

## Today's News - Friday, October 21, 2011

- Australia issues final draft of an urban design protocol for cities to encourage world-class urban design.
- A British architect who set out to explore American suburbia found the good, the bad, and the ugly.
- Maki and FXFOWLE dust off the drawing board for U.N. tower: "It takes a long time for things to happen suddenly."
- Arieff offers some fine examples of "affordable housing that doesn't scream 'affordable'" with projects "that express hope and possibility."
- Safdie celebrates "theatre of the public realm" in Kansas City.
- Controversy continues re: revamp of Friedberg's 1974 Peavey Plaza in Minneapolis; critics claim the plan "fails to preserve enough of the original."
- The public gets its first look at six shortlisted designs for Aberdeen's controversial City Gardens Project (lots of pix, but designers remain anonymous).
- NYC's High Line "inspires ideas for new life for old viaduct blighting Philly's 'eraserhood.'"
- North American winners of Holcim Awards competition are "people-focused designs" (great presentations).
- Weekend diversions:
  - Ruminating about Rem and "OMA/Progress" at the Barbican: Merrick finds the "clash" between the exhibition and the spaces instructive: "this utopian structure, and the Dutchman's ideas, speak different architectural languages - the former more or less dead, the latter oscillating between insight and incoherence."
  - Pallister opines that the show is "noisy and invigorating, but cutting through the cacophony is a challenge," and "perhaps unwittingly, reveals a lot about our current state of modernity."
  - Q&A with Rotor's Gielen re: the curatorial process behind a portrait of one of the most prolific and influential architectural firms in the world (a.k.a. OMA).
  - Rykwert offers a post-mortem on Postmodernism: "Now that we are in No-Mo, what does Po-Mo really look like? A bit bedraggled, truth be told."
  - The curator of Cooper-Hewitt's "Design with the Other 90%: Cities" offers an in-depth assessment of her research to find so many examples of hybrid solutions that make the planet's rapidly growing cities "more just and humane."
  - Lange and Lamster munch the Skyscraper Museum's "Supertall!": the "most creative new towers all seem to fall into the curvy pylon genre."
  - Kevin Roche now takes center stage at MCNY in a show that makes a case that he is "the quintessential architect of the post-industrial age."
  - If "faith in Japan's model for urban planning and construction has been deeply shaken," architects "might find some inspiration" in the Metabolism show in Tokyo.
  - "Detroit Revealed" at the Detroit Institute of Arts "elegantly sidesteps the familiar clichés of demise, degradation and so-called Ruin Porn."
  - In Los Angeles, over,under's "Projections" asks "pointed questions about the future of urban design in our ever digitally mediated world."
  - "The Pruitt-Igoe Myth" attempts to "strip away the layers of a narrative so familiar that even the film makers believed when they first set out to make their documentary."
- Q&A with John Portman on the eve of the premiere of a new documentary: Why do you design so theatrically? "Anyone can build a building and put rooms in it. But we should put human beings at the head of our thought process."

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Government establishes urban design protocol for Australian cities: ...along with the Federal Government's State of Australian Cities 2011 report, its aim to encourage world-class urban design...Creating Places for People, is now in its final draft...founded on five pillars: prosperity, sustainability, liveability, leadership and design excellence. [\[link to report\]](#)- Architecture & Design (Australia)

Manifest Destiny: A Guide to the Essential Indifference of American Suburban Housing: British architect Jason Griffiths set out to explore American suburbia...the suburban ideal retains the sense of an escape from complexity, age, fear, insecurity, imperfection — precisely what draws people to search for a new beginning.[\[slide show\]](#)- Places Journal

U.N. Architects Back to the Drawing Board; Pritzker Winner Still on Board: "It takes a long time for things to happen suddenly." By Matt Chaban -- Fumihiko Maki; Dan Kaplan/FXFOWLE [\[images, links\]](#)- New York Observer

Affordable Housing That Doesn't Scream 'Affordable': ...much affordable housing is more punitive than homey, by design...a number of architects and developers bucking this long-running and convoluted mindset...creating projects that express hope and possibility. By Allison Arieff -- Tighe Architecture; David Baker + Partners; Design 99/Fonds BKVB; Dattner Architects/Grimshaw; Alloy; Bernheimer Architecture; Briggs Knowles; Architecture Research Office (ARO); Lewis.Tsuramaki.Lewis (LTL) [\[images, links\]](#)- The Atlantic Cities

Moshe Safdie Celebrates "Theatre of the Public Realm" with Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts: ...project uses bold geometry to draw people together and encourage the self-recognition of Kansas City's community of art patrons. -- Theatre Projects Consultants; BNIM [\[slide show\]](#)- AIArchitect

A new vision for Peavey Plaza: Critics say the new design, which includes performance space with seating for 1,500, fails to preserve enough of the original. -- M. Paul Friedberg (1974); Charles A. Birnbaum; Oslund and Associates [\[slide show\]](#)- Minneapolis Star Tribune

Designs for Aberdeen's controversial City Gardens Project plans go on display to the public for the first time: Six finalists have been chosen to compete for the £140m project. [\[link to images\]](#)- STV News (Scotland)

