

## Today's News - Thursday, April 23, 2009

- Walker offers an excellent round-up of the austerity vs. extravagance debate.
- Anderton, Gehry, and Sinclair debate: Is it goodbye to architectural excess?
- Hume defends (good) starchitecture: "In our rush to throw out the iconic we are in danger of chucking the brilliant."
- Glancey enters the Chelsea Barracks fray: it's more "a case of overdevelopment rather than one of style."
- Farrelly takes on planners, their "silly ideas," and architects who, "unabashed, exploit them."
- Saffron brings back waterfront lessons from San Francisco: "There's no reason Philadelphia couldn't follow a similar path."
- A sweeping plan to green NYC's existing building stock (of course there are skeptics).
- Goodbye Gropius: Kamin on Chicago's Olympic Village plan: would replace "quality with mediocrity. That would make its new village an urban-planning tragedy of Olympic proportions."
- London picks team to convert 2012 Olympic and Paralympic venues to post-game use.
- Hadid on hold in Dubai, while Foster scoops a big one.
- National Children's Museum (finally) unveils design: it will be green in building and content.
- Sydney Opera House to take on Chinese hues.
- Carbone reviews Pei's Pyramid 20 years later: the "design was more about urbanism than architecture."
- Groves visits a Hearst beach mansion returned to glory as a community beach house: 'Oh, if only the sand and sea could talk.'
- Even with its Brutalist overtones, Brussat cheers a new park under a new bridge as being "among the most intriguing urban spaces" he's seen.
- Good news: the Architectural Billings Index jumps 8 points in March; but the up tick "should be viewed with cautious optimism."
- Peters back from SmartGeometry 2009: "this may be what keeps the industry competitive in these bleak economic times."

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Debating the Design Depression: Austerity vs Extravagance: Should we move towards the aesthetic austerity that comes with increased economic responsibility, or can we still encourage the unfettered, platinum-kissed extravagance of boom times? -- Gehry; Sinclair; Cannell; Moss; Hadid; Arieff-Fast Company

DnA/Frances Anderton: Is It Goodbye to Architectural Excess? -- Frank Gehry; Cameron Sinclair/Architecture for Humanity [audio]- KCRW (Los Angeles)

In defence of starchitecture: Some critics are happy to bid the boom and its bold buildings goodbye. They're being silly...If by starchitecture we mean buildings designed by the best architects in the world, not simply buildings designed by celebrity architects, there could never be enough...In our rush to throw out the iconic we are in danger of chucking the brilliant. By Christopher Hume -- Gehry; Alsop; Foster; Calatrava; Behnisch; Libeskind; Clewes; Pontarini; Wallman; MAD; Diamond & Schmitt; KPMB- Toronto Star

The view from Highgrove: It's 25 years since Prince Charles condemned modern architecture as 'a carbuncle'. Now, with his recent broadside against Richard Rogers, he has waded into a fresh controversy...With the best will in the world, there is something wrong with the Chelsea Barracks project. This, though, is a case of overdevelopment rather than one of style. By Jonathan Glancey -- Quinlan Terry- Guardian (UK)

Colonising garden guerillas could help feed the city: Planners get these silly ideas - in this case, that the old sense of civic arrival...is replicable by a couple of private skyscrapers flanking the seven-lane road like the two plaster bulldogs flanking your granny's front door. Planners get these ideas and architects, unabashed, exploit them. By Elizabeth Farrelly -- Atelier Nouvel; Foster Associates; Johnson Pilton Walker; Tonkin Zulaikha Greer; Tzannes Associates; Bates Smart; BVN; Cox; DCM; FJMT; Lacoste Stephenson; SuperColossal; Crawford Architects - Sydney Morning Herald

Some waterfront lessons from the City by the Bay: Mission Bay is easily one of the best new waterfront neighborhoods in America...Yet a mere 10 years ago...It was 300 acres of raw brownfields...There's no reason Philadelphia couldn't follow a similar path...Unlike a big-box casino, a new riverfront neighborhood won't be built in a year or two. It may take decades. But that's exactly how neighborhoods are supposed to grow. By Inga Saffron -- PennPraxis [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Greening the Skyline: Bloomberg unveils sweeping plan to retrofit New York buildings: ...described as the "nation's most comprehensive plan" to green the city's existing building stock..."Everyone's been talking about green jobs, but this is the program that will actually do it!"- The Architect's Newspaper

Michael Reese Hospital and the Olympic Village: Buildings that once healed are now the victims: Any opportunities to explore the revamping and repurposing of the Gropius buildings at Reese, and to weed out those not worth saving from those that are, will be ruthlessly denied...will be replacing quality with mediocrity. That would make its new village an urban-planning tragedy of Olympic proportions. By Blair Kamin- Chicago Tribune

£350m Olympic contract for Populous [formerly HOK Sport], Allies & Morrison and Lifschultz Davidson Sandilands: ...contract to convert existing 2012 Olympic and Paralympic venues...will cover 36 permanent and temporary competition venues as well as the Olympic Village and media centre developments...- BD/Building Design (UK)

Zaha's Dubai Opera House set to be cancelled: Two Zaha Hadid projects in the Middle East are on hold, while Foster + Partners scoops Saudi rail contract- The Architects' Journal (UK)

National Children's Museum Unveils Not Only Design, but Vision: ...will revolve around topics including the environment, civic engagement, play, health, the arts and the global neighborhood. -- Pelli Clarke Pelli; Amaze Design; Roto Studios; Aldrich Pears [images] - Washington Post

Sydney Opera House to take on Chinese hues: ...will feature a Tibetan red-color scheme in its proposed \$600 million makeover, adding to an array of other little-known Chinese architecture elements already used in the iconic structure. -- Jorn Utzon - China Daily

Viva Le Louvre! At 20, I.M. Pei's Controversial Pyramid Defies Critics: ...design was more about urbanism than architecture. It responded to the desperate need to integrate the museum into the fabric of the city... By Ken Carbone-Fast Company

Santa Monica beach mansion returns to glory: The compound where magnate William Randolph Hearst lived in grand style with mistress Marion Davies is being reopened as the Annenberg Community Beach House. Oh, if only the sand and sea could talk. By Martha Groves -- Frederick Fisher & Partners - Los Angeles Times

New park under the new bridge: ...strikes this observer as among the most intriguing urban spaces he's seen. It's made mostly of concrete. You might even call it Brutalist except that its designers had a good sense of the delight that can be achieved in places where large urban forms such as bridges and highways intersect. By David Brussat -- William D. Warner Architects; Maguire Group [image] - Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Architectural Billings Index Jumps 8 Points: It's the first time the score has landed above 40 since last September...The March uptick "should be viewed with cautious optimism"... - Architectural Record

Reviewed: SmartGeometry 2009: ...a unique educational resource (crucially well funded by industry) that is succeeding in creating a network of forward looking architects interested in new technologies, and this may be what keeps the industry competitive in these bleak economic times. By Terri Peters - Archinect

Book Review: A Perspective from One Elevation: "Conversations With Frank Gehry" by Barbara Isenberg: Gehry's conversations offer portraits of an astute listener as well as talker, an architect as aware of his flaws and limitations as of his virtues. By Norman Weinstein - ArchNewsNow

Op-Ed: Designing the New Public/Private Model: Greater government involvement in design can be an opportunity - if done correctly. That requires architects to be at the table from the beginning. By Peter Schubert, AIA - ArchNewsNow



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