

Today's News - Tuesday, December 15, 2009

- ArcSpace brings us Hadid in Rome, and Viñoly in Montevideo.
- Last week we ran Lomborg's argument that efforts to halt global warming should be postponed; now German energy company head says "never before has there been a better chance for a global climate deal."
- Impressive signs of a blooming life for California's green economy despite the recession.
- Hosey on a new a new gender gap in the office and on campus when it comes to sustainability: "When it comes to green, the gender gap is clear, and it favors women."
- A new survey finds that China is losing thousands of historic sites because of aggressive development: "the damage caused over the last 20 years was worse than during the Cultural Revolution."
- Is San Francisco's preservation commission leaning towards landmarking mid-century mediocrity?
- Russell finds some "wow" on a tour of CityCenter in Las Vegas, but the "architectural bouquet never forms a crisp, readable ensemble."
- Lewis minces no words about what he thinks of the Swiss "misguided vote" to ban minarets.
- Pogrebin delves into the cultural building boom: "bigger buildings may not be better."
- Rosenbaum begs to differ: what about "the many beneficial and successfully realized projects" - and those still moving forward.
- Ouroussoff on DS+R's very "different kind of bubble" in Washington that could be "the most uplifting work of civic architecture" since Pei's East Building and "transform one of the most somber buildings on the mall into a luminous pop landmark" (whether it will go forward in the question).
- High hopes the Louvre-Lens will bring the Bilbao effect to a former French mining town (improved cuisine might also help).
- Litt on the Cleveland Museum of Art's approval of Viñoly's expansion project, splitting the second phase in two (at least the museum will look finished from the outside).
- Hadid's Broad Art Museum at Michigan State also given the go-ahead.
- Kennicott digs the good vibes at St. Albans school: it is "a building that seems to trust its people, rather than reflect their anxieties and suspicions."
- Bayley practically bubbles over Dublin's new Beckett Bridge: "Calatrava is a form-giver of novel genius."
- Call for entries: The Architectural League Prize for Young Architects + Designers: "ReSource"; and ASLA call for presentations/education sessions for 2010 Annual Meeting.

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-- Zaha Hadid Architects: MAXXI museum, Rome, Italy  
-- Rafael Viñoly Architects: Carrasco International Airport, Montevideo, Uruguay

Essay: Danish statistician Bjørn Lomborg argued last week...that efforts to halt global warming should be postponed. Fritz Vahrenholt, head of the renewable energy operations at German energy company RWE, disagrees. Never before has there been a better chance for a global climate deal, he says. - Der Spiegel (Germany)

'Green economy' growing in California despite recession: The bulk of the state's green jobs — 45 percent — were in services, including legal services, environmental consulting, green marketing and public relations. Manufacturing represented 21 percent. - Mercury News (California)

Women Rule: In the office and on campus, a new gender gap emerges...the growing importance of sustainability in education is directly related to the rising number of women in education. When it comes to green, the gender gap is clear, and it favors women. By Lance Hosey - Architect Magazine

China loses thousands of historic sites: More than 30,000 items on 1982 list have vanished, in part due to China's aggressive development, survey finds...the damage caused over the last 20 years was worse than during the Cultural Revolution... - Guardian (UK)

Midcentury Madness? New San Francisco preservation commission may landmark mediocrity: ...initiating landmark status for the North Beach branch, along with several other libraries designed in the 1950s and '60s by defunct firm Appleton & Wolfard... "If this collection of libraries becomes landmarks, one wonders what the selection criteria will be for determining a landmark" -- Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects - The Architect's Newspaper

Vegas \$8.5 Billion CityCenter Has Classy Casino, Empty Rooms: The complex was supposed to invent an exuberantly cosmopolitan future...with sleek contemporary architecture...Yet...struggles to find its tone. By James S. Russell -- Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); Daniel Libeskind; David Rockwell; Helmut Jahn; Foster & Partners; Rafael Vinoly; Pelli Clarke Pelli - Bloomberg News

