

Today's News - Monday, March 29, 2010

- SANAA snags the Pritzker! (details follow)
- ArcSpace brings us an eyeful of Nouvel's "desert rose" in Qatar.
- We're much saddened by the passing of Paul Devroux, who "led the way for black firms" (saddened also for lack of coverage).
- Back to the Pritzker: Weinstein offers "celebratory meditations" on SANAA winning the prize.
- Russell praises their "brainy, boxy designs" - with a caveat: the jury's "narrow aesthetic" is "sending a message that architecture is mostly an aesthetic refuge. That's a disservice."
- Hawthorne cheers the choice: it "may exorcise some old ghosts" and acknowledges "the often collaborative nature of architectural practice."
- Kamin offers up a smorgasbord of coverage (including a brief but amusing Q&A via e-mail).
- Still in star mode: Moore on H&deM's Miami Beach parking garage: "It is austere playful, or deadpan theatrical... If Miami is a flamingo city, this tends more in the pterodactyl direction" (that's a good thing).
- Nouvel's modern take on traditional architecture deserves recognition for its role in shaping our urban landscapes (and by no means is he "past his creative prime").
- Ricky Burdett offers an eloquent tribute to Bruce Graham who "reinvented the role of the architect."
- UN-Habitat's new "State of the World Cities" report released at the World Urban Forum in Rio.
- U.S. EPA study says "smart growth" is taking root in U.S. cities, marking a "fundamental shift" in the real estate market (even ahead of the Obama administration's push for denser development).
- A researcher data-crunches and theorizes about what defines a great city (it all boils down to four "C"s).
- L.A. leads the country in Energy Star-rated buildings.
- That might - or might not - mean all that much as an audit finds some serious flaws in the Energy Star program.
- McDonald on the "Armageddon" for architects in Ireland: the collapse of Murray Ó Laoire last week "shows how bleak the outlook is for many professionals in the construction sector."
- On a lighter note: Groves cheers USC getting the archives of Edward H. Fickett, an "unsung hero" of architecture.
- Spielberg takes on Ground Zero, a documentary conceived by Brooklyn-based architect that "will largely celebrate architectural and engineering accomplishments at the site" and "won't dwell on the infamous delays."
- Winners all: eyefuls of the HB:BX - High Bridge: Bronx, Building Cultural Infrastructure international ideas competition winners; and the 2010 Re-Skinning Award winners (plus why the winning "glowing cocoon" for a Sydney university tower won't be built).

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[Jean Nouvel: National Museum of Qatar, Doha Corniche, Qatar](#)

Obituary: D.C. architect Paul Devroux, 67, led the way for black firms: ...helped design many landmark buildings in the Washington region..."We know fully what our responsibility is," he said in 2004. "Helping other young architects - now, that's the most rewarding accomplishment." -- Devroux & Purnell [slide show]- Washington Post

Celebratory Meditations on SANAA Winning the Pritzker Prize. By Norman Weinstein - ArchNewsNow

Japanese Duo Gets \$100,000 Pritzker for Brainy, Boxy Designs: ...their highly formal design process has produced buildings of compelling authority...That quality comes from an intensely cerebral process that strips away the extraneous...While I can't fault the Pritzker jury on narrow aesthetic grounds...sending a message that architecture is mostly an aesthetic refuge. That's a disservice. By James S. Russell -- Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa/SANAA [links]- Bloomberg News

SANAA partners are joint winners of Pritzker Prize: The choice also may exorcise some old ghosts...jury's choice this year is just as important for acknowledging the often collaborative nature of architectural practice. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa [slide show, links]- Los Angeles Times

How to win the Pritzker Architecture Prize: Practice, practice, practice (and don't be shy about nominating yourself); Pendulum may be swinging against once-revolutionary designs; An interview with the new Pritzker Prize winners: Their occasional arguments, advice for young architects and what one of them wanted to be when she grew up. By Blair Kamin -- Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa/SANAA [images, links]- Chicago Tribune

Car park art: Multistoreys are usually little more than a concrete stack, but Herzog & de Meuron...are bringing high style to Miami Beach...It is austere playful, or deadpan theatrical...the opposite of...American architecture in general, which is generally a matter of putting a (hopefully) nice wrapping on to a frame...If Miami is a flamingo city, this tends more in the pterodactyl direction. By Rowan Moore [image]- Observer (UK)

Nouvel by name, novel by nature: Jean Nouvel's modern take on traditional architecture deserves recognition for its role in shaping our urban landscapes - Guardian (UK)

