

Today's News - Wednesday, September 29, 2010

- Baggini on architecture and its "duty to beauty": apparently, beauty is "too fluffy for public policy."
- A call for Johannesburg architects to "take back the power to conceptualize, and create, a 'World-Class African City' that means something beyond an empty slogan."
- Rogers calls for Sydney to stick to Barangaroo plan or risk not being a "truly great city of the world."
- Brandes Gratz on New Orleans defying "conventional expectations. It should be the catalyst for a fundamental re-examination of how we deal with urban challenges: how to build back up, not keep tearing down."
- How federal and local governments are rebuilding communities: "terms like smart growth and eco-communities, and tools like LEED-ND are no longer odd concepts for local policymakers."
- King takes a walking tour of Boston and finds it "more expansive and intriguing than ever...informed by history but adding to it with intelligent restraint."
- Hot talents lend their skills to envisioning a park beside a restored Los Angeles River.
- East Germany's coal mines undergoing extreme makeover to become Europe's biggest artificial lake district (any wonder developers are chomping at the bit?).
- Merrick offers mild praise for the extension of the Lille métropole musée d'art modern d'art contemporain et d'art brut: while it is "a radical addition, it could have been even more daring" (though "in broad terms" it is a success).
- SHoP unveils design of its newest amenity for Atlantic Yards' Barclays Center: a new public plaza (green roof and oculus included).
- Predock's "futuristic" (and only 17-year-old) CLA Building at Cal Poly Pomona may be demolished, though the "architect's stature will be considered as the future of the building is studied" (one would hope - it's part of the university's official logo!).
- Even sadder, L.A. lost Lautner's 1950 Shusett House (really sad images!).
- Two brighter notes: Tucson is taking its trove of Modernist buildings to heart.
- Bey hails Chicago's 2010 Preservation Excellence Awards: "We complain loudly when we lose a building to demolition...We should cheer just as loudly when one is saved and restored."
- Kamin on USGBC's first Daley Legacy Award winner: in case you're wondering who, it's "Chicago's lame-duck mayor, famous for his green thumb and his iron fist."
- Big times coming up in the Big Apple (we're being unabashedly chauvinistic): it's Architecture Week at the Center for Architecture and openhousenewyork + Big and Super-Green theme for the 8th annual Innovation Conference + 4th Annual DOCOMOMO US Tour Day 2010 coast-to-coast.

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Architecture and our duty to beauty: We all have a responsibility to make the best of our surroundings. Yet the political classes are reluctant to be arbiters of taste. That has to change...People make a fuss about Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), but neglect Areas of Ordinary, Normal Beauty...beauty appears to be too fluffy for public policy. By Julian Baggini-Independent (UK)

Architecture ZA 2010: With architecture comes responsibility: ...it seems that property developers have dominated the imagined – and real – future of our cities, Johannesburg more than others. It's time that conscientious architects take back the power to conceptualise, and create, a "World-Class African City" that means something beyond an empty slogan.- The Daily Maverick (Johannesburg, South Africa)

Stick to the plan, or risk greatness: Sydney will not be a "truly great city of the world" unless it builds Lend Lease's plan for Barangaroo, says Richard Rogers...has weighed into the debate about Barangaroo after criticism of the proposed development by the Australian Institute of Architects and others... -- Rogers Stirk Harbour - Sydney Morning Herald

It Takes a Neighborhood: ...the political and real estate establishment of New Orleans tried to follow the lead of already shrinking cities like Detroit, Buffalo and Youngstown, Ohio. But New Orleanians resisted such ideas...has become a model for how to defy conventional expectations. It should be the catalyst for a fundamental re-examination of how we deal with urban challenges: how to build back up, not keep tearing down. By Roberta Brandes Gratz -- TEDxNOLA; David Waggoner/Waggoner & Ball Architects - New York Times

Livability to the Rescue: ...how federal and local governments are applying strategies that enhance livability in order to rebuild communities...terms like smart growth and eco-communities, and tools like LEED-ND are no longer odd concepts for local policymakers. -- Partners for Livable Communities; CEOs for Cities; Municipal Arts Society; David Owen - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Chic shift in Boston neighborhoods: ...cultural and architectural shifts are telling in a city whose image remains defined by a palpable sense of the past, soothing and staid. Yet central Boston is more expansive and intriguing than ever...informed by history but adding to it with intelligent restraint. By John King -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Hacin + Associates [slide show] - San Francisco Chronicle

