

Today's News - Wednesday, March 9, 2011

- Two from the U.K. (with lessons for us all?): Moss digs deep into the wave of wanting to demolish perfectly stable mid-century housing estates and why so many regeneration plans are unraveling: is it "the welcome end of a misguided experiment? Or is it the push for regeneration that is flawed?" (he even tracks down the architect of the Heygate estate - a great read).
- Meanwhile, Britain's housing minister "urges communities to take advantage of bigger say in developments" if they don't want "Legoland" estates: that "might drive architects out of their complacency" (more likely the developers who need a shaking up).
- A great Q&A with Jaime Lerner re: some of his current projects and some sage advice: "If you want creativity, cut one zero from your budget. If you want sustainability, cut two zeroes from your budget."
- Harrington says there might be "10 amazing established and up-and-coming architecture firms" designing BOOM!, the LGBT retirement community in Palm Springs, but it's the "plugged-in seniors" in an online community who "will inform how the master plan develops" (and creating "a new field: information master planning").
- A residential development in Mexico is inspired by architects' work in the 1990s that "represent the first examples of 'negotiation' between the restrictions based on local tradition and the desire for contemporary, cosmopolitan architecture."
- Kamin cheers the arrival of "Light Sabers" on University of Chicago campus that are a "model for how lighting can change our perceptions of a moribund urban zone and bring it new life."
- Rinaldi riffs on the arrival of dozens of 7-Eleven stores in Colorado and how they fit into the local landscapes, now that they tend to move into existing architecture instead of building new.
- The campaign continues to save parts of Corbu's Chandigarh from landing on foreign auction blocks.
- An eyeful of Höweler + Yoon's vision for BSA's new HQ on the Boston waterfront.
- A California architect has a big idea for living small: an Airstream trailer as live/work space. "Location: Roaming, currently Santa Barbara" (great pix!).
- Lasky offers a most lively (and amusing) report from Design Indaba 2011 in Cape Town, where the city itself seems to be "high on design."
- An even more humorous take on de Monchaux's "Seven architectural embarrassments" lecture at Yale.
- Edinburgh and London named second and third most family-friendly cities in Europe - after Florence (a few real surprises in this Top 10 list).
- Eyefuls of eVolo's 2011 Skyscraper Competition winners (great presentations!).
- Call for entries: Baldwin 2011 Hardware Design Competition (become part of the collection).

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The death of a housing ideal: Is the demolition of the Heygate estate in south London the welcome end of a misguided experiment? Or is it the push for regeneration that is flawed? ... "Because there's nothing wrong with the buildings, they have to find an excuse to regenerate the place, ie knock it down and replace it"... Naturally, the man who designed the Heygate, Tim Tinker, disagrees with... assertion that the estate is obsolete after less than 40 years. By Stephen Moss -- Owen Hatherley; Alison and Peter Smithson; Rowan Moore - Guardian (UK)

Fed up of 'Legoland' estates? Then reject plans, says housing minister: Grant Shapps praises conservative housebuilders and urges communities to take advantage of bigger say in developments... ministers hope that the concept of neighbourhood plans, designed and voted on by communities themselves, might drive architects out of their complacency. - Guardian (UK)

Interview with Jaime Lerner: "If you want creativity, cut one zero from your budget. If you want sustainability, cut two zeroes from your budget. And if you want solidarity, assume your identity and respect others' diversity... These relate to three key issues in cities: mobility, sustainability, and tolerance (or social diversity)." [images] - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

A Virtual Community That's Defining the Future of a Physical One: New tools are allowing plugged-in seniors to craft their own retirement community... BOOM! LGBT retirement community in Palm Springs... The online community will inform how the master plan develops... a new field: information master planning. By Paddy Harrington/Bruce Mau Design -- HWKN [images, links] - Fast Company

Residential complex in Mexico: By redefining the relationship between public and private spheres, Santa Maria, Valle de Bravo is based on the combination of spaces both intimate and open... represent the first examples of "negotiation" between the restrictions based on local tradition and the desire for contemporary, cosmopolitan architecture. -- Alberto Kalach; TEN Arquitectos; BGP (1990s); Herve-Diseñeria [images] - Domus

Right out of 'Star Wars,' a new way to light a path at U. of C.; 40-foot-tall light masts inspired by Olmsted's vision for the Midway: ... neither a precious work of public art nor a nuts-and-bolts piece of infrastructure, but an enlightened combination of the two... model for how lighting can change our perceptions of a moribund urban zone and bring it new life. By Blair Kamin -- James Carpenter; BauerLatoza; Schuler Shook [images, video link] - Chicago Tribune

The architecture of convenience: With 24 new Colorado stores in two years, the successful 7-Eleven chain is more ubiquitous than ever. But how do the shops fit into the local landscape? ... what sets one new store apart from the next is more reliant on existing architecture, due to the chain's recent practice... of occupying existing buildings rather than constructing new ones. By Ray Mark Rinaldi [images] - Denver Post

Le Corbusier's Indian masterpiece Chandigarh is stripped for parts: Group rallies to rescue city built as monument to modernity from neglect and plunder... Campaigners hope that with international support the auctions can be halted until new laws are passed. -- Manmohan Nath Sharma; Rajnish Wattas - Guardian (UK)

Höweler + Yoon Tapped for Boston Society of Architects Headquarters: ... two-story space the BSA is renting in a new waterfront tower... iconic element... Slipstream Public Exchange, is a green steel stairway that extends from the ground level up a wall and onto the ceiling of the second floor, and incorporates an LED sign band that broadcasts information. [slide show] - Architectural Record

Matthew Hofmann remodels Airstream into live-work space: Project goal: To live in a small space. Location: Roaming, currently Santa Barbara. -- Hofmann Architecture [images] - Los Angeles Times

Design Indaba 2011: Social change was the informal theme of this Indaba. Even commerce had a warm, fuzzy feeling... Cape Town not just cheerful... but even high on design. Little wonder that the city is bidding to be World Design Capital 2014... you can't pick up a bottle of beer... without finding a label worthy of presentation at a prestigious international design conference. By Julie Lasky -- Francis Kéré; Dror Benshetrit/QuaDror; Droog; etc. [images, links] - Change Observer

The Architecture of Embarrassment: New York-based architect and writer Thomas de Monchaux with his "Seven architectural embarrassments" lecture at Yale University... claims that by airing architecture's biggest embarrassments they become a "source of extraordinary strength in that they illuminate what [architects] are afraid of." - BD/Building Design (UK)

Edinburgh and London named second and third most family-friendly cities in Europe: The Scottish and English capitals trailed behind the Tuscany city of Florence... - Daily Mail (UK)

2011 Skyscraper Competition Winners: Jury selected 3 winners and 32 honorable mentions [from] 715 projects from all five continents and 95 different countries. -- Atelier CMJN (Julien Combes/Gaël Brulé); Yoann Mescam/Paul-Eric Schirr-Bonnans/Xavier Schirr-Bonnans; Yheu-Shen Chua [images] - eVolo Magazine

Call for entries: 2011 Hardware Design Competition: an opportunity to have your namesake as a Baldwin collection to launch in early 2012 (U.S. residents); deadline: April 10 - Baldwin Hardware



Ryue Nishizawa: Teshima Art Museum, Teshima Island, Seto Inland Sea, Japan

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