

Today's News - Thursday, February 11, 2010

- It will take that "great American natural resource - tomorrow" - to save "slumburbia" (with some lessons about urban planning "picked from the stucco pile").
- Finch says retrofits could keep architects busy for the next 30 years; others say not if they don't wrest the lead from engineers.
- A fascinating Q&A with Vancouver's planning director re: the Olympics: they weren't out to wow the world with starchitecture, but to be the greenest and most inclusive (and a case study for urbanists and architects for a long time to come).
- Ryerson University picks a dandy team to make its mark on Toronto's "infamous" Yonge Street strip.
- Gehry takes himself out of the running for V&A expansion (via text message, no less).
- Things are only heating up (again) re: Auckland's Queens Wharf makeover for the Rugby World Cup (after a plagued design competition); the choices: between \$10 and a \$100 million (at least now there are six of runners-ups - but no architects i.d.'d).
- L.A.'s Century Plaza Hotel saved from the wrecking ball (but preservationists plan to keep their eye on things).
- New Orleans considers demolishing its World Trade Center: a vacant waterfront site would be more attractive to developers.
- Brussat on the difference between preservation, historicism, and not turning cities into museums of preservation follies.
- Helsinki Fair Centre has grand expansion plans.
- Why Eastern design principles (particularly from Japan) "are more prevalent - and relevant - than ever."
- Steelcase puts videos of last year's (star-studded) Meyer May symposium on Frank Lloyd Wright online.
- Call for entries: Chicago Architectural Club's 2010 Chicago Prize international ideas competition "Mine the Gap": what would you do with a gaping hole, a.k.a. Chicago Spire site (and Kamin's amusing musing).
- Saarinen gets two sides of the same coin for the Mint of Finland's 150th anniversary commemorative (we'd go €10 for one).
- We couldn't resist: a real spacey view of Dubai.

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Slumburbia: It's not our cities that are in big trouble: what will fill the empty homes and lots of suburban America? That great American natural resource - tomorrow - will have to save the suburban slums...a few lessons about urban planning can be picked from the stucco pile. - New York Times

Retrofit projects could secure 30 years of work for architects: "If you choose to seize it, this is one of the biggest opportunities for architects that we've seen in this country for a very long time."... "With only a few exceptions, architects are being overtaken by engineers..." -- Paul Finch/CABE; KPF; Bennetts Associates; Devereux Architects - The Architects' Journal (UK)

The Olympics and the City: Vancouver planning director Brent Toderian... "we didn't set out to wow the world with starchitects and world-class architecture that we may or may not be able to use in the future...set out to make the greenest and most inclusive Olympics, not the most architecturally exuberant..." By Nate Berg -- Arthur Erickson; Nick Milkovich; Walter Franci [images] - Places Journal

Making a mark on the Yonge Street strip: New student learning centre will transform former Sam the Record Man site...Ryerson University...efforts to revitalize the infamous Yonge Street strip and connect the centre of the campus to the downtown. -- Zeidler Partnership Architects; Snohetta - Globe and Mail (Canada)

Gehry not available for V&A: ...has decided that he has too much work on at the moment to contemplate taking part in the competition to design the £47 million museum on the Tay. -- James F Stephen Architects - The Courier (Scotland)

Mayors back away from pricey design: ...Government should forget its \$100 million plan for Auckland Queens Wharf and go back to the basic "party central" upgrade for the Rugby World Cup...planned development would cost \$100 million and include cruise ship facilities. -- Jasmax; Architectus - New Zealand Herald

Queens Wharf options open for debate: The public can now join the fray in debating how to spruce up Auckland's Queens Wharf for the 2011 Rugby World Cup...dithering over what to do...ranged from...a \$10 million temporary venue, to a \$100m new design that would turn the wharf into a cruise ship terminal. [images, links] - New Zealand Herald

Deal reached to save Los Angeles' mid-century Century Plaza Hotel from wrecking ball: ...plan allows the owners to build behind and to the sides of the hotel, but obliges them to maintain the hotel's visibility from the street...preservation groups plan to meet with the developer four times a year to monitor the project. -- Minoru Yamasaki (1966) - Los Angeles Times

City of New Orleans considers demolishing the World Trade Center: ...has concluded that the land beneath the iconic, 33-story building...is more valuable without the tower...coveted site along the Mississippi River would be more attractive to developers if it were vacant...The possibility is a major shift in thinking for the city... -- Edward Durell Stone; Robert Coleman & Partners (1967) - The Times-Picayune (New Orleans)

The museum of preservation follies: "In a culture that pays lip service to nonconformity and the questioning of authority, the power of architectural elites has yet to be subject to the kind of public questioning now typically directed at political and economic ones." By David Brussat -- Steven Semes - Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Helsinki Fair Centre to expand with another new hall: Plans still on for 100-metre highrise hotel on the site -- Davidsson & Tarkela [image] - Helsingin Sanomat (Finland)

Eastern promise: With space becoming an ever-more valuable resource and sustainability becoming increasingly important, 'eastern' design principles are more prevalent - and relevant - than ever. -- Shashi Caan Collective; Marie-Noelle Swiderski/Blanchard; Mustafa Khamash/Kart Design; Alfred Johnson/Imagination; Tadao Ando; Toyo Ito; Yasumichi Morita; Ryu Kosaka; Noriyoshi Muramatsu; Hiroko Ashihara; Joseph Sy; Calvin Wang - ConstructionWeekOnline (Dubai, UAE)

Meyer May Symposium Videos Now Available: The September event asked architecture and design leaders to consider Frank Lloyd Wright's legacy...and what his designs can teach us today. -- Steelcase; Susan Szenasy; Jeffrey Bernett; Shashi Caan; Toshiko Mori; Michael Van Valkenburgh - Metropolis Magazine

Call for entries: Round two: Filling the Chicago Spire hole: Chicago Architectural Club is running an international ideas competition for the site, which is smartly titled "Mine the Gap." It sounds fun and we all might learn what to do with this embarrassing hole... By Blair Kamin -- Deadline: May 3, 2010 [link to competition] - Chicago Tribune

Finland Jubilee Marked With New Look: Mint of Finland began its 150th anniversary celebration with the launch of the "Eero Saarinen and Architecture" jubilee coin...reverse side depicts the Gateway Arch...in St. Louis, Mo...obverse side depicts his "Tulip chair," which was made popular...in the original Star Trek series. -- Juha Kauko [image] - World Coin News

[Audacity's Shape, From Outer Space: ...Dubai coast, seen from the International Space Station. \[image\]- New York Times](#)

[Twilight Visions: Vintage Surrealist Photography Sheds New Light on Architecture: An exhibition and book of photographs of Paris between the wars might just be the necessary correctives to the virtual sterility of digital imagery. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow](#)



[Morphosis: Cahill Center, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California](#)

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