In the Heart of Los Angeles, a Vision of a Park Beside a Restored River: The Friends of the Los Angeles River want to transform a 130-acre rail yard into a public park that would also serve as a flood detention plain for a river restored to its natural state. By Fred A. Bernstein -- Michael Maltzan Architecture; Perkins+Will; Chee Salette Architecture Office [images] - New York Times

Extreme Makeover: The Watery Future of East Germany's Coal Mines...an ambitious facelift: Derelict open-cast mines dating from communist East Germany are being flooded, transforming the area into Europe's biggest artificial lake district. Developers hope it will become a tourist magnet as well. - Rolf Kuhn/International Building Exhibition (IBA); Karin Mietke; SteelTec37 [slide show] - Der Spiegel (Germany)

Brut force: The Lille Art Museum extension: The Lille Art Museum has reopened with a new extension for its collection of Art Brut. The building is a radical addition, but it could have been even more daring...extension's design is only faintly surreal; that it isn't absolutely surreal, or indeed brut, rankles. By

Jay Merrick -- Roland Simounet (1983); Manuelle Gautrand [images]- Independent (UK)

Plaza sweet — Ratner unveils new front for his Barclays Center: ...a "neighborhood" amenity at the core of a highly controversial project was a central theme of the new design...Despite all the details, the plaza is only temporary — hopefully...public space concept itself is permanent... -- Gregg Pasquarelli/SHoP Architects [images]- The Brooklyn Paper

Antoine Predock's CLA Building in California May Be Demolished: ...futuristic Classroom Laboratory Administration Building, on the campus of Cal Poly Pomona, is only 17 years old...needs extensive repairs and seismic upgrades that could cost as much as \$80 million...architect's stature will be considered as the future of the building is studied. [image]- Architectural Record

Before and After: Lautner: Three weeks ago...John Lautner's 1950 Shusett House, was demolished...negotiations between the John Lautner Foundation and the owner, Enrique Mannheim, broke down...conservancy groups then failed to get 'a stay of execution' passed by the Beverly Hills City Council, the landmark house was summarily ripped apart. [images]- Architizer

Sleek lines, big windows, flat roofs say modernism: MAPP Modern 50 list of significant residences...by a couple dozen Tucson architects... Chris Evans/Modern Architecture Preservation Project; Arthur Brown; William Wilde; Nicholas Sakellar; Judith Chafee; Anne Rysdale; Charles Cox; Jim Gresham; Bernard Friedman Friedman; David Swanson [slide show]- Arizona Daily Star

An Art Deco dazzler wins honors: 2010 Preservation Excellence Awards honored 21 buildings and the outreach efforts of the Chicago office of Partners for Sacred Places...We complain loudly when we lose a building to demolition in this town. We should cheer just as loudly when one is saved and restored. By Lee Bey -- Holabird & Root (1929) [images, links]- Lee Bey's Chicago

And the winner of the first Daley Legacy Award for sustainable cities is....(hint: he ripped up Meigs Field): You'll never guess who just won the first Mayor Richard M. Daley Legacy Award for Global Leadership in Creating Sustainable Cities. Chicago's lame-duck mayor, famous for his green thumb and his iron fist... By Blair Kamin -- USGBC - Chicago Tribune

Architecture Week 2010: annual week-long celebration of the best in architecture and design in New York City, October 2 - 10; includes 8th Annual openhousenewyork Weekend October 9 & 10- Center for Architecture / AIANY (NYC)

Innovation 2010: Big and Super-Green: From Buildings to Cityscapes: 8th annual Innovation Conference, October 6-7, NYC -- David Owen; Stefan Behnisch; Bruce Kuwabara/Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects (KPMB); Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); etc. - Architectural Record / GreenSource

4th Annual DOCOMOMO US Tour Day 2010: has expanded to include more than 20 modern architecture tours from coast-to-coast; Saturday, October 9- DOCOMOMO US



Exhibition: John Pawson: Plain Space, Design Museum, London, UK

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