

Today's News - Monday, June 21, 2010

- ArcSpace brings us an eyeful of McHugh's photographs that "capture the ghost of what was....and might be again."
- With 20-30% of city lots vacant, Detroit residents begin to lend their support to the wide demolition of abandoned buildings: "It's really about reorganizing our land to make a more livable city."
- A new report shows that public housing is in danger of extinction at a time when it is most needed.
- Portland's mayor vowed to make it "the most sustainable city in the world" - and he's actually doing it.
- A call for St. Louis to take on its own Big Dig to create a tree-lined connection between downtown, the Gateway Arch, and the riverfront.
- King x 2: cheers for downtown Berkeley's smart growth project "that merits the title"; unfortunately, it's "more overstuffed than urbane...a box dropped onto the landscape, rather than something that looks at home" + the Fairmont makeover: "so far, what's proposed falls far short."
- Lewis cheers a Georgetown grocery store as "a monument to changing supermarket architecture": it "may not win design awards, but it deserves recognition for what it has aspired to achieve urbanistically and architecturally."
- Rochon has high hopes for two Ontario university projects by Snøhetta, with "fingers crossed that it imports its flare for dramatic innovation, too."
- Moore cheers a gallery and an eatery by two young firms: "Both show more wit and delight than can be found in most of the billions of pounds of construction" going on.
- Rasdi cheers a new university complex in Malaysia that proves "when you put students first, architecturally, learning can be exciting" (though it's not without its shortcomings).
- Hawthorne digs deep in L.A.'s "peripatetic patron": in his relationships with so many starchitects, "Broad the client often trips up Broad the patron."
- Jones minces no words about the British government axing new Stonehenge visitors center: "Canceling what was already an inadequate plan for the site's rehabilitation just adds insult to injury to this wonder of the world."
- Gehry talks LEED (again): "I wasn't saying what they reported I said. I never said I was opposed to the LEED program or to green building - I'm not."
- Forbes digs deep into the future of design, highlighting Prince-Ramus (on the "myth of architectural genius" - some amusing points), McDonough, Maeda, and many more.
- An eyeful of the shortlisted designs for the New Aldgate temporary landmark and entrance to the City of London (sure to raise some eyebrows).
- A building material innovation from South Africa could revolutionize housing for "the not-so-rich in the society."
- Speaking of which, the Government of Haiti issues an RFP for a prototype housing Expo (McAslan has a hand in it) + call for presentations for AIA 2011 Convention in New Orleans (deadlines loom for both).
- Happy Summer Solstice!

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Exhibition: Jim McHugh: Let's Get Lost, Timothy Yarger Gallery, Beverly Hills, California

Razing the City to Save the City: After generations of opposition, many Detroit residents now support the wide demolition of abandoned buildings...a lot-by-lot survey in February showing that, on average, 20 to 30 percent of the city's lots were vacant..."It's really about reorganizing our land to make a more livable city" - New York Times

Op-Ed: We Call These Projects Home: Public housing is in danger of extinction at a time when it is most needed...This reality is uniquely portrayed in a recent report, We Call These Projects Home: Solving the Housing Crisis from the Ground Up, by the Right to the City Alliance. By Bill Quigley and Tony Romano- The Root

Innovative Mayor Sam Adams Builds a Cleaner Portland: ...vowed to make [it] "the most sustainable city in the world." And this wasn't some populist politician's empty promise...has proven that even in slow economic times, he's still moving Portland forward as a Fast City. - Fast Company

Turn I-70 near Arch into tree-lined street: "City to River" began with a new twist on an old idea: that St. Louis should not just cover Interstate 70 downtown but dig up the road altogether...volunteer group of architects and urbanists who hatched the plan came up with research and data and drawings of a tree-lined boulevard connecting downtown, the Gateway Arch and the riverfront. - St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Complex houses Berkeley's first Trader Joe's: ...giving a green light to construction of relatively dense housing...Unfortunately, it also conforms to the norm in that the quality of what gets built is more overstuffed than urbane...New Californian...is smart growth that merits the title. But, like too many similar efforts...it's a box dropped onto the landscape, rather than something that looks at home. By John Kin -- Kirk Peterson & Associates Architects [slide show]- San Francisco Chronicle

Fairmont makeover a chance for S.F. to shine: ...illustrates a 21st century challenge faced by cities...Can new buildings help repair the damage done by wrongheaded "progress" after World War II, or should mistakes be left intact for fear of making things worse? There's no pat answer in a case like this...so far, what's proposed falls far short. By John King -- Reid Brothers (1906); Lawrence Halprin; Miles Berger [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

