

Today's News - Thursday, April 29, 2010

- Here's a not-so-cheery question to ponder: Is the profession of architecture corrupt? Faced with some sticky "ethical conundrums" the answer is yes (and why) - according to Harvard's Center for Ethics.
- Shanghai World Expo deals with its own ethical conundrums, with claims of "plagiarism over the design of China's pavilion, mascot and theme song."
- The "father of Singapore's urban planning" shares his views on what goes into creating an ideal city: "fundamentals" are more important than "sexiness" (we'd like to think so, anyway).
- Hawthorne on Broad's museum plans: "the question is who on the public side will be pushing back - and how effectively" because L.A.'s downtown needs "innovative thinking on the subjects of mobility and civic identity" more than "additional - and immovable - monuments."
- A new report advocates for - and offers suggestions to achieve - road projects designed for "livability."
- Eyefuls of San Francisco Transbay Transit Center design (with a "1,000-foot long fountain shaped like a bus. Yes, a bus. Since this is a bus station, get it?").
- European Capital of Culture 2012, Maribor, Slovenia, picks winning designs for three (very cool) projects along the banks of the river Drava.
- Kamin on the dog fight brewing in Chicago over design changes to Tigerman's 1981 "doggie in the window" building, with hopes it will result in something "more sympathetic to its still-engaging exercise in postmodern whimsy."
- The altered profile of Oakland Museum of California is ready for its close-up (will all be pleased?).
- Cullinan unveils his design for a new Maggie's Centre in Newcastle (it'll be green and very user-friendly).
- Talk about large-scale up-cycling: a 3-story building made from 1.5 million recycled plastic PET bottles in Taipei is pretty impressive (and looks pretty, too).
- Canada's Governor General's Medals in Architecture 2010 announced (some impressive projects, great presentation).
- A good reason to head to France at the end of May: 1st Annual François Ascher Conference will explore the relationship between urban planning research and action (with plans to create an open network think-tank).
- A new website launches to bring the best New Zealand architects to the world.
- A "superb infographic" shows what colors mean across 10 cultures (way beyond "red is lucky in China; blue is soothing in the West").
- Call for entries: YOU Design: show how you use Umbra product(s) in your space (and win more!).

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Is the Profession of Architecture Corrupt? According to the definition of "institutional corruption" currently in use at the Center for Ethics at Harvard University, yes...These seven structural features may indeed be corrupting in...undermining the profession's ability to serve its defining ethical goals...many even stickier ethical conundrums are posed by the very existence of an artistic pursuit structured as a professional and commercial enterprise. By Victoria Beach-DesignIntelligence

Pavilion plagiarism refuted: In the latest response to plagiarism accusations in the lead-up to Saturday's opening of the World Expo, organizers in Shanghai pledged that the protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) is a priority...public suspicion of plagiarism over the design of China's pavilion, mascot and theme song. -- Ni Yang; Tadao Ando [images]- Global Times (China)

Fundamentals crucial to building ideal city: Singapore city planner: Liu Thai-Ker, renowned as the "Father of Singapore's urban planning"...shared his views on urban planning..."fundamentals" more important than "sexiness"...identity needed in urban planning...science key to urban development... -- RSP Architects Planners & Engineers-People's Daily (China)

What L.A. might ask of Eli Broad: What would the arrival of the museum mean for Bunker Hill and downtown? ...the question is who on the public side will be pushing back - and how effectively...Downtown needs innovative thinking on the subjects of mobility and civic identity...a good deal more than it needs additional - and immovable - monuments. By Christopher Hawthorne- Los Angeles Times

13 ways states can invest in "livability" in transportation policy: ...incorporate new urban planning concepts such as "complete streets" into their comprehensive planning...American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)...released a report advocating that road projects need to be designed to accommodate all users, making the right of way accessible to all who use it: drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and the handicapped. [link to report]- Public Works Magazine

Moving Designs for San Francisco Transbay Transit Center Put the Light Back in Rail: On top, there will be a 1000-foot long fountain shaped like a bus. Yes, a bus. Since this is a bus station, get it! -- Pelli Clarke Pelli [images, links]- Fast Company

Three projects in Maribor European capital of Culture 2012: Three international competitions...for projects along the banks of the river Drava, in Maribor, Slovenia...the river embankment, design of a footbridge and the new Maribor Art Gallery. -- Tamás Lévai/Ágnes Józsa: Burgos y Garrido Arquitectos; Francesco Sabatini/Francesco Deli, Aurelia d'Andrea/Alessandro Carmine Console/Gina Oliva/Francesco Belvedere [link to images, info]- International Union of Architects (UIA)

Dogfight over 'doggie in the window' building; debate erupts over how to revamp Stanley Tigerman's postmodern icon, the Anti-Cruelty Society [1981]: ...the only hope is that the society and its architects will return to the drawing board and devise an alternative that improves on the functional failings of [his] original design but is more sympathetic to its still-engaging exercise in postmodern whimsy. By Blair Kamin -- Interactive Design- Chicago Tribune

Oakland's "museum for the people" reopens to the public: Following a \$62m renovation, the Oakland Museum of California hopes to renew visitor interest with more space to show its collections and an altered profile. -- Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo/Dan Kiley (1969); Mark Cavagnero Associates [images]- The Art Newspaper

Maggie's Cancer Centre designs unveiled: Plans highlight the relaxing atmosphere of the facility at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital...will be fitted with environmentally-friendly features... -- Edward Cullinan Architects [images]- Evening Chronicle (UK)

Rubbish bin inspires Taiwan's plastic bottle building: A building made from 1.5 million recycled plastic PET bottles has been built in Taipei. -- Miniwiz Sustainable Energy Development Company [video]- BBC

Governor General's Medals in Architecture 2010 Recipients: ...outstanding design in recently built projects by Canadian architects. -- Shim-Sutcliffe; Baird Sampson Neupert; Patkau/Croft Pelleter/Menkès Shooner Dagenais; gh3; Kohn Shnier Architects; Saucier + Perrotte; DAOUST LESTAGE; Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg (KPMB); Alaire Courchesne Dupuis Frappier [images, info]- Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) / Canada Council for the Arts

1st Annual François Ascher Conference: The relationship between urban planning research and action...will be the first step in creating an open network think-tank, with an institutional existence as a NGO, Paris-Marne-La-Vallée, May 31 - June 1 - l'Institut Français d'Urbanisme

New website takes NZ architecture to the world: selectARCHITECT profiles a growing selection of the best New Zealand architects.- Scoop (New Zealand)

What Colors Mean Across 10 Cultures: Colors are probably the most obvious way that design varies across cultures...for most designers and companies, those color sensibilities often don't rise past "Red is lucky in China; blue is soothing in the West." That's naive, as this superb infographic by David McCandless and Always With Honor shows. [images, links]- Fast Company

Call for entries: YOU Design: submit photos of how you use Umbra product(s) in your space; prizes; deadline: June 30- Umbra

Book Review: Sage Architectural Reflections from Architecture's "Athena": Denise Scott Brown's "Having Words" distills a lifetime of theorizing and practice into practical and succinct guidance for thriving through difficult times...trace a trenchant trajectory of learning from Las Vegas to learning from everything. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow



Dominique Perrault: Olympic Tennis Center, Madrid, Spain

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