

Today's News - Friday, October 1, 2010

- We lose Seinuk, a structural engineer who made tall, sleek buildings possible, and who taught young architects how to "bring poetry and power into their designs."
- European Architectural Barometer shows "German architects are most optimistic about the future."
- Booth on the "toughest trading period for British architects in a generation...but architects are nothing if not ingenious": dRMM sets sail (literally) for foreign shores; what will it mean for the Stirling shortlist (we'll find out tomorrow).
- Bayley wonders if "we have reached the end of "isms," particularly minimalism (not as long as Pawson's around, it seems).
- Saffron on a historic Philly church that "needs buyer, not wrecking ball."
- It looks like Steve Jobs' "unrelenting legal kung fu" will end with his 1920s mansion finally facing the bulldozers; and a first look at the plans for its \$8.45 million single-family replacement.
- An architect's own LEED Platinum home is bunkered into a hill: nothing about the project "was easy, inexpensive, or fast" (but it was worth it, he says).
- Weekend diversions:
- MoMA's "Small Scale, Big Change": Hawthorne wonders: "Has architecture rediscovered its conscience? Or is it just critics and curators...suddenly paying attention to design work that has been going on steadily, and right under our noses, for years?" + Gendall says "the notion of architecture tackling social issues is part of MoMA's institutional DNA" + the show "is a rousing display of ingenuity" + it "inspires - or, maybe, challenges - its audience...to be that mighty change we want to see in the world."
- Rawsthorn rhapsodizes about the Frankfurt Kitchen: it dominates the "domestic gizmos" in MoMA's "Counter Space" (a fascinating read).
- "Designing Tomorrow: America's World's Fairs of the 1930s" at the National Building Museum considers the impact of all six American world fairs of the depression era on the popularization of modern design.
- Kapoor's Sky Mirror sculptures in Kensington Gardens are right at home among the swans (great slide show!).
- Koppelkamm's photography of former East Germany presents "some unexpected contrasts" at Berlin's Museum for Communication (amazing images).
- Meanwhile, Muhs's photos of Berlin highlight "the forgotten corners of a city in perpetual transition" (more great pix!).
- Q&A with Kamin re: his new book, "Terror and Wonder" (and "everything from McDonald's to Mies").
- A new tome celebrates Richard Kelly and his "nocturnal modernity" in architectural lighting design.
- A Louis Sullivan documentary is a "loving look at architecture" with moments "that can only be described as 'design porn.'"
- Vienna Design Week starts today!
- We couldn't resist: an eyeful of natural fractal patterns that are just stunning.

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Obituary: Ysrael Seinuk, 78; Made Tall, Sleek Buildings Possible: ...a structural engineer who made it possible for many...new buildings to withstand wind, gravity and even earthquakes."He had a huge impact on the students. He created the structure curriculum so that young architects could bring poetry and power into their designs." -- Cantor Seinuk; Ysrael A. Seinuk P.C.- New York Times

European architects divided on future construction industry: Q2 report of the European Architectural Barometer shows that the sentiment among architects in Europe varies by country. Especially when it comes to the expected number of projects for the coming 12 months, differences are noticeable...German architects are most optimistic about the future. [pdf]- Arch-Vision

Architects build an ark as work dries up: De Rijke Marsh Morgan (dRMM) will seek out work in Belgium, Norway and the Netherlands on the barge, complete with design studio...comes amid the toughest trading period for British architects in a generation...The shortlist for tomorrow's Stirling Prize...includes some of the most modest buildings ever to appear in the prize's history... By Robert Booth -- DSDHA; Theis and Khan Architects; Zaha Hadid; Rick Mather; Foster + Partners; David Chipperfield- Guardian (UK)

Does Minimalism Matter? It has been the defining style of our era, but now it's in retreat. Stephen Bayley works out whether less will soon be no more...: We have reached the end of "isms". -- John Pawson; Dieter Rams; Terence Conran; Shiro Kuramata- The Economist / Intelligent Life (UK)

Historic Church of the Assumption needs buyer, not wrecking ball: ...the familiar landmark is being written off...the Historical Commission approved a hardship waiver, allowing the nonprofit Siloam to tear down the burdensome property...by hastening the church's demolition, the Historical Commission compromises Philadelphia's future while it sabotages an important piece of its Catholic past. By Inga Saffron -- Patrick Charles Keely (1848) [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Exclusive: The Plans For Steve Jobs' New House: After nearly six years of...unrelenting legal kung fu with state and local preservationists, it appears the 1920s Woodside mansion Jobs bought in 1984 will finally have its date with the bulldozers...In its place...a brand new \$8.45 million single family home...Steve won't be buying another old mansion anytime soon. -- Sentient Architecture; Bohlin Cywinski Jackson [images, links]- Gizmag (Australia)

Vertical hillside house blends indoor, outdoor living: ...bunkered into a hill...The challenge lured Scott Lee, the president of San Francisco-based SB Architects. "The more people me told me I shouldn't do, the more I wanted to"...Nothing about the unique project...was easy, inexpensive or fast...won LEED Platinum... [images]- USA Today

