

Today's News - Friday, November 30, 2012

EDITOR'S NOTE: Apologies for not posting yesterday - stuff happens...

- Campbell cheers designLAB's transformation of Rudolph's Brutalist library at UMass Dartmouth: it "is going to be one terrific piece of architecture. It's a lesson in mixing the old and the new and getting a result that's better than either."
- Slatin updates L.A.'s grand Grand Avenue plans: the first, and smallest, component is a "modest" 12-acre park - a "simple start of a bold vision."
- King is more than a bit concerned about proposal for an arena on San Francisco's Embarcadero: it's "a bundle of good intentions and little more...the most important long-term aspects are being treated almost as afterthoughts."
- Woodman is cheered by Bole's attack on "pig-ugly" housing in the U.K.: "At last, a minister recognizes that improving design quality is a prerequisite of any dramatic expansion of housing delivery."
- Dittmar gives his thumb's-up, too: "NIMBYs have a point."
- Brussat is cheered to finally "see common sense promoted by the nation's top official preservationists"; he's not so cheered by "a building that has slice-and-dice windows and pooper-scooper balconies" in a historic district.
- Chaban explains the machinations that went into making SHoP's Atlantic Yards prefab tower a reality; it could be "a boon for the entire development industry, particularly on the affordable housing front."
- An eyeful of Baan's photos of SANAA's "shimmering glass- and metal-clad" Louvre Lens.
- A new luxury office condominium project in Toronto "will be a masterful combination of six existing heritage buildings complemented by a new contemporary glass tower."
- Pogrebin reports on revived plans to renovate Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall: it will seek new architectural proposals.
- Hughes parses the unpaid intern conundrum, "an issue that has bedeviled the industry for decades" ("this profession is known for eating its young").
- A German architect faces charges in death of L.A. firefighter: he "seemed to worry more about ensuring the luxury home sparked for an upcoming filming of 'Germany's Next Top Model' than guaranteeing the mansion was safe to occupy."
- Benfield has nothing but bravos for the 7 winners of the EPA 2012 National Awards for Smart Growth Achievement.
- Four inducted in the Interior Design Hall of Fame 2012.
- Weekend diversions:
- Lange lauds Disney's "Wreck-It Ralph": it "offers fairly sophisticated commentary on cities and a plug for activist civic planning."
- Pratt celebrates its 125-Year history with an exhibition of the top 125 icons created by alumni and faculty.
- The Hong Kong Art and Design Festival, "DETOUR 2012: Design Renegade," aims "to provoke local residents into rethinking and reclaiming their public space."
- Rago takes in a new installation in Brooklyn Bridge Park that "engages citizens through varied ways of use including sitting, touching, and playing."
- Groves is entranced by "Timeless Treasures" on view in L.A. that offers "layered depictions" of past and present icons.
- The Dirt offers its Top 10 must-have books on landscape architecture, urban design, and ecology.

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Paul Rudolph's Brutalism, reworked, at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth: Student guides...used to inform visitors that the architect was a Satanist...UMass Dartmouth is that kind of architecture. Theatrical, a little weird, a little grim...one of the major chunks ...is being transformed...Claire T. Carney Library...is going to be one terrific piece of architecture. It's a lesson in mixing the old and the new and getting a result that's better than either. By Robert Campbell -- designLAB; Austin Architects [images]- Boston Globe

Simple Start of a Bold Vision for Downtown Los Angeles: For more than a decade, civic leaders and developers here have envisioned a large-scale redevelopment of...Grand Avenue...the first — and smallest — component of this vision finally opened to the public...a modest 12-acre space named Grand Park... By Peter Slatin -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Frank Gehry; Rios Clementi Hale Studios - New York Times

City must dictate pace on Warriors arena: The ambitious proposal so far is a bundle of good intentions and little more...should not be treated as a presumptive slam dunk...What's fueling the project's swift pace has nothing to do with civic priorities...the most important long-term aspects - how the arena can best fit the Embarcadero, and whether it even is in the appropriate place - are being treated almost as afterthoughts. By John King -- AECOM; Craig Dykers/Snøhetta - San Francisco Chronicle

