

Today's News - Wednesday, October 6, 2010

- India faces large shortage of architects (it's about 450,000 short).
- Women architects in Australia "batter out strategies" to close the gender gap, but "it turned into a '70s-style conscience-raising...it was incredibly valuable...but it didn't enable us to move things forward" (why are we not surprised).
- Hayeem continues his call for international architects to "take action to end illegal construction in the West Bank."
- Pieri calls for Malta to return to "old architecture principles...that architects and developers have sacrificed for unsustainable ways of building...the thought that Malta has 15 years of water left is frightening."
- An amusing look at an American "eco-geek's" first week at "Masdar's mothership": "it feels like I'm living in a psychology experiment."
- Wind farms can alter local temperatures; now the challenge is to figure out strategies to either mitigate or take advantage of the effects.
- Eco-groups find themselves on both sides of the fence re: Christo's "Over The River" project in Colorado.
- Bernstein on Gehry's Manhattan tower: it's almost ready for its close-up, but no two apartments are exactly the same, which "could be a headache for the building's rental agents."
- Britain's "bad-boy architect" (a.k.a. Alsop) weighs in on Toronto's streetscapes: he likes much of what he sees - except for some condo towers "that are highly undistinguished... there's little individuality and virtually none are done by any serious designer or architect" (ouch!).
- Peter Cook visits Brisbane and talks up "nooky corners" and the need for a bold group of thinkers a la Archigram: "I wish someone had the balls to do it."
- A British architect designs the Adobe Digital Art Museum (bricks and mortar not included).
- NASA is interested in young Czech architects' space projects.
- LaBarre cheers winners of Build a Better Burb competition that use "more than just bulldozers" in creating a sustainable suburb (link to great presentations, too).
- It's been a tough week for Corbu in his homeland (though he will remain on the Swiss 5-franc note).
- Good reasons to head to Syracuse and Rome, Italy, next week: one conference looks at the benefits of creating urbanity in weak-market cities; the other asks "What Ever Happened to Italian Architecture?"
- 79 firms land on the 2010 Best Firms To Work For list.
- Two we couldn't resist: an eyeful of art by some very notable names in architecture that go on the auction block today + Rockwell illustrates how to pack a playground in a box.

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India faces large shortage of architects: ...has only 50,000 registered architects as against the requirement of 500,000. Yet, there are few takers for this career...Students are more inclined to jobs, which enable them to earn right after college, say experts...Another factor is shortage of faculty. - Sify (India)

Mind the gap - the gender imbalance in architecture: There's a long way to go before women and men enjoy equal footing in architecture...men are advantaged by the informal promotion system..."It depends a lot on mentors...tend to be men...They tend to choose people who look like themselves and are like themselves." -- Sandra Kaji-O'Grady; Marion Mahony Griffin; Naomi Stead; Kerry Clare; Kerstin Thompson; Ninotchka Titchkosky/BVN Architecture; Hannah Tribe; Caroline Pidcock/Pidcock Architecture and Sustainability; Camilla Block/Durbach Block Architects - Sydney Morning Herald

Op-Ed: Architects against Israeli occupation: With the settlement freeze over, international architects must take action to end illegal construction in the West Bank...Architecture and planning are instruments of the occupation...it can be classified as participation in war crimes. By Abe Hayeem/Architects & Planners for Justice in Palestine -- Frank Gehry; Israeli Association of United Architects (IAUA); Moshe Safdie; Shlomo Aronson; International Union of Architects (UIA); Esther Zandberg - Guardian (UK)

Going back to old architecture principles: ...that architects and developers have sacrificed for unsustainable ways of building...said American architect Vincent Pieri...the architect of the new US embassy being constructed in Ta' Qali..."The thought that Malta has 15 years of water left is frightening"... -- Pieri + Associates Architects - Malta Independent

American "Eco-Geek's" First Week At The Masdar Institute...Masdar's Mothership: ...engineering student Laura Stupin..."it feels like I'm living in a psychology experiment. Every time I flip a light switch in the living room and the faucet in the bathroom starts running...I can't help looking over my shoulder and wondering if there's a scientist observing my behavior and reactions in this strange environment." -- Foster + Partners [images, links] - Green Prophet (Middle East)

Wind farms can cause change in local temperatures: The discovery could allow for strategies to mitigate those effects in areas where they are undesirable, or take advantage of them in others. - Gizmag (Australia)

