

## Today's News - Wednesday, August 31, 2011

- We lose an architect and engineer who "helped persuade reluctant St. Louis civic leaders to build the Gateway Arch" and an "outspoken foe of St. Louis dowdiness."
- A look at how terrorist attacks changed architecture even before 9/11 (surely not the last we'll see as September 11's 10th anniversary approaches).
- King discovers Walker "prefers to discuss the details" about the 9/11 Memorial: "The true measure won't be calculating who did what. The space will succeed if it becomes an essential part of the city."
- Glancey x 2: Dictators and bunkers: "Who, except the most paranoid or terrified, would think of locking themselves away...in a nightmare such as this?" (a fascinating read!)
- His review of the week includes Kate Moss's big basement plans (must have been a slow week), possible new towers, FLW + Lego, and in Scotland, "a modest proposal has gone down so well that it might become a design template for a whole region."
- Kamin climbs Gehry's new NYC tower and finds it "may be the most delicious piece of eye candy to hit the Manhattan skyline since the Chrysler Building" that "manages to be playful without being foolish" (he likes the interiors, too).
- Merrick climbs Wilkinson Eyre's Guangzhou tower and finds "something rare": it's big "in a way that makes it possible to think of searing verticality in terms of an almost chaste elegance of surface and outline. No penile dementia here."
- Saudi Arabia's Kingdom Tower is "designed to imitate the contours of a sprouting desert plant. Adrian Smith's task is to make sure it doesn't sway in the wind like one."
- An interesting look at the pros and cons of cargo container architecture (it's not as green as one might think).
- The romance is over between European-based Passivhaus Institute Ends and Passive House Institute US (some confusion could ensue).
- Moore gives (mostly) thumbs-up to "All Over the Map" by Sorkin, "America's most invigorating writer on architecture" (though for those "unversed in current architectural jargon" it might require "some judicious skipping over the muddier parts").
- A most lively profile of RIBA's incoming president Angela Brady, an Irish woman who is a "dynamo of energy in frosted lipstick" and "a powerbroker in her field" (with a good sense of humor, it seems).
- Inform Magazine names former executive editor of AIArchitect, Douglas E. Gordon, as editor-in-chief (bravo!).
- Eric Owen Moss to receive 2011 Jencks Award for his major international contributions to the theory and practice of architecture.
- Shortlist announced for Scotland's oldest award for housing design; the most refreshing news: almost half are affordable housing or regeneration initiatives.
- Winners of the 2011 AL Light & Architecture Design Awards are a "testament to the critical role that lighting plays in completing architecture" (great presentation).
- We couldn't resist another installment of "Architects' desks" - this time, Robert Adam: "No time to make it look good. I know they say a tidy desk is a tidy mind but perhaps it's also a not-much-else-to-do mind" (our sentiment exactly!).
- Call for entries: World's Coolest Offices 2011 + Ceramics of Italy Exhibit Design Challenge.

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Obituary: Joseph Passonneau, 90: ...was dean of Washington University's School of Architecture (now part of the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts), he helped persuade reluctant St. Louis civic leaders to build the Gateway Arch...an "outspoken foe of St. Louis dowdiness." - St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Terrorist attacks had changed architecture even before 9/11: Did the destruction of the World Trade Center 10 years ago spark a sea change in architectural design with safety and security in mind? No. That spark was lit years before. -- Barbara Nadel; Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill (SOM); G. Martin Moeller/National Building Museum - Miami Herald

Peter Walker of PWP Landscape Architecture talks of 9/11 memorial work: ...the journey...has been bumpy at best...[he] prefers to discuss the details...The true measure of the Sept. 11 memorial won't be calculating who did what. The space will succeed if it becomes an essential part of the city - and an embodiment of emotions more powerfully sublime. By John King -- Michael Arad - San Francisco Chronicle

Dictators and their bunkers: Gaddafi, Hitler, Saddam ... no self-respecting dictator can bear to be without a bunker...deep below the caboodle of kitsch on ground level, is what makes Bab al-Azizia so deeply unsplendid...Carp...a national historic site of Canada...a mesmerising lesson from the school of bunker design and thinking...The Neasden bunker -- pointless, horrid and pathetic, although intensely fascinating -- sums up the sorry world of the bunker. Who, except the most paranoid or terrified, would think of locking themselves away...in a nightmare such as this? By Jonathan Glancey - Guardian (UK)