Tribute: Bruce Graham: Innovative architect whose skyscrapers marked city skylines around the world...In a sense, he reinvented the role of the architect, recognising that the job is just as much about city-making and power-broking as it is about pure design talent, which Graham possessed in spades. By Ricky Burdett -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)- Guardian (UK)

World Urban Forum in Rio Focuses on Sustainable Cities: UN-Habitat's new "State of the World Cities" report,...says the world is moving into vast mega-city regions of more than 100 million people...these "endless cities" could be one of the most significant developments – and problems – in the way people live and economies grow in the next 50 years." - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

'Smart Growth' Taking Hold in U.S. Cities, U.S. EPA Study Says: Redevelopment of urban centers has continued to outpace construction in the outskirts of suburbia...suggesting a "fundamental shift" has begun in the real estate market as the Obama administration pushes denser development through its "livability" initiative. [link to study]- New York Times

Define a 'Great' City: A University of Louisville researcher data-crunches and theorizes about the 'greatest' American cities...came up with a grid headed by four words beginning with the letter "C": Currency, Cosmopolitanism, Concentration and Charisma...New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles most frequently charted as the top... -- H.V. Savitch- Miller-McCune

LA Gets Gold (Energy) Star: ...rarely thought of as the country's greenest town, what with all the traffic and sprawl, but it's doing a lot better than you think...leads the country in Energy Star-rated buildings. - The Architect's Newspaper

Audit Finds Vulnerability of Energy Star Program: In a nine-month study, four fictitious companies...submitted data indicating that the models consumed 20 percent less energy than even the most efficient ones on the market. Yet those applications were mostly approved without a challenge or even questions...- New York Times

'Armageddon' for architects as new projects grind to a halt: The collapse last Friday of such a prominent architectural practice as Murray Ó Laoire shows how bleak the outlook is for many professionals in the construction sector – not just architects, but also engineers, quantity surveyors and others in the frontline of an industry in deep trouble. By Frank McDonald- Irish Times

University of Southern California to house works of architectural 'unsung hero': To the cognoscenti, Edward H. Fickett was the award-winning architect...To Better Homes & Gardens, he was the "Frank Lloyd Wright of the '50s"...never achieved the widespread recognition of such Modernists as Richard Neutra and Rudolph Schindler, not to mention Wright. By Martha Groves- Los Angeles Times

Steven Spielberg Focuses on Ground Zero: ..."Rebuilding Ground Zero," a six-part television documentary...to air on the Science Channel in fall 2011...Conceived by Brooklyn-based architect Danny Forster...and Jonathan Hock...will largely celebrate architectural and engineering accomplishments at the site...won't dwell on the infamous delays... -- David Childs/Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Santiago Calatrava; Michael Arad- Architectural Record

HB:BX - High Bridge: Bronx, Building Cultural Infrastructure international ideas competition winners -- PEG office of landscape + architecture; Tetsuya Kawano/Julien Bouley/Chol Pak; Yekaterina Yushmanova; Kristina Guist [images]- Emerging New York Architects (AIANY ENYA)

2010 Re-Skinning Award Winners: ...the most successful, holistic retrofitting projects of the year. -- Aidlin Darling Architects; DAHM Architekten + Ingenieure; Laboratory for Visionary Architecture/LAVA; Work Worth Doing Studio & Lorraine Gauthier; Egon Weiß (1974), Thiemo Ebbert, imagine-envelope Arch [images]- Zerofootprint

Glowing cocoon is a winning idea that will never emerge: Sydney architect Chris Bosse has won an international design competition with a plan to transform the University of Technology's tower in Ultimo from a stark concrete block into a glowing white sculpture...university, in the midst of a \$400 million upgrade to its city campus, has no intention of implementing the design... -- Laboratory for Visionary Architecture/LAVA- Sydney Morning Herald

Book Review: Keeping the Architectural Profession Professional: "Architecture from the Outside In: Selected Essays by Robert Gutman"...essays by a penetrating sociologist of architecture pose the kinds of tough-minded questions needed now to keep architectural professional on-track.By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow

Pritzker Prize Goes To Japan's SANAA Duo: jury praised their buildings for being "deceptively simple" - and, perhaps in a jab at contemporary architecture, the jurors wrote: "SANAA's architecture stands in direct contrast with the bombastic"..."I hope this prize invites more women to architecture." Elegant understatement, as in the work of Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa. By Edward Lifson [slide show]- National Public Radio (NPR)

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