

Today's News - Tuesday, July 21, 2009

EDITOR'S NOTE: Due to circumstances beyond our control, we were unable to post the newsletter yesterday...so we have a lot of catching up to do!

- ArcSpace visits a magical sculpture park and an old paper mill transformed into a charming hotel - not too far from Copenhagen.
- Some Vietnamese experts are "surprised by audacity of proposed Hanoi master plan" by an international consortium.
- Planning is "'priority profession' on the immigration scorecard" as Australia looks overseas for planners to help fill a gap in rebounding building sector.
- U.S. architects, designers looking for strategic partnerships with local developers and architects for property developments in China in the Philippines.
- Kennicott comments on AIA's "Design for Diplomacy" report: perhaps a bit dull and dry, but "the fact that it exists means that the age of the American embassy as architectural wasteland may finally be coming to an end."
- Is America leading the way on sustainability? Yes, says Patrick Bellew/Atelier Ten, but Gary Lawrence/Arup says it's China.
- Baillieu wonders why U.K. architects "design some of the least energy-efficient buildings in Europe" - and offers some plausible explanations that some might find "uncomfortable."
- Heathcote gives us a sneak-peek at Scheeren's Bangkok tower: "An archetypal modernist skyscraper with its erosion programmed in from the beginning - it is quite a metaphor for the contemporary city."
- West Kowloon Cultural District project seems to be back on track; Foster's back - this time teamed with OMA and Rocco Design.
- Russell reports from Yale's Kroon Hall: it "strikes a rustic note," but it's "not about quain" as it reaches for "the Holy Grail in the battle against global warming" - carbon neutrality.
- A Detroit banker with a mission to show how to make historic preservation economically viable even in these tough times.
- Saffron strolls the High Line and finds it makes a case for not demolishing "Philadelphia's unloved Reading Viaduct" (great pix).
- St. Louis' newest urban park "brings to downtown not only an entirely new, and enthusiastic, demographic, but a new formal and aesthetic framework."
- Signs of the times: KPF UK to split from U.S. parent (let's hope they come up with a better new name than some other splitsville firms).
- McDonough goes Dutch with a new office in Amsterdam.
- Rose on the "rural renewal" of Kathryn Findlay: she's back with a new project that "could contain the germ of a new aesthetic for 21st-century rural architecture."
- Chelsea Barracks redux: a handy round-up (links included) of all the brouhaha (in case you missed anything).
- Call for entries: AIA Show How You Re-Green Housing Awards; and 24th Annual Mockett Design Competition (royalties included).

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-- KK Letter: The Wanås Foundation, Knislinge, Sweden (Antony Gormley, Dan Graham, Jenny Holzer, Per Kirkeby, Maya Lin, Robert Wilson, etc.)
-- Pappersbruket: Östanå Papermill, Broby, Sweden

Experts surprised by audacity of proposed Hanoi master plan: Hanoi City is giving positive consideration to implementing a long-term urban development plan it has commissioned from an international consortium...drawing fire from Vietnamese experts. -- PPJ/Perkins Eastman/Posco/Jina - VietNamNet Bridge

Planners Needed As Building Rebounds in Australia: ...looks overseas to help fill the gap. Planning continues as a "priority profession" on the immigration scorecard. - PLANetizen

US architects, designers are looking for strategic partnership with local developers and architects to complement huge integrated property development in China in the Philippines. - Manila Bulletin (Philippines)

Breaking the Diplomatic Ties That Bind Design: "Design for Diplomacy" by the American Institute of Architects (AIA)...dull, dry...But the fact that it exists means that the age of the American embassy as architectural wasteland may finally be coming to an end...being taken seriously by the Overseas Buildings Operations -- which clearly wants to get back in the game of making good architecture... By Philip Kennicott - Washington Post

Is America leading the way on sustainability? Yes, thanks to the LEED standard and Obama, says Patrick Bellew/Atelier Ten, but Gary Lawrence/Arup argues that China is making greater strides - BD/Building Design (UK)