Constructive criticism: the week in architecture: A mix of models and houses this week ... with Kate Moss's big basement plans...while you can make your own Frank Lloyd Wright house with a little help from Lego...Up in Scotland, a modest proposal has gone down so well that it might become a design template for a whole region. By Jonathan Glancey -- Rogers Stirk Harbour; Make architects; Bowker Sadler Partnership; Konishi Gaffney architects - Guardian (UK)

Frank Gehry's rollicking tower: ...8 Spruce Street apartment tower may be the most delicious piece of eye candy to hit the Manhattan skyline since the Chrysler Building...manages to be playful without being foolish...what matters most...is the magic it works on New York's celebrated skyline...sets a towering yet playfully humanistic standard. By Blair Kamin [images] - Chicago Tribune

Guangzhou tower: The sky's the limit: It's the ninth tallest building in the world, with 400ft on The Shard and room for the dome of St Paul's in its atrium...something rare: it has gone big -- very big -- in a way that makes it possible to think of searing verticality in terms of an almost chaste elegance of surface and outline. No penile dementia here. By Jay Merrick -- Wilkinson Eyre; Arup - Independent (UK)

Saudi Skyscraper Architect Grapples With Wind at 3,000 Feet: Kingdom Tower...project to erect the world's tallest building in Jeddah, is designed to imitate the contours of a sprouting desert plant. Adrian Smith's task is to make sure it doesn't sway in the wind like one..."Each building that gets designed and built in the super-tall tower range adds about 10% to the whole base of knowledge for all architects out there"... -- Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM); Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture [images] - Bloomberg News

The Pros and Cons of Cargo Container Architecture: ...seems like a smart choice for people looking for eco-consciousness...there are a lot of downsides...For instance, the coatings...contain a number of harmful chemicals [and] pesticides...Reusing containers seems to be a low energy alternative, however, few people factor in the amount of energy required to make the box habitable. -- DeMaria Design Associates; LOT-EK [images] - ArchDaily

Passivhaus Institute Ends Relationship with Passive House Institute US: U.S. organization promises to continue its mission of outreach to North American market: ...PHI suspended all standing contracts—including certifier status—with the four-year-old PHIUS due to allegations of breaches of contract and good faith...due to allegations of breaches of contract and good faith. - EcoHome magazine

"All Over the Map: Writing on Buildings and Cities" by Michael Sorkin: America's most invigorating writer on architecture is at his best when defending the importance of uncompromised public space...he struggles with the compromises that go with trying to get work from the same political-economic complex that he likes to attack. By Rowan Moore - Guardian (UK)

On top of her job and built to last: ...appointed as the director of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Angela Brady is only the second woman to have taken on the role, and is the first non-British passport holder. She's proud of what it means to be an Irish woman at the helm...A dynamo of energy in frosted lipstick, she's a powerbroker in her field... - Brady Mallalieu Architects - Independent.ie (Ireland)

Editor-in-Chief Named: Former Executive Editor of AIArchitect, Douglas E. Gordon, Hon. AIA, has been named Editor-in-Chief of Inform Magazine. - Inform Magazine: Architecture + Design in the Mid-Atlantic (Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects)

Eric Owen Moss to receive 2011 Jencks Award: ...annual accolade recognising major international contributions to the theory and practice of architecture. - Charles Jencks - BD/Building Design (UK)

2011 Saltire Society Housing Design Awards shortlist announced: ...Scotland's oldest design awards scheme...Almost half of the short-listed schemes are affordable housing or regeneration initiatives. -- Austin-Smith: Lord; DO-Architecture; Collective Architecture; Elder and Cannon Architects; HLM Architects; ARPL Architects; Archial; Konishi Gaffney Architects; ICOSOS Architects; WT Architecture; Cameron Webster Architects; Rural Design; Andrew Stoane Architects; PRP Architects - BBC News

8th Annual AL Light & Architecture Design Awards: ...testament to the critical role that lighting plays in completing architecture. -- Renfro Design Group; Tillotson Design Associates; Licht Kunst Licht; Speirs + Major; Cline Bettridge Bernstein Lighting Design; Interface Engineering Lighting Studio; Elliott + Associates Architects; One Lux Studio; Caples Jefferson Architects; Atelier Ten; Horton Lees Brogden Lighting Design; Jason Bruges Studio [links to images, info] - Architectural Lighting magazine

Architects' desks: Robert Adam, director at Adam Architecture: "No time to make it look good. I know they say a tidy desk is a tidy mind but perhaps it's also a not-much-else-to-do mind." [image] - BD/Building Design (UK)

Call for entries (cash prizes): World's Coolest Offices 2011 sponsored by Autodesk; deadline: October 1 + Ceramics of Italy Exhibit Design Challenge; deadline: October 3 - Architizer

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