

Today's News - Monday, January 9, 2012

- ArcSpace brings us Holl's adventure in Biarritz (via Baan's lens).
- On sadder notes, Saffron, Kamin, Mays, and Hawthorne pay tribute to Tyng, Summers, Robbie, and Legorreta.
- On a brighter note, Hume offers "10 reasons to feel optimistic about Toronto: Random acts of urbanity are still breaking out all over."
- Knöfel minces no words about Piano's Shard: "ambition and arrogance have blinded" the developer and architect "to the building's disregard for London's history and character...Even its name sounds aggressive."
- Heathcote and Hammond tackle the continuing "urge to build tall...skyscrapers were always more about ego than profit...All those spiky skylines have become a kind of electrocardiogram of dynamism. No city wants to flatline."
- Goldhagen has a most interesting take on why tree metaphors appeal to architects.
- Meanwhile, New Zealand has a leaky home crisis having to do with chemical-free wood and a "leaky regulatory regime."
- A Zambian architect explains the havoc caused by government regulations being ignored and buildings being "designed and constructed by incompetent people" - leaving qualified architects struggling for business and graduates with no place to go.
- Kamin gives (mostly) thumbs-up to Chicago's Old Town School of Folk Music's new digs: "true contextualism has always been a dialogue between past and present, not mindless mimicry. And that's what the new building delivers."
- Gropius and his group may have "put a radical stamp on architecture, design and art education," but they forgot to protect the name.
- Unable to restore a shrine in Iran, a U.S. organization and an Iranian-American architect have decided "the only option is to restore the site - virtually."
- Orange County Great Park's master plan "is being dramatically altered, raising questions as to whether the nearly \$50 million spent in planning documents and designs is being wasted."
- Calthorpe calls for high-speed rail for California that would spur innovative land use and "breed the kind of economic development and communities" sorely needed in the state.
- AIA Twenty-five Year Award goes to the 1978 Gehry Residence in Santa Monica: its "fundamental material modesty and formal experimentation marks a Rubicon in the history of contemporary architecture" + 2012 AIA Institute Honor Awards recognize excellence (great presentations).
- AIA Minnesota 2011 Honor Awards "are characterized by modernist lines, environmental awareness and a kind of boxy, no-frills understatement that appears to reflect today's tough economic climate."
- BSA announces ArchitectureBoston Expo (ABX) - a new tradeshow and conference coming in November.

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[Steven Holl Architects: Cité de l'Océan et du Surf, Biarritz, France](#)

[Obituary: Anne Tyng, 91, groundbreaking architect: ...ideas about geometry influenced Louis Kahn's buildings...she helped him produce his pathbreaking early buildings, including the Trenton Bathhouse and the Yale Art Gallery. Yet until recently, she received little credit for those iconic projects. By Inga Saffron- Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

[Obituary: Gene R. Summers, 83: Mies protege helped design McCormick Place: ...became dean of the College of Architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology \[IIT\]...joined another Mies protege, Phyllis Lambert, to co-found an architecture and development firm...that restored such historic buildings as the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles. By Blair Kamin -- C.F. Murphy Associates; Mies van der Rohe- Chicago Tribune](#)

[Obituary: Roderick "Rod" Robbie, 83: Designed SkyDome as 'a pleasure palace for the people': Had he not landed the SkyDome commission in 1985...Robbie would be remembered today for the Expo 67 pavilion, and little else. By John Bentley Mays -- Michael Allen; Ashworth, Robbie, Vaughan and Williams Architects & Town Planners; Robbie, Young & Wright/IBI Group Architects - Globe and Mail \(Canada\)](#)

[Ricardo Legorreta, 80: ...introduced Mexican modernism to a global audience and who brought his crisp, brightly colored aesthetic to downtown Los Angeles with a controversial 1993 redesign of Pershing Square. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Legorreta + Legorreta; Luis Barragan; Jose Villagran- Los Angeles Times](#)

[10 reasons to feel optimistic about Toronto: Random acts of urbanity are still breaking out all over: The New Corporate Architecture: Not only is Toronto building office towers once again, it's building them better than ever...Occupy Toronto: As occupations go, this was among the most polite ever mounted. By Christopher Hume- Toronto Star](#)

[The Building That Will Change London Forever: British developer Irvine Sellar and Italian architect Renzo Piano are building the tallest building in Western Europe...But ambition and arrogance have blinded the pair to the building's disregard for London's history and character...The building is certainly no beauty, and its silhouette seems confident, almost arrogant. Even its name sounds aggressive: the Shard. By Ulrike Knöfel \[slide show\]- Der Spiegel \(Germany\)](#)

[Skyscrapers: why they strive for the highest: Neither 9/11 nor the financial crisis has blunted the urge to build tall: ...skyscrapers were always more about ego than profit...The contemporary skyscraper scrapes a fine line between architectural ambition, superlative-laden marketing and metropolitan vanity...All those spiky skylines have become a kind of electrocardiogram of dynamism. No city wants to flatline. By Edwin Heathcote and Ed Hammond -- Cass Gilbert; Renzo Piano; Frank Gehry; Ole Scheeren- Financial Times \(UK\)](#)