The green debate warms up: Green initiatives are all very well but UK architects need to ask why they design some of the least energy-efficient buildings in Europe...Maybe the truth is an uncomfortable one — that it has to do with our planning system and our reluctance to give up our comfortable lifestyles. It also has to do with architects, too many of whom see sustainability as a challenge to their creative freedom. By Amanda Baillieu - BD/Building Design (UK)

Metaphor for a metropolis: It is impossible to compete with Bangkok's existing exotic menagerie of skyscrapers, so Scheeren proposes a monolith...but then begins to erode its perfection...as if a computer virus has begun to eat away at an image...The appearance of decay, though, is more than a formal aesthetic device...The most intriguing aspect of Mahanakhon is [his] desire to suck the frenetic activity of the street up into the architecture. By Edwin Heathcote -- Koolhaas/Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) [images] - Financial Times (UK)

Foster back on [West Kowloon Cultural District] project, but not his canopy: ...two-year consultation exercise carries a HK\$230 million price tag, with the three consultants getting HK\$49 million each... -- Foster + Partners; Koolhaas/Scheeren/Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA); Rocco Yim Sen-kee/Rocco Design Architects; Mott MacDonald - The Standard (Hong Kong)

Yale's Rustic Kroon Hall Fits Carbon Neutral Technology: ...strikes a rustic note with its barn-like form...It's not about quaint, since it is among the few buildings in America that can claim to be almost carbon neutral -- the Holy Grail in the battle against global warming. By James S. Russell -- Hopkins Architects; Centerbrook- Bloomberg News

Banker shows how to make historic preservation economically viable: ...when Detroit's historic buildings are slated for demolition, Richard Hosey thinks it's a waste...When the Lafayette Building — the latest historic building to make the city's demo list — was still in play, the native Detroiter wanted to prove that it could be rehabilitated, the economic climate notwithstanding.- Crain's Detroit Business

Reinventing a railroad: ...New York's High Line...should be a model for Philadelphia's unloved Reading Viaduct...Forget the huge cost of demolishing...Losing the noble stone structure would actually strip [the] Loft District of a potentially valuable amenity and make it a less distinctive place to live. By Inga Saffron -- James Corner Field Operations; Diller, Scofidio + Renfro; Piet Oudolf [slide show]- Philadelphia Inquirer

An Urban Place to Park the Kids: Architect and writer Brian Newman recently took a walk through Citygarden, St. Louis' newest urban park...brings to downtown not only an entirely new, and enthusiastic, demographic, but a new formal and aesthetic framework. -- Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects; studio[urham architects [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

KPF partners look to split from US founders: UK partners of Kohn Pedersen Fox architectural practice are seeking to break away...put forward a set of proposals to buy full ownership of the business from their US counterparts...The name of the UK business...would change if the offer was accepted.- Financial Times (UK)

William McDonough + Partners opening Dutch office: The Amsterdam office will be led by David Goehring...and Kees Noorman...- San Francisco Business Times

The rural renewal of Kathryn Findlay: She made a name for herself in the 1990s with eerie, alluring buildings...Now [she] is back -- and shaking up the slow-moving, bureaucratic world of rural architecture...Poolhouse 2 is disproportionately significant...could contain the germ of a new aesthetic for 21st-century rural architecture. By Steve Rose -- Ushida Findlay; Robert Adam- Guardian (UK)

Prince Charles vs. the Architects: A dust-up between architects and the Prince of Wales over a speech and a £1b development is bringing the age-old battle between traditional and modern architecture to a head...Tim Halbur summarizes the news. [links]- PLANetizen

Call for entries: AIA Show How You Re-Green Housing Awards: to recognize designs that take the existing residential building stock into new green frontiers (submissions must be located in the U.S.); deadline: September 3- American Institute of Architects (AIA)

Call for entries: 24th Annual Mockett Design Competition for furniture parts, components, accessories, and hardware; cash prizes, royalties; deadline: October 5- Doug Mockett & Company

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