

Today's News - Friday, September 30, 2011

- A new recording studio in Syracuse, NY, has rapidly established itself as a catalyst to rebrand and revitalize the city's core (freight trains notwithstanding).
- Bayley is a bit a baleful (but eloquent) today re: starchitecture and the Stirling Prize (though each project on this year's shortlist "has at least one exceptional quality which any good building needs").
- Glancey, on the other hand, offers a "thrilling" (and almost breathless) video race through the shortlist (and makes his pick) - we'll now the winner this weekend.
- HUD comes up with (smallish - but welcome) grants for three cities to re-imagine and hopefully convert brownfield eyesores into community assets.
- Developers are on pins and needles awaiting word from the GSA re: whether their proposal for a Jewish museum by Libeskind in D.C. will find a home.
- NYC just might have (finally) struck a deal with the U.N. so it gets a new tower and the city can complete its East River esplanade (still a lot of "ifs" apparently).
- Q&A with Denari re: his HL23 and the High Line: "New York is back" (did it go somewhere?).
- Kaplicky's plagued Prague library design finds new life as a bus stop in Brno (we kid you not).
- McDonald reports on "Irish Architecture Now" debut in NYC: "any notion that there was something distinctively Irish about the work of our architects was scotched" by Arch League's Genevro.
- Weekend diversions:
 - Welton's Q&A with V&A's "Postmodernism" curator Adamson re: "When did it end? Why?"
 - A terrific round-up of reviews, slide shows, videos re: "California Design, 1930-1965: Living in a Modern Way" now in L.A.
 - Open House Chicago joins cities around the world that have launched open house events (a useful list - but leaves off Brisbane and, alas, no links).
 - In Tokyo, "Arata Isozaki: Process" might be a small exhibition, but "the overall impression it gives is of the enormous ambition of the man behind it."
 - "Jim Olson: Architecture for Art" takes center stage at Washington State University Museum of Art.
 - Hawthorne goes to the movies x 2: "Urbanized" ranks "among the smartest recent analyses of mass global urbanization and its discontents" (though leaves L.A. out) + "Drive" tours "an L.A. that isn't on postcards" (once you get beyond the gore).
 - King finds "Urban Code" is "a guide to understanding cities that takes a few detours" (we couldn't resist at least 2 of its 100 lessons: No. 27: Each building has at least one entrance; and No. 85: Weeds reduce aggression).
 - Moore finds "The Art-Architecture Complex" by Hal Foster "a refreshingly rigorous argument" that the merging of art and architecture might not necessarily be a good thing (but it's also not always bad).
 - Gould's Q&A with Steingraber re: "Raising Elijah: Protecting Children in an Age of Environmental Crisis" - her personal and scientific take makes a powerful combination.
 - Brussat at his best dissecting "Lonely Planet's 1000 Ultimate Sights": it's a "curiously enjoyable but ultimately frustrating travel book - get it for your favorite masochist."

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When a Train Rumbles Past this Recording Studio, Nobody Hears It: SubCat Studios, Syracuse, NY, has rapidly established itself as a catalyst to rebrand and revitalize the city's core. -- Fiedler Marciano Architecture [images]- ArchNewsNow

Who will win gold now the celebrity architects have been left behind? As an antidote to the vainglorious antics of celebrity architects, the Stirling Prize identifies and rewards authentic excellence in building design...Like a good meal, a good building makes you feel better. By Stephen Bayley -- O'Donnell + Tuomey; AHMM/Alford Hall Monaghan Morris; Zaha Hadid; David Chipperfield; Bennett Associates; Hopkins Architects - Telegraph (UK)

Stirling prize 2011: a thrilling race through the shortlist: Jonathan Glancey rounds up the shortlist for RIBA's annual architecture prize -- O'Donnell + Tuomey; AHMM/Alford Hall Monaghan Morris; Zaha Hadid; David Chipperfield; Bennett Associates; Hopkins Architects [video]- Guardian (UK)

Redeveloping Former Industrial Sites Doesn't Mean Giving Up on Industry: Brownfield projects in Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Toledo aim to reimagine what manufacturing means in America...the latest grant recipients in an economic development initiative designed to help cities convert...eyesores into community assets. -- Scott Page/Interface Studio-The Atlantic Cities

Decision coming on national Jewish museum in D.C.: Whether the National Museum of the Jewish People will be built in the hands of the General Services Administration...Soltes group is partnering with Hyatt Hotels, which would turn the 112-year-old Old Post Office into a luxury hotel. The museum would be located on the space currently occupied by the glass annex, which would be torn down. -- Daniel Libeskind [image, link]- Washington Jewish Week

Land Deal With U.N. Would Fill a Big Gap in the Waterfront Greenway: An agreement would give the United Nations a site for a new building and allow the city to finish an East River esplanade...in a series of real-life Rubik's Cube moves...an agreement that would create a framework for both sides to get what they want. - New York Times

"New York is Back": HL23 Architect Neil Denari on How the High Line is Reinvigorating the City's Landscape...the professional impact of this building midway through his career, architecture in New York, and what's next for his firm. - Artinfo