[Seeing the Building for the Trees: How insights from neuroscience are changing architecture: Why should tree metaphors appeal to architects? Tree metaphors allow for an architectural inventiveness that stretches people without estranging them. By Sarah Williams Goldhagen -- Junya Ishigami; Jürgen Mayer H.; Toyo Ito; Zaha Hadid; Sanaa \[images, links\]- New York Times](#)

[Leaky Homes Show Green Intentions Gone Wrong: In another kind of housing crisis, New Zealand homes built with chemical-free wood are leaky, while their owners are up a creek...causes of troubles have been endlessly debated, with blame batted between shoddy builders, negligent building inspectors, short-sighted architects and designers, greedy developers, and the use of cheap, untested materials...a "leaky regulatory regime," too.- Miller-McCune](#)

[The role of the Architect: In Zambia regulations regarding building design and construction are being largely ignored...Without enforced Government regulations, the quest for cheaper buildings has led to building design drawings being done by un-qualified and inexperienced people...Unfortunately in Zambia, great amounts of money are invested in buildings that are designed and constructed by incompetent people... By Neville Ravensdale -- Zambia Institute of Architects- Times of Zambia](#)

Old Town School of Folk Music's East Building strikes harmony with surroundings, mission: ...true contextualism has always been a dialogue between past and present, not mindless mimicry. And that's what the new building delivers...music is not just an end in itself; it's a way to form community. At its best, the new building's architecture reflects this same enlightened spirit. By Blair Kamin -- Bill Ketcham/VOA Associates - Chicago Tribune

The Battle for Bauhaus: How A Movement Failed to Protect Its Name: Walter Gropius and his group...put a radical stamp on architecture, design and art education...he forgot an important thing: to protect the name. As a result, up to 40 companies in Germany and myriad others abroad have taken the word "Bauhaus" as a brand or title. [slide show] - Der Spiegel (Germany)

Renderings: Unable to restore a shrine with a prominent Star of David in Iran, a U.S. organization and an Iranian-American architect are reviving the site online: Diarna (Judeo-Arabic for "Our Homes") has decided the only option is to restore the site - virtually. By Sohrab Ahmari -- Diarna (Judeo-Arabic for "Our Homes"); Yassi (Elias) Gabbay/Gabbay Architects (1972) [links to images] - Tablet Magazine

What's Happening to Orange County Great Park's Master Plan? ...[is it] becoming irrelevant or simply evolving in the face of new economic and political realities? ...plan for the nearly 1,500-acre park...is being dramatically altered, raising questions as to whether the nearly \$50 million spent in planning documents and designs is being wasted. -- Ken Smith Workshop West; Mia Lehrer + Associates [images] - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Why California needs high-speed rail: ...along with innovative land use, will breed the kind of economic development and communities California is missing most - urban revitalization along with more walkable, affordable communities...it would become a catalyst for urban renewal, enhance local transit systems and generate market-wise development opportunities. By Peter Calthorpe - San Francisco Chronicle

2012 AIA Twenty-five Year Award: Gehry Residence, Santa Monica, California: Enormously influential in both theory and practice, the 1978 home's fundamental material modesty and formal experimentation marks a Rubicon in the history of contemporary architecture... [images] - American Institute of Architects (AIA)

2012 AIA Institute Honor Awards Recognize Excellence in Architecture, Interiors, and Urban Design -- BIG/Bjarke Ingels Group; Morphosis; Mack Scogin Merrill Elam; Mackay-Lyons Sweetapple; Virginia Tech Solar Team; Michael Maltzan; John Ronan; Marlon Blackwell; Ennead Architects; Randy Brown; Koning Eizenberg; Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Gensler; Shim-Sutcliffe; Anmahian Winton; Patrick Tighe; Goettsch Partners; David Jameson; Andre Kikoski; Moore Ruble Yudell/DMOD Architects; Sasaki Associates; Cooper, Robertson & Partners/KieranTimberlake; Gehry Partners/West 8; ZGF; Eskew + Dumez + Ripple; Rogers Marvel [images] - American Institute of Architects (AIA)

Minnesota architecture's honor roll: AIA Minnesota 2011 Honor Awards winning designs are characterized by modernist lines, environmental awareness and a kind of boxy, no-frills understatement that appears to reflect today's tough economic climate. -- VJAA; HGA Architects and Engineers; Julie Snow Architects; Alchemy; MS&R [slide show] - Minneapolis Star Tribune

The Boston Society of Architects (BSA) is proud to announce ArchitectureBoston Expo (ABX) — a new tradeshow and conference, November 14–16, 2012 at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. - Boston Society of Architects/BSA/AIA

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