

Today's News - Monday, September 26, 2011

- ArcSpace brings us eyeful of Safdie's Kauffman Center in Kansas City, MO.
- Myers digs deep into architects getting it on with scientists well beyond biomimicry - though they "may need to invent a new language to communicate."
- Calatrava's multi-million-dollar Denver airport saga continues as the city tries to sort things out: "we won't know whether we got our money's worth until we find out whether we are allowed to use what we have"; on the other hand: "Was this worth it? Absolutely."
- Espina decries the lack of good urban design policies in Cebu City: the "proposed construction of more flyovers is a potential problem just about to happen."
- Lewis reports on a study that explains why "familiarity breeds contentment" and commercial architecture's similarity across the country.
- Gill offers a thoughtful (and amusing) riff on Koolhaas visiting the Metabolism show in Tokyo: "it's thrilling to see how far the human imagination can take flight when it throws caution to the wind."
- Kimmelman's first foray as NYT's architecture critic takes on a South Bronx housing project that "makes as good an argument as any new building in the city for the cultural and civic value of architecture" (how refreshing!).
- Dunlop gives a standing ovation to Arquitectonica's South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center: "The building is its own best playbill...a pleasing, jaunty, spirited work."
- Glancey x 2: he strolls through the new convent below Corbu's chapel at Ronchamp with Piano and finds it "spare, calm and quietly masterful. Lucky nuns."
- His week in review includes MAD, Alsop, FAT - and lots of links to 1960s tower blocks imploding (to cheers).
- Dvir on Foster's oh-so-green plans for Hebrew University's brain research center in Jerusalem.
- Q&A with Hustwit re: "Urbanized": "political processes are a design process too...it's the role of designers to improve, change or reframe it incrementally."
- An impressive shortlist for the Prince Philip Designers Prize.
- A good reason to head to Indiana this week: an impressive line-up for a 3-day confab about "Seaside at 30" at the University of Notre Dame School of Architecture.
- Then head west for AIA Portland's 3rd annual, month-long Architecture + Design Festival.
- We couldn't resist: FAA approves a flying car (it's only \$279,000, will fit in a garage, and there's a waiting list).
- Call for entries: 2011 Green Dot Awards for product, services, building designs or concepts.

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Moshe Safdie: Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, Kansas City, Missouri

Growth Spurt: Architecture is taking an active interest in life sciences that goes well beyond biomimicry. William Myers digs in: ...architects and scientists do not even use the same language and may need to invent a new one to communicate....The new crop of architects may need to know their way around a microscope...And they'll need to adopt a new aesthetic outlook... -- Bubotnik; Ferdinand Ludwig; Oliver Storz; Hannes Schwerfeger; BioConcrete; HOK/Vanderweil; David Benjamin; Mitchell Joachim/One Lab; etc. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Denver officials grapple with DIA [Denver International Airport] designs after Santiago Calatrava's exit: "...we won't know whether we got our money's worth until we find out whether we are allowed to use what we have." ..."Was this worth it? Absolutely."...did nothing unethical by walking, and Denver should not feel shortchanged. The goal is to build what the architect intended and change nothing. -- Festina Lente; Gensler; Anderson Mason Dale Architects - Denver Post

Op-Ed: Cebu City deserves good design, not urban decay: Contributing to this dire situation are government policies which by themselves further exacerbate conditions. The proposed construction of more flyovers in Cebu is a potential problem just about to happen. And it does not take that long to see and feel the results. By Joseph Espina, University of San Carlos College of Architecture- Philippine Daily Inquirer

Familiarity breeds contentment: Commercial architecture's similarity across nation provides mobile Americans with a sense of stability, study says: ...Americans are "familiarity-seeking" because they relocate frequently...Like those who build, consumers instinctively feel most comfortable embracing the known, the predictable, the tried and true. By Roger K. Lewis- Washington Post

Bricks and mortar sometimes give way to bubbles of optimism: Rem Koolhaas seems to inhabit every pop-culture cliche of what a brilliant architect should be...in Tokyo for the opening of...exhibition about...Metabolism at the Mori Art Museum...it's thrilling to see how far the human imagination can take flight when it throws caution to the wind...it would be nice if our own young architects could be encouraged...to imagine the impossible and take on board one of Koolhaas's aphorisms: "Find optimism in the inevitable." By Raymond Gill- Brisbane Times (Australia)

