

Today's News - Thursday, February 3, 2011

- A call for architects to "overcome negative public perceptions about their profession if they are to persuade people that 'having a good architect is as basic as damp-proofing.'"
- Perhaps part of the problem is the way they talk: Rybczynski offers a (hilarious) essay on archi-babble: "When in doubt, add '-ity.' Or '-ology.'" (your must-read for the day).
- Viñoly's new medical research building for UC San Francisco is "at once sharp and lithe, rational and poetic, industrial and organic" - and the city's "most exciting" building in a long time.
- Mecanoo offers a lengthy fly-through video of its controversial Birmingham Library project (book mall as new building type, perhaps?).
- Long has a long conversation with Chipperfield a week prior to his receiving the Royal Gold Medal: "his acceptance into the ranks of the elite does not seem to have diminished his desire to hold up a mirror to the failings of British architectural culture" (meaning he minces no words).
- An architect launches Project Neon to document and encourage appreciation of things that make New York glow (great slide show!).
- Brussat wants us all to watch Scruton's "What is beauty?" on BBC: "To watch it is to luxuriate in pure truth."
- Iovine finds Wines wincing at others using his (not winning) submission descriptions for Mumbai's billion-dollar tower: "We really don't want to be associated with this level of economic obscenity."
- Soaring temperatures (at 133 F - fried eggs included) in Brisbane square "have seen the designers burned by critics" (go to a park if you want shade, designer says; bah humbug to that attitude say we).
- Call for entries: EPA seeks green infrastructure case studies from architects and landscape architects in preparing storm water rules + 2011 Burnham Prize Competition: "McCormick Place REDUX" international ideas competition.

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Architects 'a basic need': Architects told that they need to overcome negative public perceptions about their profession if they are to persuade people that "having a good architect is as basic as damp-proofing." -- Shane O'Toole - Irish Times

A Discourse on Emerging Tectonic Visualization and the Effects of Materiality on Praxis: Or an essay on the ridiculous way architects talk...When in doubt, add "-ity." Or "-ology." By Witold Rybczynski - Slate

Crit> Dolby Regeneration Medicine Building: An unpromising site brings out the best in architect Rafael Viñoly...at the back of the University of California, San Francisco...at once sharp and lithe, rational and poetic, industrial and organic—an appropriately futuristic home for the cutting edge of research... [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Mecanoo unveils Birmingham Library fly-through: New video shows the controversial project as it will look once completed...now in its second year of construction, remains on schedule and within budget. [images, video]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Building rebellion with David Chipperfield: Architecture isn't radical. It can never be radical. "It takes seven years and £23 million to build something. There's no revolutionary potential in there"...he will receive British architecture's highest honour, the Royal Gold Medal...does not seem to have diminished his desire to hold up a mirror to the failings of British architectural culture. By Kieran Long - Evening Standard (UK)

Project Neon: Architect and designer Kirsten Hively describes her effort to seek out, document and encourage appreciation of the best neon in New York and shares her photography of the city's glow. [slide show]- Urban Omnibus

Roger Scruton: What is beauty? I commend...six ten-minute videos that make up a television program from BBC hosted by the philosopher...who summarizes his thoughts on beauty as it relates to art, architecture...It is simple yet profound, or rather profound because it is simple...To watch it is to luxuriate in pure truth. By David Brussat [links]- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Towering Insult in Mumbai: Architect wants nothing to do with billion-dollar Antilia Tower...reports...casting its Vaastu principles...and living walls as a modern-day Hanging Gardens of Babylon...James Wines of SITE is not amused...lifted directly, he says, from descriptions of a project he entered into the original competition... By Julie V. Iovine -- Ken Yeang; Foster + Partners; Wilkinson Eyre; Perkins+Will - The Architect's Newspaper

Heat wave burns Brisbane's King George Square designers: Soaring temperatures reaching 56.3 degrees [133 F!]...have seen the designers burned by critics...for failing to provide enough shade..."If someone is looking for a shady oasis they should go to Roma Street Parkland"... -- Urbis - Architecture & Design (Australia)

EPA Stormwater Rulemaking: Submit your green infrastructure case studies: Demonstrate to the Environmental Protection Agency that green infrastructure is a highly-effective and cost-efficient approach to improving the quality of the water supply; deadline: March 31- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Call for entries: 2011 Burnham Prize Competition: "McCormick Place REDUX" international single-stage ideas competition; cash prizes; registration deadline: March 15- Chicago Architectural Club

Book Review: "Visual Planning and the Picturesque" by Nikolaus Pevsner. Edited by Mathew Aitchison: A rediscovered manuscript unveils a portrait of the famed architectural historian as neglected urban designer. His commitment to the picturesque aesthetic for buildings and towns is as urgently needed as ever. By Norman Weinstein - ArchNewsNow

Designers of the Year: Q&A with Verda Alexander and Primo Orpilla of Studio O+A: Today Contract magazine named Verda Alexander and Primo Orpilla of San Francisco's Studio O+A Designers of the Year. We asked them about their experiences during the high and low points of the dot-com era and the ways high-tech continues to influence office design today.- ArchNewsNow

-- BIG-Bjarke Ingels Group: Waste-to-Energy Plant, Copenhagen, Denmark
-- MVRDV: Balancing Barn, Suffolk, UK

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