

Today's News - Monday, February 16, 2009

- ArcSpace brings us eyefuls of BIG in Baku, and Gehry's first project in Denmark.
- Richard Florida on how the economic crash will reshape America + he explains why recession is the mother of invention.
- Russell on the shortsightedness of trying to ban the arts from the stimulus bill: "there is no argument about the value of the arts, especially as a renewal tool."
- Saffron on Philadelphia's high hopes to "emerge from this economic crisis as the Bionic City, with modern water and energy systems. But will the public care about a transformation it can't see?"
- A promise that small firms will have a shot at designing parts of London's 2012 Olympic legacy.
- Kamin laments that Chicago 2016 organizers are "in the driver's seat" for the Olympic Village instead of architects: the design "is an outdated version of the discredited tower-in-the-park urbanism that gave us soulless housing projects in the 1960s."
- In Malaysia, a concept to foster a friendly neighborhood spirit sounds good on paper, but it doesn't quite work in the real, Malaysian, world."
- Could cohousing communities be the next big thing?
- King finds out what buildings and spaces San Francisco's new city planning director thinks are successful.
- Campbell doesn't "know where to begin to castigate the new US Capitol Visitor Center" (but does find some other places that are definitely worth a look-see).
- Rockwell takes on the Oscars (they just might be worth watching this year!).
- Portman's adaptive re-use of a 1928 mixed-use development breaks ground in Shanghai.
- School daze: Bayley gives a gold star to "a remarkable riposte" to government thinking on school design.
- Hume on a Toronto school that looks as good as it smells, and speaks "of new attitudes to education."
- Barnard College's new Nexus student center vs. Columbia University's Lerner Hall: same goals, but one works, one doesn't.
- Rudolph's old house overhauled by fraternity: gone the floating stairs, "tripping hazard" of a fireplace (but much safer for frat parties!).
- Fast Company's 10 Most Innovative Companies in Architecture (SOM the only one that makes the overall Fast 50 list).
- Call for Expressions of Interest (international): a seafront leisure facility in Worthing, U.K.

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-- BIG: Zira Island Master Plan, Baku, Azerbaijan
-- Under construction: Gehry Partners: Counseling Center, Danish Cancer Society, Aarhus, Denmark

How the Crash Will Reshape America: What fate will the coming years hold for New York, Charlotte, Detroit, Las Vegas? Will the suburbs be ineffably changed? Which cities and regions can come back strong? And which will never come back at all? By Richard Florida [+ link to Q&A: Florida explains why recession is the mother of invention]- The Atlantic

Arts Ban in Stimulus Bill Is Stupid Economics: If you want bang for taxpayer's buck, build parks and fund the arts...In most parts of the country there is no argument about the value of the arts, especially as a renewal tool. By James S. Russell- Bloomberg News

Prudent stimulus strategy: ...Nutter's construction cabinet is focusing its sights on a narrow spectrum of projects that look nothing like your grandfather's infrastructure...Philadelphia could emerge from this economic crisis as the Bionic City, with modern water and energy systems. But will the public care about a transformation it can't see? By Inga Saffron- Philadelphia Inquirer

Small practices will get the chance to design parts of the 2012 Olympic legacy masterplan, directors from the three firms leading the masterplanning have insisted. -- KCAP, Edaw, Allies & Morrison insisting that McDowell & Benedetti, Caruso St John, Haworth Tompkins, Maccreeanor Lavington, Panter Hudspith and S333 would work on six "character areas" within the site [images, fly-through]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Chicago's Olympic Village plans lack creative sparkle, aesthetic punch: ...even if they start the city down the path toward the worthy urban planning goal of revitalizing the long-ignored Near South Side lakefront...Architects...were mere advisers...competitors for the right to hold the 2016 Summer Games are doing a far better job of letting architectural flowers bloom. By Blair Kamin -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)- Chicago Tribune

No boundaries, no sense: It sounded good on paper: a modern housing estate with no divisive fences. But it doesn't quite work in the real, Malaysian, world...concept to foster a friendly neighbourhood spirit...How hip! Modern. Fantastic. But ... wrong! By Mohamad Tajuddin Rasdi- The Star (Malaysia)

A special kind of neighborhood: Cohousing offers green living and a sense of community...we could see 20 or more elder cohousing communities in the next five years. (AP)- Denver Post

Top planner picks favorite buildings: John Rahaim has been studying San Francisco buildings intensely [since becoming] city's planning director..."The challenge in the next round of growth is, how can we allow the city to grow with grace and texture?" By John King -- Handel Partners; Hargreaves Associates; Brand + Allen; Daniel Solomon; Levy Design Partners; St. Fougeron Architecture; Kennerly Strong Architecture [slide show]- San Francisco Chronicle

Capitol revisions and security mania: In today's D.C., big projects don't yield big results: It's hard to know where to begin to castigate the new US Capitol Visitor Center here. Things go wrong right at the start... By Robert Campbell -- RTKL; Alan Hantman- Boston Globe

The Little Gold Man in a New Blue World: A designer turns back time to when the Oscars were worth watching. -- David Rockwell [slide show]- New York Times

Portman Breaks Ground on Shanghai Mixed-Use, Jian Ye Li: ...an adaptive re-use, mixed-use development...Originally designed [in 1928] as residences for middle- to low-income families who worked for the Jian Ye Li Construction Company... [image]- Contract magazine

Go straight to the top of the class, Mr Henley: An architect frustrated by government thinking on school design has brought to fruition a remarkable riposte...St Benedict's school in Ealing... By Stephen Bayley -- Buschow Henley- Observer (UK)

Architecture worth savouring: Not many buildings look as good as they smell, but the new George Brown cooking school is an exception – a very tasty exception...changes reflect the evolution of architectural technology and style...also speak of new attitudes to education. By Christopher Hume -- Carruthers Shaw (1984); Kearns Mancini; Gow and Hastings - Toronto Star

Learning From Lerner: Barnard College's new Nexus student center aims to succeed where Columbia University's Lerner Hall has failed. Both buildings aspire to serve their respective communities with designs that promote interaction among students, but they pursue their goals in radically different ways. -- Bernard Tschumi; Weiss/Manfredi- Columbia Spectator

At Rudolph's old house, frat puts function over form: ...31 High Street, the Yale chapter of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity...overhauled one of the last standing homes that Rudolph designed...to upgrade the house to current design standards...many elements of Rudolph's original design had become safety hazards...- Yale Daily News

The Most Innovative Companies in Architecture -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Herzog & de Meuron; Zaha Hadid; Rem Koolhaas/OMA; Steven Holl; Foster + Partners; Renzo Piano; Christian de Portzamparc; KieranTimberlake; Olsen Sundberg Kundig Allen- Fast Company

Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI): Worthing Pool seafront leisure facility; deadline: March 17 (international)- Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)

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