Oct. 3 Humanitarian design rises in MoMA's upcoming "Small Scale, Big Change": ...the latest in a string this year of museum shows to explore so-called humanitarian design...instead of splashy new skyscrapers or private villas concentrates on disaster relief, anti-poverty programs and affordable housing. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Alejandro Aravena; Diébédo Francis Kéré; Michael Maltzan; Rural Studio; Teddy Cruz; Cameron Sinclair/Architecture for Humanity; Bruce Nussbaum; Emily Pilloton/Project H Design- Los Angeles Times

MoMA Shines a Spotlight on Architecture of Social Ambition and Outreach: "Small Scale, Big Change" hopes to start a new dialogue in architecture...the notion of architecture tackling social issues is part of MoMA's institutional DNA. By John Gendall -- Michael Maltzan; Teddy Cruz; Rural Studio; Diébédo Francis Kéré; Frédéric Druot/Anne Lacaton/Jean Philippe Vassal; Urban-Think Tank; Noero Wolff; Public Architecture/The 1%; Open Architecture Network; urbaninform [images, links]- [AIArchitect](#)

Practical architecture: Making life easier: "Small Scale, Big Change" in New York provides simple, stylish ideas for improved living...[projects] share not only a desire to help a badly served community but also a sense of where architecture fits in...The result is a rousing display of ingenuity. -- Hashim Sarkis; Diébédo Francis Kéré; Jorge Mario Jáuregui; Frédéric Druot/Anne Lacaton/Jean Philippe Vassal; Elemental; Urban-Think Tank; Rural Studio/Auburn University; Michael Maltzan; Estudio Teddy Cruz; Noero Wolff; Anna Heringer [slide show]- [The Economist \(UK\)](#)

Architecture for the Poor: Museum of Modern Art's new exhibit, "Small Scale, Big Change" is exciting and invigorating...not only educates its audience about the ingenious work being done around the world to address pressing social issues. It also inspires -- or, maybe, challenges -- its audience...to be that mighty change we want to see in the world. -- Urban-Think Tank; Rural Studio; Anna Heringer; Elemental- [Huffington Post](#)

Modernist Triumph in the Kitchen: ...domestic gizmos — and more — are part of "Counter Space: Design and the Modern Kitchen"...But one design dominates the MoMA show. It's a Frankfurt Kitchen...Even if you've never seen one before, it will look familiar, or bits of it will, because it has influenced kitchen design ever since. By Alice Rawsthorn -- Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky [slide show]- [New York Times](#)

"Designing Tomorrow: America's World's Fairs of the 1930s": ...the first-ever exhibition to consider the impact of all six American world fairs of the depression era on the popularization of modern design and the creation of a modern consumer culture; National Building Museum, October 2 through July 10, 2011- [National Building Museum \(Washington, DC\)](#)

Anish Kapoor picks 'best site in London' for Sky Mirror sculptures: Sculptor brings his stainless steel pieces to Kensington Gardens for the capital's first outdoor installation of his work..."Art for the dogs and for the swans!" Hans Ulrich Obrist cried. "Art for all." [slide show]- [Guardian \(UK\)](#)

Reunification Renovations: A Massive Facelift for Eastern Germany: During a trip to East Germany in 1990, photographer Stefan Koppelkamm discovered buildings that had survived both the war and the construction mania of the East German authorities. Ten years later, he returned to photograph the buildings again. The comparison threw up some unexpected contrasts..."Orzeit Local Time. Photography 1990 - 2004" at the Museum for Communication in Berlin- [Der Spiegel \(Germany\)](#)

A City in Flux: Documenting Berlin's Forgotten Spaces: In the two decades since reunification, Berlin has been an enormous building site, but empty spaces still litter the city center. "Rest-Berlin"...a new book by the photographer Andreas Muhs highlights the forgotten corners of a city in perpetual transition. [slide show]- [Der Spiegel \(Germany\)](#)

Sky scraper: No one knows Chicago's buildings better than Blair Kamin: His new book, "Terror and Wonder: Architecture in a Tumultuous Age" collects his writing from nearly 20 years of work...We chatted with the critic via e-mail about everything from McDonald's to Mies.- [Time Out Chicago](#)

Nocturnal Modernity: When you think of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building (1954-58), Philip Johnson's Glass House (1949), or Louis Kahn's Kimbell Art Museum (1967-72), what similarities come to mind?...the lighting. ...Regarded as one of the first architectural lighting designers..."The Structure of Light: Richard Kelly and the Illumination of Modern Architecture" [images]- [Architizer](#)

"Louis Sullivan: The Struggle for American Architecture": A loving look at architecture: There are moments in Mark Richard Smith's documentary...that can only be described as "design porn"...In the same way that some "food" movies leave you hungry for a big meal, this one makes you want to visit an architectural landmark.- [Kansas City Star](#)

Vienna Design Week Highlights October 1 - 10: ...an exciting calendar of talks, exhibitions, parties, workshops and more. [images, links]- [Core77](#)

Earth's Most Stunning Natural Fractal Patterns: From sea shells and spiral galaxies to the structure of human lungs, the patterns of chaos are all around us. [slide show essay]- [Wired](#)



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

[Yesterday's News](#)

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