurdle: Pier 17).
- Call for entries: create a new architectural icon at Glasgow School of Art (starchitects welcome!).
- Weekend diversions: "Architect Sverre Fehn" at Stockholm's Arkitekturmuseet is "like an alchemist's feat."
- Kamin cheers Bucky's arrival in Chicago, tailored to Illinois.
- "Patterns of Speculation: J. Mayer H." in San Francisco shows "the already tenuous line between fine art and architecture that much closer to the side of art."
- Q&A with the man himself: Is architecture art? "Only when I'm asked these questions do I think about it. Personally, I don't really care."
- Two takes on "Maya Lin: Systematic Landscapes" in Washington, DC (both intriguing).
- Book review: "Big Box Reuse" by Julia Christensen: "What do you do with an abandoned superstore? The answers are fascinating, but also a little gloomy."
- Two takes on "Objectified": the film "has plenty of moments that will resonate with design wonks."
- We couldn't resist: some Trekkies take Captain Kirk's chair very, very seriously. - UFOs photographed over London (we kid you not). Happy first day of Spring!

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Breaking Silos: Momentum Builds in Washington for Livable Communities, Sustainable Networks: House testimony by CNU's John Norquist follows promising announcement by DOT-HUD Secretaries [links]- Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU)

Recession & Recovery: Global Report: The economic crisis has architects hurting around the world...reports on the state of design from São Paulo to Shanghai.- Architectural Record

Global financial crisis hits Brisbane property jobs: 100s of property industry jobs have already been lost and thousands more are threatened with the global economic crisis stalling development- Courier-Mail (Australia)

Number of architects claiming unemployment benefits rises by 760 per cent: ...has increased faster than any other profession...second biggest increase was among architectural technologists and town-planning technicians.- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Developer cuts Beekman Tower from 76 stories to 38: Gehry Tower near City Hall put on hold 38 stories short of goal...work will continue on the lower stories, but added that no additional floors will be added pending an evaluation of costs.- Crain's New York

Brick city accepts glass: ...it finally seems that the last of Philadelphia's resistance to glass in domestic architecture has been crushed...you can see evidence of the city's shifting tastes reflected in the sheen of its skyline... By Inga Saffron -- Solomon Cordwell Buenz; Handel Architects [slide show]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Manhattan nip and tuck: Lincoln Center...arguably also the most ambitious of all downtown cultural regeneration projects. In spite of its odd architecture (suspended somewhere between manly modernism and fey classicism) it remains a memorable urban intervention...The newest chapter...Alice Tully Hall...a vast improvement on what was there but it is not perfect. By Edwin Heathcote -- Pietro Belluschi (1969); Diller Scofidio + Renfro- Financial Times (UK)

Ship Shape: SHoP's new East River Pier 15 gets Landmarks Preservation Commission go-ahead: ...commissioners largely agreed with Pasquarelli, who emphasized its antecedents in the multistory working and recreational piers that once lined the New York waterfront. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Call for entries: £50m competition to create new architectural icon at Glasgow School of Art...could rival the world-famous main building designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh...GSA is hoping that some of the world's most famous "starchitects"...will be attracted by the project; deadline: May 1- The Herald (Scotland)

Norway's Unsung Architectural Hero: Contemporary architecture lost an unsung hero last month, when Sverre Fehn...the torchbearer of Scandinavian modernism, died at 84..."Architect Sverre Fehn" has now reached Stockholm's Arkitekturmuseet...exhibition is like an alchemist's feat.- Wall Street Journal

Getting into Bucky's dome: "Buckminster Fuller: Starting With the Universe" opens window onto inventor's creative mind...Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) deserves credit for not simply taking this show from the Whitney but tailoring it to Illinois with the addition of more than 100 items related to Fuller's years in Chicago and southern Illinois. By Blair Kamin [images]- Chicago Tribune

Data Decor: "Patterns of Speculation: J. Mayer H." at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA)...If this degree of thought can go into a building's envelope, imagine how Mayer's talent could transform buildings as integrated systems, or conceive of whole urban environments. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Q&A with Jürgen Mayer H.: When SFMOMA gave J. Mayer H. a show, the Berlin-based studio couldn't have been expected to do anything tame...Is architecture art? "I'm not really interested in disciplines. Only when I'm asked these questions do I think about it. Personally, I don't really care." [slide show]- Architectural Record

Maya Lin Brings The Outside In: "Maya Lin: Systematic Landscapes" -- not just landscapes...despite the fact that the wall labels do tend to go on about such geologic phenomena as hills, valleys, rivers, islands and lakes, what the show draws the most attention to is not any particular body of water or any particular body of land . . . but your own body. [images]- Washington Post

Monumental Return: As a More Mature Artist, Maya Lin Brings Vision That Still Redefines Expectations: "Systematic Landscapes"...marks her attempt to bring indoors the type of monumental landscape work she has been doing for the past 15 years.- Washington Post

Book review: "Big Box Reuse" by Julia Christensen: A 21st-century problem: what do you do with an abandoned superstore? The answers are fascinating, but also a little gloomy.- Icon magazine (UK)

Golden Ticket: "Objectified": Filmmaker Gary Hustwit takes viewers inside famous - and sometimes secretive - design studios...to uncover the creative processes of top designers while examining how the objects they make impact our lives. -- Marc Newson; Dieter Rams; Karim Rashid; Hella Jongerius; Naoto Fukasawa; Jonathan Ive [images, links]- Metropolis Magazine

"Objectified" Review: A Hurricane of Consumer Values: ...has plenty of moments that will resonate with design wonks...designers each labor to explain to us how human-centered their designs are, yet it's the misshapen clay figurines and cheap handmade toys that truly define who we are.- Fast Company

Getting Their Kirk On: Serious Trekkies are expressing a passion for "Star Trek" by building replicas of Capt. James T. Kirk's original chair and making them a focal point in the home. [images]- New York Times

UFOs photographed over London: Strange shapes have been photographed hovering over London leading to speculation they could be UFOs. [image]- Telegraph (UK)

When Your New Job is to Find Your Next Job: Some practical suggestions for opening new doors of opportunities in difficult times. By Marjanne Pearson- ArchNewsNow

Happy Ending for the Little Beach House That Could: Venturi and Scott Brown watch their Lieb House sail by. By Kristen Richards -- Frederic Schwartz; Inga Saffron [images, links]- ArchNewsNow



-- Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA): Taipei Performing Arts Centre, Taipei City, Taiwan
-- Sadar Vuga Arhitekti: National Gallery Extension, Ljubljana, Slovenia

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