

Today's News - Monday, December 5, 2011

- ArcSpace brings us an eyeful of Perrault's pretty amazing Arganzuela footbridge in Madrid (bikes welcome).
- On a more distressing Spanish note, the Niemeyer Center for the arts is slated to close December 15, after opening barely nine months ago; it could be an "omen of what could happen as other big public projects become white elephants littering the landscape"; Niemeyer is "disturbed" by the news (a sad irony: 12/15 is his 104th birthday).
- On a brighter note, social media is becoming a useful planning tool, "creating a level of public involvement" that exceeds what would be possible through traditional town hall meetings.
- Community groups are also "leading the charge to transform abandoned rail lines into new city parks" in "a bold new model that bypasses the traditional role of city government in implementing and maintaining public space."
- Kimmelman and Garvin explore the good, the bad, and the outright ugly public spaces in midtown Manhattan: "We've been so fixated on fancy new buildings that we've lost sight of the spaces they occupy and we share."
- Among the newest amenities in public spaces: very cool architect-designed benches.
- Woodman warns that architects designing bold, "innovative show homes ignore mainstream market trends at their peril...most have proved commercially naïve."
- Meanwhile, zero-energy passive housing may be in its infancy in the U.S., but it's beginning to take baby steps in New York.
- A Delhi-based "stalwart" of architecture cheers the Nagpur centre of the Indian Institute of Architects for being "a resource base" for the growing city.
- Glancey x 2: his weekly review is about train stations, a Maggie's Centre, and London's "flashy" new Canada Water library + His picks for best architecture of 2011: "it was very much Zaha Hadid's year" (with Gehry, Architect Barbie, and a few others thrown in).
- How could we resist an eyeful of Hadid's Miami Beach parking garage: the design "delivers a concrete structure that calls to mind both gyroscopes and pizza dough in mid flight" (indeed!).
- Moore marvels at Gough's "celebratory" Canada Water library: "From a practical question - how to put a library on a site too small for it - comes the pleasure of the architecture."
- An eyeful of Kurokawa's Maggie's Centre in Swansea.
- New England gets serious about preserving its all-too-rapidly disappearing Modern heritage (being demolished to make space for McMansions, what else?).
- We reported on the leaning church tower in Bad Frankenhausen, Germany, a bit ago; barring a miracle, it looks like it'll be meeting its maker via a wrecking ball soon (great slide show).
- Jerusalem Design Week is underway, with an interesting conference coming up on Thursday to debate why "current received wisdom about progress and design will no longer hold."
- Call for entries: NEA posts guidelines for 2012 Our Town grants for creative placemaking projects + 2012 AIA/COTE Top Ten Green Project Awards.

If you could hand your business card to one person in the world, who would it be?

**ArchNewsNow / MOO
Competition
(it's fun!)
Deadline: December 15**

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[Dominique Perrault: Arganzuela footbridge, Madrid, Spain](#)

[Curtain Could Fall On A Dazzling Arts Center In Aviles, Spain: The Niemeyer Center...slated to close on Dec. 15, after barely nine months of operation...could be an omen of what could happen across Spain, as conservative politicians cut funding for the arts and other big public projects become white elephants littering the landscape. -- Oscar Niemeyer \[image\]- National Public Radio \(NPR\)](#)

[Social Media to the Rescue: New online tools are changing how residents of Tuscaloosa, Ala., are planning to rebuild their tornado-stricken city...creating a level of public involvement...that far exceeded what would have been possible through traditional town hall meetings alone...In urban planning, where disassociation with one's built environment is an unparalleled killer of communities on par with any natural disaster, community ownership of whatever is rebuilt is a raw necessity. -- BNIM; MindMixer \[images, links\]- AIArchitect](#)

[On the Right Track: Community groups are leading the charge to transform abandoned rail lines into new city parks...a bold new model, one that bypasses the traditional role of city government in implementing and maintaining public space. -- Bloomingdale Trail \(Chicago\); Embankment \(Jersey City, N.J.\); Reading Viaduct \(Philadelphia\); High Line \(NYC\); Arup; Ross Barney Architects; Michael Van Valkenburgh; Alan Greenberger; Alex Garvin \[images, links\]- AIArchitect](#)

[Treasuring Urban Oases: Alexander Garvin has spent the better part of the last half-century thinking about New York City's public spaces...What passes for public space...often means some token gesture by a developer...We've been so fixated on fancy new buildings that we've lost sight of the spaces they occupy and we share. By Michael Kimmelman \[images\]- New York Times](#)

