

Today's News - Wednesday, November 23, 2011

EDITOR'S NOTE: We'll be celebrating the Thanksgiving Day holiday for the rest of the week, and will return Monday, November 28...Happy Turkey Day!

- A very interesting Q&A with a planning professor at the University of Cape Town re: the Association of African Planning Schools' efforts to reform planning education (including a course on "informality"): "The problem is at the interface between planning education and practice."
- Berg offers a fascinating take on how the Occupy movement is reshaping how we think about public spaces: "the clash between the users and the stewards of public spaces has underscored a startling disconnect - public space doesn't always mean what we think it does."
- Brake parses the debate swirling around the redesign of Minneapolis's Peavey Plaza: "Not everyone is pleased with the process or the plan."
- Reports from last week's The Second Wave of Modernism II: Landscape Complexity and Transformation conference: "we need to stop playing the game' that pits different design fields against each other" (for Renfro, it's all about glass - with a little grass thrown in).
- Q&A with Mazria re: plans for his \$100,000 Purpose Prize, being a green building pioneer, and how he's faring in his mission to make all buildings carbon-neutral.
- More on Chicago selling advertising on its iconic bridges: it is "reviving a debate about how governments raise money in tough economic times": is it, as Kamin said, "a visual crime" or does it "beat going bust" (advertising pro's say ads could "backfire if public disgust sticks").
- Nemens cheers Trahan's "visionary design" for the Louisiana State Museum Sports Hall of Fame.
- SCAD's new museum is "an extraordinary project that harnesses history rather than mimics it."
- Tate St. Ives names 6 finalists in a competition "re-run" to design an extension (the winner of the first round makes the cut - again).
- London experiments with a calcium-based solution that glues pollution to the roads in trials that show a 14% drop in particulate pollution (not all are convinced).
- A lively debate about the merits of Architect Barbie showed "opinions divided along generational lines."
- Weekend diversions:
- Amelar ambles through "Pacific Standard Time" exhibits and finds "a grand bazaar, as eclectic, wide-ranging, and uneven as the period of art it celebrates" (great slide show, too).
- Perth is the new perch for "Now and When: Australian Urbanism," designed to "unshackle conventional thinking rather than be prescriptive maps for the future."
- If you're heading to Art Basel Miami Beach and DesignMiami next week, Clemence turns his camera on some eye-popping "memorable aesthetic experiences" that can be had "just by paying close attention to the city's very public buildings."
- Heathcote has (mostly) high praise for "The Lure of the City: From Slums to Suburbs" edited by Williams (one of our favorite curmedgeons) and Donald: it is "a provocative and very readable book on a subject more usually written about in the grim language of sociologists, technocrats and non-governmental organizations" (but he also disagrees "with huge chunks").
- Zacks zones in on Tumblr's "Small, Gritty, and Green" and its "digestible revisionist histories of urban theory" that is mostly "free from professional architecture-and-planning jargon except for its heavy reliance on the unfortunate [New Urbanist] term 'transect.'"
- Kamin cheers two new books about the past and future of the Chicago River that "spring from different sources."
- Day deliriously delves into "The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture": the "impressive tome is testament to...what constitutes Australian architecture as a particular part of global culture."
- "New Japan Architecture" proves that "serious designers are in the ascendancy" (even if "today's well-placed building may be tomorrow's anomaly").
- If you happen to be looking for an unusual holiday gift, "Rem Koolhaas: Conversations with Students" has been translated into Persian (there are only 1450 copies of this slim tome by Remment Lucas Koolhaas).

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"Unbuilt Washington": The National Building Museum explores some breathtakingly beautiful and some simply bizarre proposals to shape - or re-shape - America's capital: Two architect/curators discuss the what-might-have-been architecture and urban design projects that would have made Washington, DC look very different today (and tomorrow). -- G. Martin Moeller, Jr.; Susan Piedmont-Palladino - ArchNewsNow

Improving Urban Planning in Africa: Q&A with Nancy Odendaal...of the Association of African Planning Schools (A.A.P.S.): "The problem is at the interface between planning education and practice...The notion of planning as control, rather than enabler, is entrenched in many country policy frameworks." By Eric Jaffe - The Atlantic Cities

The Occupy Movement and the New Public Space: It's time to have a serious debate about what we really want from our public spaces...the clash between the users...and the stewards...has underscored a startling disconnect...The crux of the problem is that public space doesn't always mean what we think it does. By Nate Berg - The Atlantic Cities

Parsing Peavey: Minneapolis plaza redesign would alter Friedberg project...could see new life if the city...moves ahead with a redesign...Not everyone is pleased with the process or the plan...Friedberg and Charles Birnbaum...were initially advisors to the design team...have since been actively campaigning against the redesign. By Alan G. Brake -- M. Paul Friedberg (1973); Tom Oslund/oslund.and.associates; The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Rethinking Urban Renewal + The Next Wave of Modernism: Healing Urban Landscapes: "The first wave of modernism was about beauty and sensuality, but the second wave may be about confrontation - confronting the mistakes of the past"... "we need to stop playing the game" that pits different design fields against each other." - reports from The Second Wave of Modernism II: Landscape Complexity and Transformation conference. -- Charles Birnbaum/The Cultural Landscape Foundation TCLF; Thaisa Way; Raymond Jungles; Herzog + de Meuron; Charles Renfro/Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Elizabeth Meyer/Michael Van Valkenburgh; Eero Saarinen; Dan Kiley; Brad McKee; Julie Bargmann/D.I.R.T. Studio; James Corner Field Operations; Ian McHarg; Kathryn Gustafson/Gustafson Guthrie Nichol [images, links]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Newsmaker: Edward Mazria: The Architecture 2030 founder and recent Purpose Prize winner speaks about being a green building pioneer and how he's faring in his mission to make all buildings carbon-neutral. - Architectural Record