NYC skyline park inspires ideas for new life for old viaduct blighting Philly's 'eraserhood': ...a three-block branch of the mile-long Reading Viaduct...efforts picked up steam after the High Line, an old rail bed on Manhattan's west side remade into an elevated park, opened to kudos and crowds in 2009. (AP) [\[images\]](#)- Washington Post

North American winners of Holcim Awards competition announced: People-focused designs at the heart of sustainable construction -- Lateral Office/InfraNet Lab; Swift Lee Office; Julie Snow Architects; Dan Rockhill/Studio 804; Anderson Anderson Architecture; Jeanne Gang/Studio Gang Architects [\[links to info, images\]](#)- Holcim Foundation

Rem Koolhaas: Dutch designs for life: "OMA/Progress"...the clash between the exhibition's dense collages of information...and the murky stillness of the Barbican's spaces is instructive: this utopian structure, and the 66-year-old Dutchman's ideas, speak different architectural languages - the former more or less dead, the latter oscillating between insight and incoherence. By Jay Merrick -- Rotor- Independent (UK)

"OMA/Progress" at the Barbican: OMA's first UK exhibition is noisy and invigorating, but cutting through the cacophony is a challenge...a show which, perhaps unwittingly, reveals a lot about our current state of modernity. By James Pallister -- Rem Koolhaas; AMO; Rotor [\[images\]](#)- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Q&A: Unpacking Rem Koolhaas's Studio: Maarten Gielen on Curating the Barbican's Unorthodox "OMA/Progress"...the curatorial process behind a portrait of one of the most prolific and influential architectural firms in the world. -- Rotor; Office for Metropolitan Architecture [\[images\]](#)- Artinfo

Postmodernism post-mortem: Now Postmodernism is over, we can try to define it. But the V&A's "Postmodernism: Style and Subversion 1970-1990" doesn't clear things up...Now that we are in No-Mo, what does Po-Mo really look like? A bit bedraggled, truth be told. Perhaps its charm, even at the time, was a matter of a few captivating images. By Joseph Rykwert -- Charles Jencks; Minoru Yamasaki- The Architects' Journal (UK)

"Design with the Other 90%: Cities": ...curator Cynthia Smith's in-depth assessment...of the research that took her to Asia, Africa and Latin America. Exploring innovations in humanitarian design, she found many examples of hybrid solutions that work "to bridge the formal and informal city" and to make the planet's rapidly growing cities "more just and humane." [images, links]- Places Journal

Lunch with the Critics: "Supertall!" at the Skyscraper Museum: ...the most creative new towers all seem to fall into the curvy pylon genre...How can one evaluate them as anything but sculpture? It is disturbing how indistinct skylines have become. By Alexandra Lange and Mark Lamster -- Murphy Jahn; Gensler; Kohn Pedersen Fox/KPF; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill/SOM; Wilkinson Eyre; Arup; Carol Willis [images]- Places Journal

"Kevin Roche: Architecture as Environment": ...at the Museum of the City of New York, a new exhibition attempts to make a case that Kevin Roche is, in the words of chief curator Sarah Henry, "the quintessential architect of the post-industrial age."...shows the Pritzker-winning architect wrestling with America's transition from a manufacturing to an information-based economy and culture in the late 20th century. [slide show]- Architectural Record

Japanese architecture's days of future past: ...faith in Japan's model for urban planning and construction has been deeply shaken...they might find some inspiration in the Metabolism...currently being explored at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo...modern architects still have much to learn...After all, what better way to protect against nature than to mimic it? -- Kenzo Tange; Kisho Kurokawa; Kiyonori Kikutake; Arata Isozaki; Kenji Ekuo; Sachio Otani; Kumiko Inui; Masato Otaka; Fumihiko Maki- Asahi Shimbun (Japan)

Detroit comes alive from many angles in "Detroit Revealed: Photographs 2000-2010" at the Detroit Institute of Arts: ...how elegantly it sidesteps the familiar clichés of demise, degradation and so-called Ruin Porn...There is beauty and ugliness, progress and stagnation. Sometimes it can be hard to tell the difference between one and the other... [images]- Detroit Free Press

"Projections" at WUHO Gallery, Los Angeles, developed, designed, curated by Boston practice over,under, asks pointed questions about the future of urban design in our ever digitally mediated world.- Woodbury School of Architecture

Exploding the Myth: The Pruitt-Igoe housing project in St Louis, Missouri, was built during the post-war boom: The film-makers behind "The Pruitt-Igoe Myth" confronted a formidable task: to strip away the layers of a narrative so familiar that even they themselves believed it when they first set out to make their documentary. -- Minoru Yamasaki- The Economist / More Intelligent Life (UK)

Q&A: John Portman, Symphonic Architect: Now 86, the Atlanta architect is the focus of "John Portman: A Life of Building," a new documentary that premieres at the Architecture & Design Film Festival in Manhattan...Why do you design so theatrically? "Anyone can build a building and put rooms in it. But we should put human beings at the head of our thought process."- New York Times

Mixing It Up with Elders: An Interview with Byron Kuth and Liz Ranieri: "In its current state, the senior living industry is all about isolating senior communities from the larger communities around them. We're proposing a very different social structure." [images]- ArchNewsNow.com



Exhibition: "Zaha Hadid: Form in Motion," Philadelphia Museum of Art

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