

## Today's News - Tuesday, May 31, 2011

- ArcSpace brings us more on Snøhetta's SFMOMA, and some remarkable photos of Brasilia.
- King has high hopes for SFMOMA plans: "It's imaginative and utterly unexpected, provocative and urbane" - it's also "a gamble," but one "that could pay off big time" (with a not-so-kind swipe at local talent).
- Hawthorne x 2: he's much less sanguine about SFMOMA - and other museums' lofty plans: it may be "a boom for contemporary architects," but "never have museums been so dismissive of architecture's civic or historic value."
- He's only slightly more optimistic about revived plans for a mega-project surrounding L.A.'s iconic Capitol Records building: at this point, it's success or failure "depends on fuzzy details."
- KPMB's design for the new Art Gallery of Saskatchewan gets (mostly) thumbs-up's (and we just heard naming rights for the right amount could be in play).
- An eyeeful of FXFOWLE's Museum of the Built Environment in Saudi Arabia that "aims to explore the role that social, economic, and environmental forces have played in the region's constructed landscape."
- Rogers and Harbour defend their Barangaroo vision for Sydney Harbor.
- Gunts explains big plans on the horizon for Baltimore re: a \$900 million convention center expansion and arena + new visions for Inner Harbor.
- Rochon rails against Toronto's literal (and figurative) gridlock: "we have to unpark our brains, invest in transit and get this city moving"; unfortunately, "urban visionaries" with "remarkable urban intuition" are "a scarce commodity in Canada."
- An in-depth look at PlaNYC's brownfield program: as in other cities, "some question how much they actually serve low-income communities in the long-term."
- Austin Williams takes on de Botton's Living Architecture, calling it "his personal therapy session to exorcise his childhood torment by recreating the modern architecture of his memories" that only "creates interesting, well-designed but self-regarding follies."
- Lamster sings high praise for the "unsung genius of Flemish architecture": it "should not be underestimated, though it usually is" (and surely to tick of NJ: Belgium doesn't deserve being called "the New Jersey of Europe").
- The fate of Goldberg's Prentice Women's Hospital in Chicago could be sealed by tomorrow: Roeder finds Jahn, Gang, and Keegan anxious to save it, and Goldberg's architect son wondering when does the city's "can do" attitude become "don't care."
- Kamin minces no words: the lack of engagement of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks "is reprehensible" given the building meets standards for landmark status.
- He also ventures to the "secret city" of Oak Ridge, where the "drive to build the atomic bomb (and planners from Chicago) shaped this city in Tennessee" (and no, Virginia, your toes won't glow if you stick them in the brook).
- Pogrebin offers a sneak-peek (great pix!) of the soon-to-open second leg of NYC's High Line that "promises to be the summer's biggest sequel" (we can't wait!).
- Last year, Moscow's Strelka Institute was the top "hipster hangout"; this summer's programs promise more "responsible fun" with some big names (though you'll still be able to "have a night out without necessarily having to use your brain").
- A bumper crop of AIA Small Project Award winners demonstrates architects' ability to bring design excellence to the humblest of projects.

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-- Expansion: Snøhetta: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA)  
-- The Camera: Duccio Malagamba: Brasilia -- Lucio Costa; Oscar Niemeyer

SFMOMA: Snøhetta's designs spin magic from angles: It's imaginative and utterly unexpected, provocative and urbane, keeping a low profile even as it turns the city grid inside-out...is very much a work in progress...has shown there's an inventive way to double the size of San Francisco Museum of Modern Art with both artistic flair and ground-level smarts. John King -- Mario Botta (1995) [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

When it comes to architecture, museums forsake the past: Institutions including SFMOMA, the Whitney, the Barnes Foundation and MoMA plan various additions and exits, a boom for contemporary architects but a bust for architectural history...Never have museums been so eager to hire talented architects...And never have museums been so dismissive of architecture's civic or historic value. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Renzo Piano; Marcel Breuer (1966); Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Diller, Scofidio + Renfro; Snøhetta - Los Angeles Times

Hollywood landmark at a crossroads: New York developers are reviving plans to surround the Capitol Records building with a mixed-use project covering 1 million square feet. Whether Millennium Hollywood would enhance or detract from the iconic structure depends on fuzzy details. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Welton Becket/Louis Naidorf (1956); Gary Handel/Handel Architects; William Roschen/Roschen Van Cleve Architects [image]- Los Angeles Times

Reaction mixed to first look at \$84M Art Gallery of Saskatchewan: ...a prototype for the modern gallery: An art institution that is also a popular social space...modernist design is meant to fit into, not dominate, its surroundings... -- Bruce Kuwabara/Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg/KPMB Architects; Smith Carter Architects [image]- Saskatoon Star-Phoenix (Canada)

AR Exclusive: FXFOWLE Unveils Design for Museum of the Built Environment in Saudi Arabia: ..340,000-square-foot museum aims to explore the role that social, economic, and environmental forces have played in the region's constructed landscape, both historically and in recent times. [slide show]- Architectural Record

