

## Today's News - Thursday, February 10, 2011

- Ouroussoff veritably oozes high praise for Gehry's Manhattan tower, "the finest skyscraper to rise in New York" since Saarinen's 1965 Black Rock for CBS (except at street level).
- Kamin, on the other hand, is dismayed by plans to rehab a 1940s Chicago "retail gem" into "an architectural non-entity - tasteful but forgettable...a classic case of a developer dumbing-down Chicago's visual IQ."
- Hume says "British bad-boy architect" Alsop's design for a Toronto subway station "offers a compelling case that the lowly subway station needn't be so lowly" (even though it "looks strangely post-apocalyptic" evoking "a romantic sense of ruin" in a "bizarre mix of mass transit and empty fields" - dreams of density?).
- Brussat is (somewhat humorously) brutal about DS+R's Granoff Creative Arts Center at Brown University: it's "an architectural cliché - a thingamajig - with the sort of energetic flippancy," but at least it's "not boring, unlike most new modern architecture inflicted upon Providence in recent years."
- NYC picks the team for the city's largest affordable housing complex since the 1970s (housing for 5,000 - waterfront park included).
- Litt cheers Cleveland's Group Plan Commission call for "parity for pedestrians" around the city's Public Square and the Mall with recommendations that "embody the idea that civic beauty could be an economic development tool for a shrinking Great Lakes metropolis trying to turn itself around."
- Lubell lauds LAUSD commissioning local talent to come up with innovative prefab prototypes for future Los Angeles schools.
- We've run a few items about Tasmania's newest (mostly subterranean) art museum in Hobart - finally some pix!
- LEED lawsuit no longer a class-action suit; plaintiffs are now professionals who claim they are "losing customers because USGBC's false advertisements mislead the consumer."
- Court clears the way for Camden, NJ, to raze historic Sears building: it's "a blow to activists," but "the fight's not over."
- Forbes annual America's Most Miserable Cities finds "California has never looked less golden" (some cities take issue with the findings).
- Call for entries: Balance Your Digital Diet: tackle society's ever-increasing addiction to technology (big prize \$\$ - and Antonelli just joined the jury) + Deadline draws near for ASLA Professional Awards.

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Downtown Skyscraper for the Digital Age: 8 Spruce Street (formerly Beekman Tower)...the finest skyscraper to rise in New York since Eero Saarinen's CBS building went up 46 years ago...seems to crystallize a particular moment in cultural history, in this case the turning point from the modern to the digital age. By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- Frank Gehry [slide show]- New York Times

Making State Street 'timeless' - and meaningless; planned rehab of 1940s retail gem...No one is making much of a fuss...So I'll make one...its impending demise presents a small but significant example of a developer stripping a city of its history...an architectural non-entity — tasteful but forgettable. Goodbye, bracing history. Hello, bland consistency. This is a classic case of a developer dumbing-down Chicago's visual IQ. By Blair Kamin -- Holabird, Root & Burgee (1948); DePalma Group [images]- Chicago Tribune

New subway station could be major stop on the road to Toronto's future: If architecture could solve the problems of transit...the spectacular Steeles West station would be the answer...looks strangely post-apocalyptic...end-of-times esthetic may be just the thing for a transit system that hovers perpetually on the verge of oblivion. By Christopher Hume -- Will Alsop; Stevens Group Architects [images]- Toronto Star

The Darth Vader Creative Arts Center: ...Brown University's new Perry & Marty Granoff Creative Arts Center...Diller Scofidio + Renfro have produced an architectural cliché - a thingamajig - with the sort of energetic flippancy that has vaulted the New York firm into the celestial reaches of starchitecture...At least the GCAC is not boring, unlike most new modern architecture inflicted upon Providence in recent years. By David Brussat [images]- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Team chosen for huge affordable housing project: ...on a 30-acre waterfront parcel in Long Island City, Queens...once envisioned as home to an Olympic Village for the 2012 games...Hunter's Point South...the city's largest affordable housing complex since the 1970s...will provide new homes for 5,000 New York City families... -- SHoP Architects; Ismael Leyva Architects [images]- Crain's New York

Cleveland's Group Plan Commission calls for big changes around Public Square and the Mall: Traffic engineers have called the shots for decades...commission wants parity for pedestrians...recommendations embody the idea that civic beauty could be an economic development tool for a shrinking Great Lakes metropolis trying to turn itself around. By Steven Litt -- LMN Architects; Gustafson Guthrie Nichol [images]- Cleveland Plain Dealer

Back To School in Los Angeles: LAUSD Wakes Up; Commissions Innovative Prefab Prototypes For Future Building. Better late than never...largely prefabricated, kit-of-parts schemes from local firms...which can be built quickly, cheaply, and en masse...will be flexible, sustainable, and easy to maintain. By Sam Lubell -- Hodgetts+Fung; Swift Lee Office (SLO); Gonzalez Goodale [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

MONA, Tasmania's newest art museum: The latest addition to David Walsh's art empire...Museum of Old and New Art in Hobart... -- Fender Katsalidis [images]- Australian Design Review

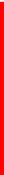
New Plaintiffs Join Amended LEED Lawsuit: ...has been boiled down to a claim of false advertising, and is no longer a class-action suit...It claims that...professionals are..."losing customers because USGBC's false advertisements mislead the consumer"... -- Henry Gifford - BuildingGreen.com

Judge rules landmark Camden building may be razed: ...officials can move ahead with a plan to take ownership of a landmark former Sears building, then raze it to make way for an office park being developed by the Campbell Soup Co...a blow to activists who have been trying for years to keep the building up — even coming up with an alternate plan to give it a new life...the fight's not over. (AP)- Bloomberg News

America's Most Miserable Cities: California has never looked less golden, with eight of its cities making the top 20 on our annual list. [slide show]- Forbes

Call for entries: Balance Your Digital Diet: tackle society's ever-increasing addiction to technology; winning team of three may take home as much as \$40,000; registration deadline: February 13- Yoxi

Deadline reminder: Call for entries: ASLA Professional Awards; deadline: February 25- American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)



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