

Today's News - Tuesday, January 18, 2011

- Bevan on UTS going "utterly giddy" over Gehry, and why Sydney "needs to take a leaf from Melbourne's book and begin mulching local talent" so that "a thousand architectural flowers may bloom" (all "trophy architects" do is "design tall poppies").
- Lui on Chicago being the "likely birthplace for what could be the largest-ever smart-grid pilot program" and how smart grids "will directly impact architects' design strategies."
- Another pilot program hopes to get beyond measuring a building's energy-efficiency to quantifying how location affects its carbon footprint (commuters included).
- A look at a few British eco homes that are "both carbon neutral and architecturally outstanding" (ranging from a "nostalgic reproduction of an ancient British chieftain's hut" to something a Teletubby would love).
- Q&A with Architecture for Humanity's Sinclair re: the current state of Haiti, what countries are still in need, and ultimately what options there are for all of us to help, too.
- How six Harvard GSD grads are transforming the lives of 400,000 Rwandans - and many others - by questioning why the category of humanitarian architecture is even necessary: "The two terms should be synonymous. Because sound building practices can and should lead to social justice."
- A French architect is transforming the understanding of public green spaces in Vietnam.
- Developers in Thailand are digging the fact that landscape architecture adds value in a competitive property market, but face a shortage of talent as newly-graduated landscape architects gravitate to more lucrative foreign markets.
- The youngest member of the "Sarasota School" of Modernist architects finds the current state of architecture "very depressing at times. They are putting these old-fashioned Disney World light fixtures downtown with lousy, glaring light. Memory is great, but not nostalgia."
- An alternate take on how Ai Weiwei's Shanghai studio met its end (the official version, it seems).
- On the auction block tomorrow (and yours for £800-1,000): the world's first skyscraper design (yes, it seems the Brits "pipped the Americans" on designing tall).
- The 2011 Civic Trust Awards finalists announced - 57 strong.
- Call for entries: 2011 Landslide nominations for landscapes threatened with destruction or irreversible damage + 2011 FIGMENT Minigolf Course on Governors Island: "Bugs and Features" + SMPS 2011 National Marketing Communications Awards.

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Towering designs for harbour city: When Frank Gehry came to Sydney to present his draft ideas for the new business school at UTS...the university went utterly giddy...Sydney's fortunes may have changed...with not one but a firmament of starchitects...needs to take a leaf from Melbourne's book and begin mulching local talent with substantial commissions. Then a thousand architectural flowers may bloom. By Robert Bevan -- Denton Corker Marshall; Norman Foster; Jean Nouvel; Tzannes Associates; Tonkin Zulaikha Greer; Johnson Pilton Walker; William Smart; Koichi Takada; Christoph Ingenhoven; Richard Rogers; Kerry Hill; WOHA- The Australian

Smart Grid City: Chicago invented the skyscraper. Can it pioneer the best urban sustainable-energy strategies as well?...can't rely on new green construction. It has to look at existing building stock...Smart grids will directly impact architects' design strategies...Clients...will find that when linked to a smart grid, investing in good design will return not just in savings, but also in terms of income. By Ann Lok Lui -- PositivEnergy; Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Green builders find that location matters: Going beyond measuring a building's energy-efficiency, green builders are attempting to determine how much energy commuters use to reach that building. But quantifying how location affects carbon footprints has been a challenge. -- Center for Neighborhood Technology- Los Angeles Times

New homes: the future is green: With soaring energy costs, there's a big demand for 'eco' homes...whatever the size, until very recently, good design and low carbon have not sat together well with architects...we are on the brink of a house-design revolution. -- Glenn Howells; DSH Architects; Associated Architects; Mole Architects [images, links]- Telegraph (UK)

Inspired Nation: Architecture For Humanity on Haiti and Rebuilding The World: Q&A with Cameron Sinclair about how he grew AFH to what it is today, the current state of Haiti, what countries are still in need, and ultimately what options there are for all of us to help too.- CBS News

Social Design: Straight Out of School: Founded three years ago by six Harvard GSD students, MASS Design Group has transformed the lives of 400,000 Rwandans..."Why is the category of humanitarian architecture even necessary?...The two terms should be synonymous. Because sound building practices can and should lead to social justice." [images]- Metropolis Magazine

Community counts: Oliver Souquet...had been awarded several major projects in Vietnam including 1,200 hectares urban planning project in Gia Lam, Hanoi and a 25-hectare design project for Thu Thiem in Ho Chi Minh City...Unlike other Western architects, who may be strongly influenced by the French colonial buildings in Saigon, he gives priority to what he calls "ecology and identity values"- Thanh Nien News (Vietnam)

The great outdoors: Landscape architecture thrives on developers' demand to stand out in competitive property market: Despite increasing demand and recognition of landscape architecture, the number of landscape architects in Thailand remains small...graduates prefer to work abroad due to more attractive salaries. -- Root Design; Rafa Design Office- Bangkok Post

A half-century's perspective: Carl Abbott has seen many changes in architecture...the youngest member of the so-called "Sarasota school" of modernist architects..."Things are very depressing at times. They are putting these old-fashioned Disney World light fixtures downtown with lousy, glaring light. Memory is great, but not nostalgia." [images]- Herald- Tribune (Florida)

An Alternate Take on the Demolition of Ai Weiwei's Shanghai Studio: ...a decidedly different tale..."these accounts paint a very different picture than the narrative being presenting by our media...an example of sensationalist China reporting"...a rundown of Caijing's account of how [the] studio met its end.- UnBeige

World's first skyscraper design up for auction: While the debate continues as to whether the world's first skyscraper was the Home Insurance Building built in Chicago in 1885, or New York's Equitable Life Assurance Building built in 1870, it seems that the British pipped the Americans to the post in terms of a design...Charles Burton designed a 1,000 foot high metal and glass building in response to a call to redesign The Crystal Palace- Gizmag (Australia)

2011 Civic Trust Awards Finalists Announced: From 333 national and international entries, 57 projects have been successful...- Civic Trust Awards (UK)

Call for entries: 2011 Landslide: "The Landscape I Love" Honoring Great Landscapes & Their Advocates and Issues Call for Nominations for landscapes and landscape features threatened with destruction or irreversible damage; deadline: March 31- The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF)

Call for entries/proposals: 2011 FIGMENT Minigolf Course on Governors Island: "Bugs and Features"; registration deadline: February 15- FIGMENT / Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC)

Call for entries: SMPS 2011 National Marketing Communications Awards for excellence in marketing communications by professional services firms in the design and building industry; deadline: March 7- Society for Marketing Professional Services (SMPS)

Book Review: How New Urbanism's Case Triumphs Best Through "The Language of Towns & Cities: A Visual Dictionary" by Dhiru A. Thadani: His oversized reference charms, infuriates, and enlightens. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow



-- Diller Scofidio + Renfro: The Broad, Los Angeles

-- Travel: New Orleans: Soniat House, The French Quarter + "Architecture in Times of Need: Make it Right - Rebuilding the New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward"

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