Chicago selling advertising on iconic bridges as city tries to close \$600M budget hole: ...reviving a debate about how governments raise money in tough economic times...a public school district in Colorado is selling ads on report cards and Utah has a new law allowing ads on school buses...Blair Kamin called the bridge ads "a visual crime"...A Chicago Sun-Times editorial said the ads..."beat going bust"...ads could backfire if public disgust sticks to the bank...- Chicago Tribune

If You Build It... Local architects bring visionary design to Louisiana State Museum Sports Hall of Fame in Natchitoches: ...already getting attention around the architecture world for its bold design. By Emily Nemens -- Trahan Architects [image]- DIG: Baton Rouge, Uncovered

Foundation Studies: SCAD's new museum rises from an antebellum railroad depot...Savannah College of Art and Design Museum of Art takes its place as an extraordinary project that harnesses history rather than mimics it. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Jamie Fobert Architects in running again as Tate St Ives names finalists: ...won the first competition...in 2005, has been named on a six-strong shortlist in the contest 're-run'... -- 6a architects; Amanda Levet Architects/AL_A; DSDHA; Tony Fretton Architects; Feilden Clegg Bradley - The Architects' Journal (UK)

Boris Johnson sticks by gluing pollution to roads: ...calcium-based solution will stick pollution in the air to the road...London mayor called them "wonderful contraptions" which tackle air quality head-on. But others aren't quite as convinced...trials have shown it has led to a 14% drop in particulate pollution at hotspots. - BBC News

What can a toy do for architecture? "Horrified" is how Ila Berman described her reaction to seeing her name next the plastic doll's at [AIA San Francisco] "Ladies and [Gents] Who Lunch with Architect Barbie"...Opinion seemed to be divided along generational lines. By Lisa Boquiren/EHDD Architecture -- Cathy Simon/Perkins+Will (formerly SMWM); Anne M. Torney/Daniel Solomon Design Partners; EB Min/Min | Day; Despina Stratigakos; Kelly M. Hayes McAlonie- Metropolis Magazine

Under the California Sun, Architecture Blossomed: Five Los Angeles cultural institutions shed new light on mid-20th-century design efforts: "Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945–1980"...is a grand bazaar, as eclectic, wide-ranging, and uneven as the period of art it celebrates. By Sarah Amelar -- Charles and Ray Eames; Hodgetts + Fung; Raymond Loewy; R.M. Schindler; Kenneth Dillon; Esther McCoy; A. Quincy Jones; Frederick Emmons; Richard Neutra; John Divola; etc. [slide show]- Architectural Record

Radical city ideas floated: The fantastic concepts of Australia's future appear in "Now and When: Australian Urbanism" in Perth...It is a timely addition to the debate about migration, population growth and urban life...throws down challenging perspectives...designed to unshackle conventional thinking rather than be prescriptive maps for the future.- The West Australian

Welcome to Miami! As Miami prepares to throw a big party for art lovers and design fans to the creative extravaganza that's Art Basel Miami Beach and DesignMiami [December 1-4], visitors can expect to have memorable aesthetic experiences just by paying close attention to the city's very public buildings. By Paul Clemence [images]- Metropolis Magazine

"The Lure of the City: From Slums to Suburbs": This collection of essays edited by Austin Williams and Alastair Donald mounts a defence of life in urban spaces...in effect, a defence of modernism...a provocative and very readable book on a subject more usually written about in the grim language of sociologists, technocrats and non-governmental organisations...But it is also deeply problematic and I disagree with huge chunks. By Edwin Heathcote- Financial Times (UK)

Industrial Strength: "Small, Gritty, and Green: The Promise of America's Smaller Industrial Cities in a Low-Carbon World" by Catherine Tumbler: ...character-driven storytelling and digestible revisionist histories of urban theory framed through the interests of small cities...the die-hard localism she champions is not new...Ironically the suburbs in areas she describes are often more economically and ethnically diverse than the cities. By Stephen Zacks- The Architect's Newspaper

Two new books look at the past and future of the Chicago River: The reversal of the Chicago River has long been touted as one the world's great engineering feats...But it also had a dark side, as two thoughtful new books about the river's past and future make clear...."The Lost Panoramas: When Chicago Changed Its River and the Land Beyond," by Richard Cahan and Michael Williams and "Reverse Effect: Renewing Chicago's Waterways," by Jeanne Gang/Studio Gang Architects spring from different sources. By Blair Kamin [images]- Chicago Tribune

Building blocks of a nation: "The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture": This impressive tome is testament to our role in the world of built design...I have argued that architecture is a constructed morality...we come to understand what constitutes Australian architecture as a particular part of global culture...a bountiful display of information, well researched and carefully collected samples of all types of creative work and something new to learn on each page. By Norman Day- Sydney Morning Herald

Beauty and purpose in design: "New Japan Architecture" by Geeta Mehta and Deanna MacDonald: ...in Japan's construction flux today's well-placed building may be tomorrow's anomaly...If the designs seem at times more daring than practical, this is because the Japanese "can be fearless, and willing to forego comforts dear to most of us in order to live in a work of art"...this is a good time to be an architect in Japan...after periods of hubris, showmanship and unlimited budgets, serious designers are in the ascendancy.- Japan Times

"Rem Koolhaas: Conversations with Students" has been translated into Persian by Amir-hussein Hashemi: In this compact volume, Koolhaas addresses the urban and architectural implications of extra-large construction, using as examples three of OMA's (Office for Metropolitan Architecture) important large-scale projects. - Iranian Book News Agency (IBNA)



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