Richard Rogers, Barangaroo architect, defends his vision: The argument that Sydney does not need another green headland on the harbour alongside the new financial services industry high-rise

hub...has stumped the project's lead architect...Ivan Harbour...whose design was selected for the project - noted it was the heritage Walsh Bay wharves nearby that helped shape the practice's plan. -- Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners- Sydney Morning Herald

Proposed downtown arena gets private financing commitment: Construction magnate Willard Hackerman pledges to lead group to raise funds for new hotel and 18,500-seat arena...significantly increasing the chances that plans for a \$900 million convention center expansion and arena will become a reality + Walking bridge, light shows, park proposed for Inner Harbor. By Edward Gunts -- Ayers Saint Gross [images, links]- Baltimore Sun

Toronto's gridlock is never going to be beautiful: If Torontonians truly want grace in our public space, we have to unpark our brains, invest in transit and get this city moving...Beauty in a city has as much to do with ease of transportation as it does with the aesthetics of a particular building...Urban visionaries are a scarce commodity in Canada. By Lisa Rochon -- Janette Sadik-Khan; Lee Myung-bak- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Shades of Brown: PlaNYC Brownfield Program Cleans Sites, But Who Benefits? ...as brownfield programs in other parts of the country come to fruition, some question how much they actually serve low-income communities in the long-term...a close look at these initial projects begins to reveal some tarnish. [links]- Gotham Gazette (NYC)

Exploring the architecture of Alain de Botton: Living Architecture is his personal therapy session to exorcise his childhood torment by recreating the modern architecture of his memories...Unfortunately, therapeutic architecture is not the real thing...creates interesting, well-designed but self-regarding follies... By Austin Williams -- JVA; MDRDV; NORD Architects; Hopkins; Peter Zumthor; David Kohn Architects- Future Cities Project (U.K.)

The Unsung Genius of Flemish Architecture: The old knock on Belgium is that it's the New Jersey of Europe...Flemish architecture is...fundamentally solid, creative when the situation requires (but never flashy), and respectful to a fault...it should not be underestimated, though it usually is. By Mark Lamster -- Stephane Beel; Jo Crepain; Robbrecht & Daem; Xaveer de Geyter; B-Architecten; Barak; Nu Studio; Vincent van Duysen; Neutlings-Riedijk [images, links]- Design Observer

Prentice Women's Hospital: Landmark or teardown? Northwestern University, wants to tear the structure down in the name of higher uses for its medical school...Geoff Goldberg, an architect and son of Bertrand Goldberg, said..."This would be a signal to the creative community," he said. "Does 'can do' become 'don't care'?"- Chicago Sun-Times

Old Prentice Women's Hospital is on life support; where is the Commission on Chicago Landmarks? As the clock ticks down to Wednesday's end of the 60-day reprieve...one voice is embarrassingly absent from the debate over whether this significant building should be saved...This lack of engagement is reprehensible given that [it] meets at least three of the standards...to qualify for city landmark status. By Blair Kamin -- Bertrand Goldberg (1975) [image]- Chicago Tribune

Visiting the 'secret city' of Oak Ridge: The drive to build the atomic bomb (and planners from Chicago) shaped this city in Tennessee...was once home to 75,000 people, yet it did not appear on any map...Nearly 66 years later, Oak Ridge is getting ready to celebrate its heritage - and to party a little, too. By Blair Kamin -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)- Chicago Tribune

High Line: the Sequel: Coming soon: the grand opening of Section 2 of the High Line, the elevated park along the Hudson River that drew two million people last year. By Robin Pogrebin -- James Corner Field Operations; Diller Scofidio + Renfro [slide show]- New York Times

Summer at Strelka Offers 'Responsible Fun': Last year, the program shot the Strelka Institute for Media, Architecture and Design to the top of Moscow's hipster hangouts but this year promises more "responsible fun" and less pure entertainment...luckily you can still have a night out...without necessarily having to use your brain. -- Yekaterina Girshina; Alejandro Aravena; Joseph Grima; Kazuyo Sejima- The Moscow Times (Russia)

With 8th Annual Small Project Practitioners Design Awards Awards, Architects Show Resourcefulness in Finding Small Places for Design: ...the latest crop of SPP award recipients is a bumper one, demonstrating architects' ability to bring design excellence to the humblest of projects. -- Plus One Design + Construction; Revelations Architects/Builders Corporation; Macrae Gibson Architects; Johnsen Schmalig Architects; David Jameson Architect; Jeffery S. Poss, FAIA; David Salmela, FAIA; Robert Maschke Architects [slide show]- AIArchitect

Book Review: Wake-up Calls for Color-Challenged Architects: Two recent books point the way to advanced imaginings of color: "Light Color Sound: Sensory Effects in Contemporary Architecture" by Alejandro Bahamon and Ana Maria Alvarez, and "Color Moves: Art & Fashion by Sonia Delaunay" edited by Matilda McQuaid and Susan Brown. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow



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