

Today's News - Wednesday, September 3, 2008

- Sudjic offers "a menu for the paradise metropolis": one city's smart ideas "only a conference away from infecting all its competitors."
- An "Opportunities Book" is "an urban plan that rises high above failed promises" for Toronto's suburban towers.
- Hess cheers the saving of a Neutra, but mourns the probable loss of a shopping center that was 50 years ahead of New Urbanist principles.
- Heathcote on the "blob of awe and wonder" that is the Natural History Museum's new Darwin Centre in London. - and an eye-ful that might (or might not) prove it.
- Architects learning to master re-cladding of old facades - and fast.
- Saffron gives a thumbs-up to the restoration and repurposing of a once-dowdy Deco tower, but wonders what they were thinking plunking a "Wal-Mart" on top.
- Plans to use seawater and solar for greenhouses in the Sahara.
- In Chicago, SOM to restore (and green) its own 1958 Loop landmark (with Gehry as client).
- Bangkok architects turn green into gold ("cactus" building worth a look).
- New life for a Deco behemoth in Jersey City.
- King gives kudos to effort to map New Deal treasures in California - before they all disappear.
- Shortlist for RIBA special awards announced.
- 2008 Constructech Vision Award winners.
- Calls for entries: 2009 Committee on Design Ideas Competition. - Discarded Dreams Mattress Recycling Competition. - 2A International Architectural Students and Young Architects Competition: Du(b)ailities.

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What makes the perfect city? Bustle, culture, clean streets, the Olympics. ...a menu for the paradise metropolis...When one city has what seems like a smart idea for addressing its ills then it is only a conference away from infecting all its competitors, who start building them too. By Deyan Sudjic/Design Museum - The Times (UK)

An urban plan that rises high above failed promises: Planning in Toronto is too often a catalogue of things that will never happen. The more exciting a vision, the less likely a concrete result... "Opportunities Book"...stands out as a masterpiece in the often dreary literature of urban planning. -- Graeme Stewart; E.R.A. Architects- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Two architectural treasures: Neutra house and a shopping center...Palo Alto's Edgewood Plaza is a lot more than "just another shopping center"...offered a viable alternative to the decay, congestion, and pollution of old cities. By Alan Hess -- Joe Eichler; A. Quincy Jones; KTG Group- Mercury News (California)

The blob of awe and wonder: ...Natural History Museum's new £78m (\$139m) Darwin Centre. It appears to be a blob in a cage...The cocoon is intended to loom over visitors, an icon within a building that hardly needs more icons...if it does not attempt to compete with Alfred Waterhouse's building, it does not bring anything truly inspiring to it either. By Edwin Heathcote -- CF Møller- Financial Times (UK)

CF Møller unveils extension to Natural History Museum: ...features the largest sprayed concrete, curved structure in Europe. [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Old Facades Refreshed for Efficiency and Higher Rents: ...an emerging national trend as owners of middle-aged office buildings strive to provide better energy efficiency and handsomer appearance — and to do it fast, before an existing base of tenants disappears. -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Gensler; Cook + Fox- New York Times

A Wal-Mart of a penthouse atop an art deco tower: Who plopped the discount store on the roof of the historic former Penn Athletic Club? With the repurposing of this once-dowdy apartment house and hotel into the chic Parc Rittenhouse condos...our architects can't seem to fashion a credible-looking penthouse structure on an American building of the same vintage. By Inga Saffron -- Hillier [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Seawater greenhouses to bring life to the desert: The Sahara Forest project will use seawater and solar power to grow food in greenhouses across the desert. -- Charlie Paton; Michael Pawlyn/Exploration Architecture [image, links]- Guardian (UK)

Owners plans \$40-million revamp of Inland Steel Building...the modernist Loop landmark -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Frank Gehry- Crain's Chicago Business

Green is gold: Aesthetics Architects GO Group wins clients with progressive designs that add a lot of real value..."Our policy...is to offer clients energy-efficiency as a choice...and illustrate how green design is worth the additional expenditure [images]- Bangkok Post

DMR Architects Redesigning Historic Paramount Building: ...part of a larger adaptive reuse project in Jersey City known as the Beacon...site was built as the Jersey City Medical Center during the Great Depression and is New Jersey's largest example of art deco architecture. - New Jersey & Company

Chasing Bay Area artifacts of the New Deal: ...Living New Deal Project, a 4-year-old effort to catalog how California's landscape is marked by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's response to the Great Depression. By John King [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

Shortlist for RIBA special awards unveiled -- Rogers Stirk Harbour; Feilden Clegg Bradley; Wilkinson Eyre; Denton Corker Marshall; Julian Harrap; Taylor John McAslan; Alastair Lansley; Allies and Morrison; Levitt Bernstein; Hopkins Architects; Gustafson Porter; Heatherwick; Sarah Wigglesworth; John Pawson; Foster + Partners; Gumuchdjian Architects; etc. [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

2008 Constructech Vision Award winners for implementing leading-edge technology solutions -- OPN Architects; CH2M Hill; etc. - Constructech magazine

Call for entries: 2009 Committee on Design Ideas Competition: Design a sustainable home to replace the demolished 1931 Rachel Raymond House designed by her sister Eleanor Raymond, FAIA; registration deadline: February 13, 2009- AIA Committee on Design (COD)

Call for entries: Discarded Dreams Mattress Recycling Competition: create innovative ways of converting used mattresses into useful products; cash prizes; deadline: December 5- Architecture for Humanity / Rubicon National Social Innovations

Call for entries: 2A International Architectural Students and Young Architects (40 and under) Competition: Du(b)ailities: Supra_global_culture / micro_ethnic_localities; registration deadline: October 1- 2A Architecture + Art magazine

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- [-- Sverre Fehn: Exhibition Pavilion, Norwegian Museum of Architecture, Oslo, Norway](#)
- [-- Zaha Hadid Architects: Zaragoza Bridge Pavilion, Zaragoza, Spain](#)
- [-- Book: Architecture Now! 5 By Philip Jodidio](#)

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