Georgetown's 'Social Safeway' is a monument to changing supermarket architecture: ...represents a positive evolution in thinking about merchandising strategy and about being a good citizen through pedestrian-friendly architecture and urban design. By Roger K. Lewis -- Torti Gallas and Partners

This new building may not win design awards, but it deserves recognition for what it has aspired to achieve urbanistically and architecturally. - Washington Post

Hoping for a pair of class acts: A cutting-edge Norwegian firm is creating bold new buildings at two Ontario universities. Fingers crossed that it imports its flare for dramatic innovation, too...Hip, wise and cheeky, this global firm has grown up to become a poster child for meaningful acts of design. By Lisa Rochon -- Craig Dykers/Snohetta; Tarek El-Khatib/Zeidler Partnership Architects [images]- Globe and Mail (Canada)

South London Gallery; Studio East Dining: What the gallery and the restaurant have in common is a spirit of adaptation and of making use of what is at hand...the architecture heightens but does not dominate. Neither is passive or dull...Both show more wit and delight than can be found in most of the billions of pounds of construction that spread below the Studio East pavilion. By Rowan Moore -- 6a; Carmody Groarke- Observer (UK)

Creative campus: When you put students first, architecturally, learning can be exciting. Taylor's University College's

Lakeside Campus in Subang Jaya, Selangor...I have to say, it took my breath away!...this is a campus that Malaysia can learn from...Not that there aren't some weaknesses... By Mohamad Tajuddin Rasdi -- NWKA Architects [image]- The Star (Malaysia)

Eli Broad: L.A.'s peripatetic patron: Philanthropist's idiosyncratic vision and hands-on control have been both his strength and his weakness...his relentless personal style can sear right through his relationships with the architects he has so carefully courted...In short, Broad the client often trips up Broad the patron. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Renzo Piano; Cesar Pelli; Frank Gehry; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Frederick Fisher; Michael Palladino/Richard Meier & Partners; Rem Koolhaas; A.C. Martin; Wolf Prix/Coop Himmelblau- Los Angeles Times

Coalition's cuts are final betrayal of Stonehenge: Cancelling what was already an inadequate plan for the site's rehabilitation just adds insult to injury to this wonder of the world...The site is so badly landscaped that it scars your memory of a visit there with crummy visions of Britain in decay. If the coalition thinks the most remarkable monument in the British Isles is a dispensable luxury, God help the culture, God help the land. By Jonathan Jones - Guardian (UK)

Frank Gehry talks LEED and the future of green building: "I wasn't saying what they reported I said. I never said I was opposed to the LEED program or to green building - I'm not."- PBS

The Future By Design: Joshua Prince-Ramus On The Myth Of Architectural Genius: Getting back to the good old days of the master builder + Jon Kolko On Design That Changes Human Behavior + Another Step Toward Green Design: With help from William McDonough, a "green products" institute is born + Your Life In 2020: we might just regain some of the humanity that was lost in 2010. -- REX Architecture; Frog Design; McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC); Green Products Innovation Institute; John Maeda - Forbes

A New Landmark for Aldgate: Shortlist -- DONIS; Foster Lomas; Juan Alfonso Galan Arquitecto; NORMAL; Sou Fujimoto Architects [images]- The Architecture Foundation (UK)

Building without blocks: The building innovation, which was imported by Moladi Nigeria Limited from South Africa, is likely to revolutionise mass housing delivery...particularly in Lagos where the need for housing is overwhelming. With the ability to deliver a hundred houses in a few months and at a relatively lower price, the innovation may enhance the provision of high quality houses to the not-so-rich in the society.- 234NEXT (Lagos, Nigeria)

Call for entries/Request for Proposals/RFP: Building Back Better Communities initiated by the Government of Haiti to investigate alternative forms of permanent housing for displaced citizens. A prototype housing Expo will take place in Port-au-Prince from early October 2010; deadline: June 28- Malcolm Reading Consultants

British architect to rebuild Haiti's social housing: The Haitian government...has launched an international housing design competition and major construction Expo...with the hope of attracting a wide range of reconstruction professionals... By Jay Merrick -- John McAslan - Independent (UK)

Call for presentations for AIA 2011 Convention in New Orleans: "Regional design REVOLUTION: ecology matters"; deadline: July 1- American Institute of Architects (AIA)

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