In a Bronx Complex, Doing Good Mixes With Looking Good: The rebirth of the South Bronx isn't news. But Via Verde is. And it makes as good an argument as any new building in the city for the cultural and civic value of architecture...It breaks the mold of subsidized housing... By Michael Kimmelman -- Grimshaw Architects; Dattner Architects - New York Times

South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center is itself a work of art: ...pays homage to the act and art of performance, and so the metaphor of applause is both appealing and persuasive. The building is its own best playbill...a pleasing, jaunty, spirited work... By Beth Dunlop -- Arquitectonica [images]- Miami Herald

Renzo Piano: let there be light in the convent: Hidden in a French hillside below Le Corbusier's famous chapel at Ronchamp, Piano's new convent is spare, calm and quietly masterful. Lucky nuns, says Jonathan Glancey [images]- Guardian (UK)

Constructive criticism: the week in architecture: Do we love or loathe modern architecture? While Scotland demolishes 1960s tower blocks, Will Alsop tries to win us over with his new practice ALL Design...dramatic new Art and City Museum by MAD architects opened this week in Ordos, Inner Mongolia..."Modernism in Miniature" at CCA (Canadian Centre for Architecture)...fascinating, Honey-I-Shrunk-the-Bauhaus show... By Jonathan Glancey -- Basil Spence; FAT; Holder Matthias Architects [images, links]- Guardian (UK)

Norman Foster to design new Hebrew University brain center: Design of new Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Brain Research, to be built at university's Givat Ram campus, reflects his well-known commitment to environmental sustainability, including energy conservation. By Noam Dvir -- Foster + Partners; Baer Shifman-Natan; Zadok Sherman-Ha'aretz (Israel)

Gary Hustwit's "Urbanized": He talks about his latest film, a global exploration of the individuals, projects and forces that shape our cities... ""political processes are a design process too..it's the role of designers to improve, change or reframe it incrementally." -- Bruce Katz; Amanda Burden; Michael Sorkin; Enrique Peñalosa; Candy Chan
[images, links]- Urban Omnibus

Prince Philip Designers Prize shortlist announced: The UK's longest-running design award...recognises an outstanding contribution to UK business and society through design -- Cecil Balmond; Chris Wilkinson/Jim Eyre/Wilkinson Eyre Architects; David Chipperfield; Dinah Casson/Casson Mann; Tim Brown/IDEO- Design Council (UK)

"Seaside at 30: Lessons from the First New Urbanist Community and the Future of Traditional Town Building": ...will examine the successes and failures...by bringing together the architects, planners and builders who created it...will include an exhibit and launch of the Seaside Research Portal, an online resource; September 29 - October 1, University of Notre Dame School of Architecture. -- Robert Davis; Andrés Duany/Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk/Duany Plater-Zyberk; Léon Krier; Dhiru Thadani; Scott Merrill/Merrill, Pastor & Colgan Architects; and Christopher Leinberger; Daniel Parolek; Marianne Cusato; etc.- University of Notre Dame School of Architecture (Indiana)

AIA Portland launches the 3rd annual Architecture + Design Festival: a month-long celebration of the city's built environment and design community; coincides with the 100th Anniversary of the American Institute of Architects in Oregon; Sept. 29 - Oct. 31- AIA Portland (Oregon)

Massachusetts firm has been cleared to manufacture flying car: The Transition flying car recently cleared a hurdle to production when the FAA granted a waiver on weight restrictions...Now Terrafugia, a Woburn, Mass.- based company, appears poised to succeed where others have failed.- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Call for entries: 2011 Green Dot Awards for product, services, building designs or concepts; earlybird deadline (save \$): October 20; standard deadline: November 30- Green Dot Awards

Book Review: Pencils that Refuse to Die: Meditations about New Books on Architectural Drawing: Three recent books dealing with architectural drawing by pencil you need to read. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow

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