All change for Kaplicky library: A scaled-down version of the late Czech architect Jan Kaplicky's design for a national library in Prague has been built in Brno for use as a bus stop. -- Future Systems [image]- BD/Building Design (UK)

The building blocks of Irish culture: "Imagine Ireland" festival... "a year-long assault or seduction" of American audiences...the first "Irish Architecture Now"...any notion that there was something distinctively Irish about the work of our architects...was scotched...by Rosalee Genevro of the Architectural League of New York. "What we've learned is that there's no such thing as Irish architecture. There's just architecture that's practised somewhere." By Frank McDonald -- Heneghan Peng; Bucholz McEvoy Architects; McCullough Mulvin Architects - Irish Times

The Legacy of Postmodernism: Almost as quickly as it arrived and changed our world, Postmodernism promptly disappeared. But with "Postmodernism: Style and Subversion 1970-1990" at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, it's time now to take a look back...When did it end? Why? ..."it became a look - time to move on." [Q&A with curator Glenn Adamson]. By J. Michael Welton [images]- Huffington Post

Design gets its due in new LACMA show: "California Design, 1930-1965: Living in a Modern Way" goes beyond traditional art and architecture to look at a broader movement and its influence outside California. By David Hay + Landmark Houses: The most important homes of Southern California -- Frank Lloyd Wright; Rudolph Schindler; Richard Neutra; John Lautner; Greene & Greene; Ray Kappe; Irving Gill; Koening; Charles & Ray Eames [images, videos]- Los Angeles Times

Chicago Opens Its Doors: Following in the footsteps of a growing number of cities around the world—including London, Melbourne, Barcelona, Dublin, Toronto, New York, and Denver...Open House Chicago- Architectural Record

The esoteric architect: building on artistic ardor: "Isozaki Arata: Process" at Misa Shin Gallery: Although this is a small exhibition, the overall impression it gives is of the enormous ambition of the man behind it — a superstar architect, would-be artist, abstruse philosopher, and star-clouded mystic atop the Mount Sinai of Japanese architecture — down in a small gallery in the backstreets of Tokyo. By C.B. Liddell - Japan Times

Washington State University Museum of Art creates architect retrospective: "Jim Olson: Architecture for Art" the first comprehensive retrospective of the 45-year career of Northwest architect...Sept. 30-Dec. 10 -- Olson Kundig Architects [slide show] - WSU News (Washington State University)

"Urbanized" examines the growth of city life: Gary Hustwit's...love letter to urban life and a cautionary tale about crowded cities, but Los Angeles is left out...a sharp, good-looking documentary...ranks among the smartest recent analyses of mass global urbanization and its discontents..."Just because the architects are so divinely wonderful, isn't going to make the place wonderful." By Christopher Hawthorne -- Rem Koolhaas; Yung Ho Chang; Alejandro Aravena; Ricardo Scofidio; Ricky Burdett; Deyan Sudjic; Norman Foster; Enrique Peñalosa; Make It Right Foundation; Thom Mayne; Shigeru Ban; David Adjaye; Grover Mouton - Los Angeles Times

"Drive" tours an L.A. that isn't on postcards: The cityscape seen in director Nicolas Winding Refn's film is drab, standoffish and true to life...captures the slippery urban and architectural character of Los Angeles...one of the most perceptive recent attempts to understand the peculiarly standoffish personality of L.A.'s built environment...don't expect glamour shots... By Christopher Hawthorne - Los Angeles Times

Guide to understanding cities takes a few detours: ...I'm still not sure what to think about "Urban Code: 100 Lessons for Understanding the City" [by Anne Mikoleit and Moritz Pürckhauer]...It falls short, but that's because cities are too varied to be reduced to a formula - and because each of us carries our own urban code in our head. By John King - San Francisco Chronicle

"The Art-Architecture Complex" by Hal Foster: Is it a good idea if architects start seeing themselves as artists? ...a refreshingly rigorous argument...As the half-sinister title suggests...the merging of art and architecture is not necessarily a good thing...is image always such a bad thing, and can it in any case be avoided? By Rowan Moore -- Anish Kapoor; Olafur Eliasson; Henning Larsen; Richard Rogers; Renzo Piano; Norman Foster; Zaha Hadid; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Herzog & de Meuron; etc. - Guardian (UK)

Our Toxic World: Q&A with Sandra Steingraber, author of "Raising Elijah: Protecting Children in an Age of Environmental Crisis"...In 10 elegantly framed chapters, she gives both a personal account of a family attempting to live a healthy life in upstate New York and a scientist's look at the issues that make that so very challenging. The combination is powerful. By Kira Gould - Metropolis Magazine

'Ultimate sights'? Put up your dukes! "Lonely Planet's 1000 Ultimate Sights": There's much to like...the book's ultimate flaw is that it lets you see very few of the sites to which Ultimate Sights directs you. It has 1,000 sites but a mere 140 sights...The result is a serious case of ultimatus interruptus...curiously enjoyable but ultimately frustrating travel book. By David Brussat [images] - Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

INSIGHT: Small-Scale Solution to Alternative Energy Resistance: Why the assumption that an industrial-scale response is required to produce green energy in the vast quantities required to power this country is wrong. By Peter Gisolfi, AIA, ASLA, LEED AP - ArchNewsNow.com



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

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