

Today's News - Monday, May 3, 2010

- ArcSpace brings us C.F. Møller's apartment tower in Aarhus, Denmark, that "protrudes into the light and the landscape like Lego bricks."
- Hume fumes that hockey has trumped good planning for Toronto's Lower Don Lands waterfront: it's "a tale of mediocrity told by a cast of characters" ranging from the mayor "to a faceless but senior bureaucrat" (no wonder Greenberg quit).
- Deutsche Bank conversion of its Frankfurt HQ "towers of gorgonian ugly" to LEED Platinum is all well and good - except it's really just turning "horrid '80s towers into horrid '80s eco-towers."
- Historic preservation in Shanghai is slowly beginning to take hold - but it takes a lot of work.
- Malcolm Fraser puts the pedal to the metal to save a listed 1898 electric car factory from demolition and convert it for modern use.
- With residents growing restless waiting for visible action on the new Cleveland Convention Center and Medical Mart, Cleveland commissioners finally name an urban design/landscape architecture team.
- A legislative proposal to help take green infrastructure methods from theory to practice is gaining support on Capitol Hill, but there are a range of obstacles.
- Moore cheers plans for 6 more Maggie's Centers, but do they really need to be designed by starchitects?
- Rosenbaum takes on the NYT for creating a "crisis of confidence" for the Whitney's planned High Line branch: "If this effort fails, New York, not just the Whitney, will be the poorer."
- Kennicott cheers the "fine temper" of Mather's new wing for the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.
- Maschal cheers Botta's Bechtler Museum in Charlotte: he "is not just a great architect. He is a magician" who has "created a building that seems alive."
- Safdie's "art path" for Singapore's Marina Bay Sands will have visitors "sure to be wowed by the seamless integration of both stunning architecture and public art" (great pix + link to Q&A).
- Maya Lin and Michael Van Valkenburgh team up to design "an oasis for a St. Louis medical campus that greens the city beyond."
- How creative solutions get hospital projects built, even in a down economy.
- Glancey has nothing but glowing things to say about the conversion of London's historic Midland Grand Hotel into St Pancras Chambers (great pix - we'd settle for just the tub in the clock tower pad).
- Kennicott compares Cret and Warnecke: "if the former succeeded and the latter failed, it is, in part, because of the role that power and self-confidence plays in the prevailing architectural fantasy of Washington."
- Berkeley Prize 2010 Essay Prize, Travel Fellows, and Architectural Design Fellow announced.

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C.F. Møller Architects: [The Sil\(o\)houette, Aarhus, Denmark](#)

Hockey trumps planning in Toronto the mediocre: Proposed waterfront sports complex a study in why Toronto will never be a great city...a tale of mediocrity...an allegory of a city where expediency beats excellence every time...the city decided the Lower Don Lands would be an ideal location for a four-rink facility and the 440 parking spots... By Christopher Hume -- Ken Greenberg - Toronto Star

Deutsche Bank Converts Horrid '80s Towers Into Horrid '80s Eco-Towers: Too bad they're so damn ugly...The greenest buildings are the ones that already exist. But what if a building is so hideous, so bland, so utterly devoid of beauty that, green or not, it's an affront to the very conceit of architecture? -- Mario Bellini Architects [images] - Fast Company

In Shanghai, Preservation Takes Work: Amid rapid growth and extensive construction, Shanghai has tried to make sure some of its old architecture is saved...created 12 preservation zones, giving historic neighborhoods at least some protection. -- Ruan Yisan/National Research Center for Historic Cities; Anne Warr [images] - New York Times

Architect's bid to save 19th century electric car factory: Malcolm Fraser has spoken out against...plans to demolish the historic and listed 1898 Maldevic electric car factory in Granton to make way for new houses...would like to work with a specialist developer to retain and convert the historic factory for modern use. [image, links] - Guardian (UK)

Cuyahoga County Commissioners name names: ...residents have grown restless waiting for visible action on the new Cleveland Convention Center and Medical Mart...Top of the list, due to the visibility of the mall, was the naming of the urban design/landscape architecture team. -- Gustafson Guthrie Nichol; McKnight Associates; LMN-Examiner

Scaling up Green Infrastructure: ...a recent legislative proposal gaining support on Capitol Hill, "The Green Infrastructure for Water Act," which would help take green infrastructure methods from theory to practice...there are a range of obstacles...- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Maggie's Cancer Caring Centres: Plans are afoot for six more innovative...centres, but do they really need such star architects to build them? ...such centres should always be special and singular, but they no longer need to look like items from an exhibition of architecture. By Rowan Moore -- Page\Park; Richard Murphy; Frank Gehry; Zaha Hadid; Rogers Stirk Harbour; Rem Koolhaas/OMA; Foreign Office Architects; Piers Gough; Richard MacCormack; Kisho Kurokawa - Observer (UK)

Downtown Whitney: NY Times-Generated Crisis of Confidence - Part II: ...by casting so much doubt upon this laudable project based on flimsy evidence and arguments, the Times has made the job of selling its merits to potential donors in a tough economic climate all the more difficult. If this effort fails, New York, not just the Whitney, will be the poorer. By Lee Rosenbaum -- Renzo Piano [links]- ArtsJournal

Rick Mather's design elevates Richmond museum's dour 1930s architecture: ...Virginia Museum of Fine Arts...the major accomplishment is the new wing's fine temper...Its success, as architecture, lies in how well it balances these terrestrial pleasures with the seriousness of its new galleries and how easily it connects with the existing buildings. By Philip Kennicott -- SMBW Architects [images]- Washington Post

Art-filled cathedral: Design at its finest: Nestled among uptown's towers, the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art has a striking presence: Mario Botta...created this paradoxical art palace not to express some Gehryesque flamboyance, but to do an architect's duty...The result is the most enjoyable, snazzy and all-around excellent building uptown Charlotte has seen in years. By Richard Maschal -- Wagner Murray Architects [images]- Charlotte Observer (North Carolina)

Art path at Marina Bay Sands: When Moshie Safdie handpicks art pieces to be placed in his building, be sure to be wowed by the seamless integration of both stunning architecture and public art. -- Antony Gormley; Zheng Chongbin; Ned Kahn; James Carpenter; Sol LeWitt [images, links]- Asia One (Singapore)

Fountain of Health: Maya Lin Studio and Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates have designed an oasis for a St. Louis medical campus that greens the city beyond. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Even in Today's Economy, Creative Solutions Get Hospital Projects Built: Collaboration and commitment are enabling hospitals of all sizes to be built in a down economy. Old playbooks don't have to be entirely discarded, but they must be revised and adjusted to accommodate a reconfigured playing field. By J. Todd Robinson/Earl Swensson Associates and Alan P. Richman- HealthLeaders

No place like home: After a £200m makeover, London's St Pancras Chambers are open for business...Britain's most exciting address...magnificent building began life, in 1873, as the Midland Grand Hotel... By Jonathan Glancey -- George Gilbert Scott (1873); Les Broer; Geoff Mann/RHWL [slide show]- Guardian (UK)

Comparing Paul Philippe Cret and John Carl Warnecke: ...both struggled to adapt classical styles for contemporary times, and if the former succeeded and the latter failed, it is, in part, because of the role that power and self-confidence plays in the prevailing architectural fantasy of Washington. By Philip Kennicott [slide show]- Washington Post

Berkeley Prize 2010 Essay Prize, Travel Fellows and Architectural Design Fellow announced- Berkeley Prize

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