

Today's News - Friday, November 6, 2009

- Mincing no words re: Auckland's failed Queens Wharf competition: "the heavyweights of the architectural world who couldn't resist entering the fatally flawed competition" should have known better.
- Is there a Guggenheim Bilbao, Jr. in the stars for northern Spain?
- Hadid addition to Philip Johnson's Sheldon Museum of Art could be in the stars - "if fundraising for the expansion is successful."
- Saffron bemoans the probable loss of Philly's art deco steam plant: "yet another emblem of the city's industrial might vanish."
- Better news for the city's 24-acre Penn Park: it's actually going to break ground, "replacing bland asphalt lots and an old industrial site...trading ugly for pretty."
- Goldhagen writes a rhapsody to the "uncanny beauty of Zumthor's out-of-the-way buildings."
- Spanking new Connecticut Science Center wants back the \$10 million it cost to fix problems (finger pointing abounds).
- Ralph Lauren endows Yale with a permanent professorship in honor of Charles Gwathmey.
- WAF Awards for the best buildings in the world (great presentation).
- BD hands out lots of awards, including Architect of the Year and Young Architect of the Year Awards (also well presented).
- Weekend diversions (and lots of 'em!):
- LightMappingNYC: a week of nighttime walks to underscore the vital role of lighting in New York City.
- Ouroussoff finds MoMA's "Bauhaus" an "unexpected treat" that "allows you to glimpse just how wild that creative roller coaster really was" (and it will haunt you long after you leave the show).
- Kennicott and Lewis both give thumbs-up to National "House of Cars," the National Building Museum's "fascinating and comprehensive" exhibition that proves "parking garages do not have to be ugly or scary."
- Daniell on "Archi-neering Design," a show traveling around Japan that proves "it makes no sense to hold on to the conventional distinction of the architect as creative visionary and the engineer as supporting consultant."
- "Power and Domesticity: The Architectural Legacy of TVA" in Clarksville, TN, captures "the poetry of TVA's architectural and aesthetic commitment."
- In Atlanta, "John Portman, Art and Architecture" is "both fitting and ironic" when many architects are feeling the sting of recession.
- Kennicott's take on "Visual Acoustics," the Julius Shulman documentary, "makes for a fascinating primer in modern architecture, Los Angeles culture and the meaning of a well-lived life."
- "Of Dreams and Cities" film series in London: a welcome relief from the usual suspects like "Blade Runner" and "Metropolis."
- Page turners: Minton's "Ground Control" will "make anyone who cares about the future of British cities very angry indeed."
- Baker's "The Freedoms of Suburbia" is "an intriguing defense," though ultimately its arguments "are not persuasive."
- Hagberg's "Dark Nostalgia" has a sense of "Film Noirish chiaroscuro as it tracks the recent obsession with old chandeliers and red-flocked wallpaper."

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Op-Ed: Let the paper stay blank until we can fill it properly: It's a good bet the only Aucklanders saddened by the decision to pull the plug on the Queens Wharf design contest are the big-name architects who couldn't resist entering the fatally flawed competition...all these shortcomings were obvious...the heavyweights of the architectural world should have spoken out, should have boycotted the exercise. By Brian Rudman [slide show]- New Zealand Herald

Guggenheim Bilbao, part II: The Basque museum plans to open a second outpost. Not content with having one of the most iconic buildings in the world, northern Spain may now be gaining a rival to its Frank Gehry-designed beacon....near the historic town of Guernica...authorities in the Basque Country anticipate that the new museum would extend the so-called "Bilbao effect"...to a pristine but underdeveloped coastal region. - The Art Newspaper (UK)

Initial designs for Sheldon expansion to be unveiled: Zaha Hadid...has been selected to do the preliminary design for the Haymarket expansion of the Sheldon Museum of Art...Final designs will be made public early next year, if fundraising for the expansion is successful. -- Philip Johnson (1963); DLR Group - Lincoln Journal Star (Nebraska)

Powering down: The art deco steam plant and soaring smokestack near 30th Street Station soon will be gone, yet another emblem of industrial might vanished...it's all too easy to forget that these are the structures that made Philadelphia modern...If Amtrak understood the potential of its rail yards, it could return the favor a second time. By Inga Saffron -- Graham, Anderson, Probst & White (1929)- Philadelphia Inquirer

Ground breaking to begin on Penn Project: ...24-acre Penn Park, the centerpiece of University of Pennsylvania 30-year master plan...Replacing bland asphalt lots and an old industrial site, the project will help to transform the landscape of West Philadelphia...In short, it's trading ugly for pretty. -- Michael Van Valkenburgh [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Place of Grace: The uncanny beauty of Peter Zumthor's out-of-the-way buildings...Simple volumes and familiar materials are packed into compositions thick with meanings...[his] buildings may be few, and some of them are tricky to get to. But you must go, go to see some of the great artworks of our time. By Sarah Williams Goldhagen - The New Republic

Connecticut Science Center Sues Architects: ...says it cost more than \$10 million to fix the problems with their spectacular building in downtown Hartford, and they want their money back -- Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects - Hartford Advocate (Connecticut)

Gwathmey honored with professorship: ...starting in January, Peter Eisenman will be the first Charles Gwathmey Professor of Architecture...Ralph Lauren has endowed a permanent professorship in honor of the late architect ... -- Gwathmey Siegel - Yale Daily News