[Bench Innovations in NYC: Both practicing and student architects are exploring intriguing new bench forms in New York City...multi-use infrastructure at the sidewalk-scale. In another case...a flexible, ergonomic model that can be scaled-up at low-cost. -- Rogers Marvel Architects; Grimshaw \[images, links\]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects \(ASLA\)](#)

[Bold may not be bountiful: Architects designing innovative show homes ignore mainstream market trends at their peril...many of the show houses built for Scotland's Housing Expo last year have failed to sell...Each of the 28 designs was presented as a model worthy of wider application but...most have proved commercially naïve. By Ellis Woodman -- Rogers Stirk Harbour; Proctor & Matthews- BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

['Zero-Energy' Construction Crosses the Ocean: Passive, or zero-energy, houses are making their way to the United States from Europe and several are being built in New York. By Alison Gregor -- Passivhaus Institut; Ken Levenson- New York Times](#)

[Stand up to challenges, Ashok Lall urges city architects: The Delhi-based stalwart was pleased with the activities being undertaken by the Nagpur centre of IIA \[Indian Institute of Architects\], calling the architects a resource base for a city developing at a pace as fast as Nagpur. - Times of India](#)

[Constructive criticism: the week in architecture: It's all about train stations, with the Tube bringing beauty to Battersea and Canada Water unveiling its flashy new library. Meanwhile, LA's Union Station oozes Hollywood...ripe for a revamp...Maggie's Cancer Care Centres are proving to be a godsend... By Jonathan Glancey -- Rafael Viñoly; Foster + Partners/IBI Group; Grimshaw Architects/Gruen Associates; Renzo Piano/Parsons Transportation Group; Piers Gough/CZWG; Kisho Kurokawa \[images, links\]- Guardian \(UK\)](#)

[The best architecture of 2011: Frank Gehry completed his first Manhattan skyscraper and Mattel Toys launched Architect Barbie, but it was very much Zaha Hadid's year...Frédéric Chaubin's revelatory book, "CCCP: Cosmic Communist](#)

Constructions Photographed" was a highlight of 2011...The architecture world is a poorer place without the Hungarian Imre Makovecz... By Jonathan Glancey -- Piers Gough/CZWG; Anish Kapoor/Cecil Balmond- Guardian (UK)

No Parallel: Zaha Hadid designs a parking garage for Miami Beach: ...delivers a concrete structure that calls to mind both gyroscopes and pizza dough in mid flight...the city's latest to use design as a tool to attract tourism and notoriety. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Canada Water library: Southwark's new library is...a celebratory building...to "look civic and grand without being pompous"...From a practical question – how to put a library on a site too small for it – comes the pleasure of the architecture...a new public place has been created, where the architecture contributes to and expands the experience of using it. By Rowan Moore -- Piers Gough/CZWG [images]- Observer (UK)

Kisho Kurokawa's Maggie's Centre opens in Swansea: The concrete spiral-shaped building has a kitchen at its heart, with private rooms and terraces occupying the two wings. -- Garbers & James [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Amid Historic Homes, New England Moves to Preserve a Modern Heritage: Historic New England is now seeking to protect certain modern houses along with the more traditional New England homes it has helped preserve for generations...after some notable modern homes...were torn down to make way for the McMansions... -- Walter Gropius; Alexander Gorlin; Earl Flansburgh; Henry B. Hoover- New York Times

Famous Leaning Church Tower Set For Demolition: The people of Bad Frankenhausen have been fighting to save their famous leaning church tower for years...The Protestant church authority slated it for demolition...after the town failed to secure funding to stabilize its collapsing landmark. But the mayor has vowed to fight on. [slide show]- Der Spiegel (Germany)

Grand designs: ...a preview of Jerusalem Design Week...An international design conference...about how the global financial crisis is affecting artists, designers and architects on Thursday, December 8...on the assumption that, as the crisis broadens and the international financial situation deteriorates, current received wisdom about progress and design will no longer hold.- Ha'aretz (Israel)

Call for entries: NEA posts guidelines for 2012 Our Town grants: ...for creative placemaking projects that contribute toward the livability of urban and rural communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with the arts at their core; deadline: March 1, 2012- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

Call for entries: 2012 AIA/COTE Top Ten Green Project Awards (open to architects licensed in the U.S.); deadline: January 23, 2012- AIA Committee on the Environment (COTE)

Call for entries: ArchNewsNow / MOO Competition: If you could hand your business card to one person in the world, who would it be? (It's fun!)- ArchNewsNow

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