Eco-groups line up on both sides of Christo project "Over The River": ...fighting a proposal from one of the world's most-revered artists can make even the most ardent wilderness lover feel conflicted...opposing scenarios have divided the ranks...torn between an artistic appreciation for Christo's grandiose projects and a drive to protect the natural environment. - Denver Post

New Gehry Tower Prepares for Renters: 8 Spruce Street [formerly Beekman Tower] is the tallest residential building in the city...what is important to him...isn't how the folds look but what they do to the interiors...no two exactly the same...potential renters may want to see dozens of units before selecting one...That could be a headache for the building's rental agents... By Fred A. Bernstein - New York Times

Will Alsop sees colour in Toronto: Britain's bad-boy architect weighs in on city's streetscapes...He feels the cultural renaissance has transformed the city for the better...While he applauds Toronto's efforts to build housing downtown, he thinks the city is making mistakes in its rapid condominium

development..."There's no real personality to them...."- CBC (Canada)

Peter Cook's tour of the daring city: Visiting architect talks up 'nooky corners', layers and overlays...says there is as much need now as there was in the 60s for a bold group of thinkers to create a group such as Archigram. "I wish someone had the balls to do it...There are lots of clever people in universities and they can make very smart ideas, but they don't come up with anything." - The Australian

Grand Opening: Adobe Digital Art Museum: For its new virtual museum, Adobe wanted more than a website designer: It wanted a forward-thinking architect who could make the space feel "physical." It turned to Filippo Innocenti, co-founder of Spin+ and an associate architect at Zaha Hadid Architects. [slide show]- Architectural Record

NASA interested in young Czech architects' space projects: ...focused on inflatable membrane structures and the use of robotics in architecture. -- Ondrej Doule; Tomas Rousek- Prague Daily Monitor

Creating a Sustainable Suburb (Using More Than Just Bulldozers): The results of the Build a Better Burb design competition...asked architects and designers to re-imagine Long Island as an economically and environmentally viable 21st century hub. By Suzanne LaBarre -- Park Office Architects/Network Architecture Lab; Meri Tepper/Ted Porter/Ted Sheridan/John Buckley; Denise Hoffman Brandt/Alexa Helsell/Bronwyn Gropp; etc. [images, link to all winners]- Fast Company

Nazi praise sparks Swiss rethink of Le Corbusier: ...Switzerland's largest bank dropped an ad campaign featuring the architect...Now, Zurich authorities are debating whether to dump plans to name a square after him...It's been a tough week for the artist born Charles-Edouard Jeanneret...- Associated Press (AP)

"Formerly Urban: Projecting Rust Belt Futures": A two-day conference on the benefits of creating urbanity in weak-market cities; keynote by Adriaan Geuze/West 8; October 13-14, 2010 @ Syracuse University School of Architecture- Syracuse University School of Architecture

Symposium: "What Ever Happened to Italian Architecture? Critical Positions on the Past, the Present, and the Future" October 15-16 at the Istituto Svizzero di Roma...a look at the last 60 years of Italian architecture...to debate future potentials. -- Alberto Alessi, Sandy Attia, Pippo Ciorra, Fabrizio Gallanti, Francesco Garofalo, Filip Geerts, Joseph Grima, Mark Lee, Elli Mosayebi, Matteo Scagnol, Paolo Scrivano, Martino Stierli, Pier Paolo Tamburelli, Mark Wasiut- The Depart Foundation / Istituto Svizzero di Roma (ISR)

2010 Best Firms To Work For: 79 firms, including 12 honorable mentions, were recognized for their efforts to create outstanding workplace environments; categories: architecture, civil engineering, structural engineering, multidiscipline A/E services, environmental service -- TowerPinkster; NAC|Architecture; Scott&Goble Architects- ZweigWhite

"Modern Views: Inspired by the Mies van der Rohe Farnsworth House and Philip Johnson's Glass House": an exhibition [and] book to be auctioned at Sotheby's New York on October 6...celebrated names in architecture, art, design and landscape architecture have been invited - under the curatorship of Paul Goldberger - to create and donate a work of art accompanied by a short statement that captures the essence of either or both houses. [slide show]- Wallpaper*

Op-Chart: Unpacking Imagination: In creating the Imagination Playground in Lower Manhattan...we realized that many of the elements with the greatest value to children were inexpensive and portable...boxed imagination playgrounds can be put together for under \$10,000. By David Rockwell [image]- New York Times



Steven Holl Architects: Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, UK: The new design complements its neighbor, but moves forward using a new language of light.

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