WAF Awards: Best buildings in the world...in 15 categories have been awarded at the World Architecture Festival in Barcelona -- Isay Weinfeld; Murman Arkitekter; Produkcija 004; WOHA; Mc Bride Charles Ryan; Choi Ropihai/Perkins Eastman/PKSB; Peter Rich; Morphogenesis; Behnisch

Architekten; Turenscape (Beijing Turen Design Institute); Allen Jack+Cottier; Rogers Stirk Harbour; Battle & Roig; Sordo Madaleno Arquitectos [links to images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

The firms that raise the roof: Architect of the Year, Young Architect of the Year Awards + 16 other category winners -- Eric Parry; David Kohn; John McAslan; Rick Mather; Feilden Clegg Bradley; Marks Barfield; Peter Milican; Alford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM); Stephen Taylor; Riches Hawley Mikhail; Eldridge Smerin; Maccleanor Lavington; Hawkins Brown; Project Orange- BD/Building Design (UK)

2009 LightMappingNYC: the first North American event to underscore the vital role of lighting in New York City, the multi-part program will include interactive group walks in the city at night, group discussions; November 10-18- iGuzzini, PLDA, IESNYC, DLFNYC

Finding a Bit of Animal House in the Bauhaus: "Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity"...an unexpected treat. The kind of exhibition that comes around once in a rare while, it takes a sledgehammer to the clichés and restores its historical subject to vivid life. By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- Groipus; Hannes Meyer; Mies van der Rohe; etc. [slide show]- New York Times

On the spot: Putting parking in its proper place: The National Building Museum's fascinating and comprehensive "House of Cars" exhibition...they were once more routinely beautiful and integrated into the urban fabric, and that even today they can be architecturally daring if real architects are allowed to explore the poetry of the structure. By Philip Kennicott- Washington Post

Where you park doesn't have to be scary: As "House of Cars: Innovation and the Parking Garage" at the National Building Museum demonstrates that parking garages do not have to be ugly or scary. Indeed, some architects and their clients have aspired to make attractive, artfully designed garages. By Roger K. Lewis- Washington Post

"Archi-neering Design": ...on tour through 10 different locations in Japan...to showcase architectural designs in which collaboration between the architect and engineer is so central...it makes no sense to hold on to the conventional distinction of the architect as creative visionary and the engineer as supporting consultant. By Thomas Daniell -- Architecture Institute of Japan (AIJ); Kenzo Tange/Yoshikatsu Tsuboi; Toyo Ito/Mutsuro Sasaki; Kiyonori Kikutake/Sukenobu Tani; Hiroaki Ohtani/Koichi Toki; etc. [images]- Artscape (Japan)

TVA exhibit in Clarksville presents a vision of public good: Tennessee Architecture Foundation exhibit "Power and Domesticity: The Architectural Legacy of TVA"...curated by Tim Culvahouse....Captured in Richard Barnes' photographs are the poetry of TVA's architectural and aesthetic commitment..."This is public architecture at the highest level."- The Leaf-Chronicle (Tennessee)

High Museum Exhibit Celebrates Atlanta Architect: ..."John Portman, Art and Architecture," celebrates the work of this prolific Atlanta native. At a time when many architects are feeling the sting of recession...the exhibit seems both fitting, and ironic. - Public Broadcasting Atlanta (PBA)

"Visual Acoustics" honors a master's modern eye: ...Julius Shulman, the irrepressible and engaging subject of the documentary, was no ordinary architectural photographer, and his long and productive career makes for a fascinating primer in modern architecture, Los Angeles culture and the meaning of a well-lived life. By Philip Kennicott- Washington Post

Architecture Tells the Tale: It's a relief to find a season of films on architecture that doesn't include Blade Runner and Metropolis. One thing the British Film Institute and RIBA wanted to avoid was the usual suspects when they programmed Of Dreams and Cities...interested in a broader reading of architecture than futuristic urban visions.- RIBA Journal (UK)

Book review: "Ground Control: Fear and happiness in the twenty-first-century city": Anna Minton's book about regeneration, crime and urban policy will make anyone who cares about the future of British cities very angry indeed. We are told...there has been an urban renaissance, a phenomenon with near-spiritual qualities. This book is an essential rejoinder to that particular lie.- Icon magazine (UK)

Book review: "The Freedoms of Suburbia" by Paul Baker: ...an intriguing defence of a way of life practised by 80% of the British population...main focus is on that "tiny urban elite" of planners, architects and rationalist do-gooders who try to impose their visions of the better life on "the people"...its arguments, though interesting, are not persuasive.- Telegraph (UK)

Dark Nostalgia: The speakeasy format is making a comeback in Manhattan...Eva Hagberg's new book...makes me think of Bette Davis as a hedonistic, boozing heiress...has some of the same Film Noirish chiaroscuro as it tracks the recent obsession with old chandeliers and red-flocked wallpaper. By Alastair Gordon [images]- Wall Street Journal

WORDS THAT BUILD Tip #20: The aim of an opening statement is to open a door to dialogue rather than to persuasively "hook" another into compliance with your message. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow



-- Santiago Calatrava: Liège Guillemins TGV Station, Liège, Belgium
-- Book: Catherine Corman: "Daylight Noir: Raymond Chandler's Imagined City"

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