Swiss vote delivers blow to architectural freedom: Wholesale banning of a specific architectural element, such as a tower or minaret, is terrible public policy...Clearly this misguided vote is driven by irrational phobia, by perception eclipsing reality, and by misunderstanding of Islamic architecture and mosque building traditions. By Roger K. Lewis - Washington Post

In the Arts, Bigger Buildings May Not Be Better: Many poured millions into building larger, flashier spaces in recent years, but critics wonder if it ever made sense..."nobody actually asked: 'Is there a need here? If they build it, will they come?'" By Robin Pogrebin -- Gehry; Toyo Ito; Terry Riley; Yoshio Taniguchi; César Pelli - New York Times

NY Times Watch: Kimmelman on Hoving; Pogrebin on the Museum Building Bust: ...by focusing on the "irrational exuberance" of museum expansions...she ignores many beneficial and successfully realized projects...as well as those that are still going forward. By Lee Rosenbaum -- David Chipperfield; Tadao Ando; Peter Zumthor; Terence Riley; Yoshio Taniguchi; Herzog & de Meuron; Jean Nouvel; Tod Williams Billie Tsien [links] - ArtsJournal

In Washington, a Different Kind of Bubble: Richard Koshalek, the newly appointed director of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, plans to erect a 145-foot-tall inflatable meeting hall on the National Mall...would transform one of the most somber buildings on the mall into a luminous pop landmark. By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro [images] - New York Times

Louvre's expansive aim: Revitalize a mining town: ...150 million euro (\$226 million) museum, to open in 2012, is part of a strategy to spread art beyond the traditional bastions of culture in Paris to new audiences in the provinces...Officials hope the Louvre-Lens can help transform the city the way the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, turned a struggling industrial area into a hot travel destination. -- SANAA - Washington Post

Cleveland Museum of Art board OKs next phase of expansion project: ...split the second phase of work into two major batches of contracts...would leave the museum looking finished from the outside by the end of 2011. By Steven Litt -- Marcel Breuer (1971); Rafael Vinoly [images]- Cleveland Plain Dealer

MSU trustees give authorization to proceed with Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum construction: The university will break ground on the museum on March 16, 2010. -- Zaha Hadid [link to images]- Michigan State University (MSU)

At St. Albans, a new building gives off good vibes: The remarkable thing about its new building [Marriott Hall]...is how porous it is, both to the outside world and to the free flow of social energy...a building that seems to trust its people, rather than reflect their anxieties and suspicions. By Philip Kennicott -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)- Washington Post

Happy days for Samuel Beckett: What better tribute to a giant of 20th-century Irish literature than his own bridge over the Liffey?...Dublin has a fine new landmark bridge. It's too early to say whether it's a success, but let's remember Beckett's advice: "Fail better." By Stephen Bayley -- Santiago Calatrava [image]- Guardian (UK)

Call for entries: The Architectural League Prize for Young Architects + Designers: "ReSource" (formerly known as the Young Architects Forum); open to residents, who need not be citizens, of the United States, Canada, and Mexico only; deadline: February 8, 2010- Architectural League of New York

ASLA Call for Presentations/Education Sessions for 2010 Annual Meeting September 10-13, with the theme Water, Earth, Air, Fire: DESIGN; deadline: January 27, 2010- American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

A Star is Reborn: Fox Oakland Theater and Oakland School for the Arts: A faded movie palace - and the surrounding neighborhood - gets a new lease on life. -- Architectural Dimensions; ELS Architecture and Urban Design; Starkweather Bondy Architecture [images]- ArchNewsNow

Best Architecture Books of 2009: 10 crucial volumes from the classic to the iconoclastic. By Norman Weinstein -- Steven Holl; Le Corbusier; Jerry Yudelson; Álvaro Siza; Vicente Guallart; Calatrava; Bauhaus; etc.- ArchNewsNow

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