Only good design can open the door: Nick Boles' attack on 'pig-ugly' housing is a step in the right direction...At last, a minister recognises that improving design quality is a prerequisite of any dramatic expansion of housing delivery. By Ellis Woodman - BD/Building Design (UK)

NIMBYs have a point, says Prince's Foundation: Hank Dittmar backs planning minister 'pig ugly' comments...call for better design to win public backing for housing projects has been welcomed by The Prince's Foundation and Design Council Caba. - BD/Building Design (UK)

Long march of the preservationists: In a historic district...a building that has slice-and-dice windows and pooper-scooper balconies would disrupt the symphonic rhythm of the existing streetscape...those who have proposed [it]...know it does not fit...relevant "standards"...demand that the new be "differentiated" from the old but still "compatible" with it...It's good, finally, to see common sense...promoted by the nation's top official preservationists. By David Brussat -- Ronald Lee Fleming; International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS); Steven Semes; SYSTEMarchitects; Fosster + Partners; Coutoure Design Associates; Rafael Moneo [images]- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Legoland! Ratner Moving Ahead With Atlantic Yards Tower, World's Tallest Modular Building: ...made possible in large part through an agreement with the city's labor unions...touted modular construction's ability to be a boon for the entire development industry, particularly on the affordable housing front...across the city. Or even across the world. By Matt Chaban -- SHoP Architects; Skanska [images]- New York Observer

First Look: SANAA's Louvre Lens: ...a shimmering glass- and metal-clad outpost...on a former minefield...view early shots of the nearly complete project. Photography by Iwan Baan [slide show]- Architectural Record

Harini Pontarini Architects reveal design of new luxury office condominium project in Toronto: 7 St. Thomas will be a masterful combination of six existing heritage buildings, constructed in the 1880s, fully restored and modernized, complemented by a new contemporary glass tower. [images]- Canadian Architect

Avery Fisher Hall to Be Renovated: Rather than proceed with a previous redesign plan [by Foster + Partners]...officials said they would solicit new architectural proposals to overhaul the building...trying to establish timetables for the selection of an architect and acoustician. A theater designer has been chosen, though officials declined to name the person. By Robin Pogrebin -- Max Abramovitz (1962)- New York Times

Unpaid Architecture Internships Come Under Fire: ...one of the first organized attempts to address an issue that has bedeviled the industry for decades. Still, complaints by interns are rarely publicly leveled..."this profession is known for eating

its young"... By C.J. Hughes - Architizer

Firefighter's death: Expert to testify in hearing for architect: Gerhard Becker...accused of negligently installing outdoor fireplaces in his Hollywood Hills mansion...seemed to worry more about ensuring the luxury home sparked for an upcoming filming of "Germany's Next Top Model" than guaranteeing the mansion...was safe to occupy. - Los Angeles Times

2012's Best Smart Growth Projects, According to the EPA: Environmental Protection Agency announced seven winners of its 2012 National Awards for Smart Growth Achievement. By Kaid Benfield [images] - The Atlantic Cities

Interior Design Hall of Fame 2012 Inductees: "This group designs the full spectrum and, most importantly, positively impacts lives all over the world." -- Alexandra Champalimaud; Patrick Jouin; Olson Kundig Architects; Michael Vanderbyl - Interior Design magazine

"What 'Wreck-It Ralph' Can Teach Us About Urban Planning: The new Disney movie offers fairly sophisticated commentary on cities and a plug for activist civic planning...can be seen as a parable of urban displacement. Everyone needs work they can feel proud of, and a neighborhood they feel welcome in. By Alexandra Lange - The Atlantic Cities

Pratt Did That?! 10 Unexpected Cultural Icons From the School's 125-Year History: ...top 125 list of icons created by alumni and faculty...on exhibition at the Pratt Manhattan Gallery on November 30. [slide show] - Artinfo

Sneak Peek at Hong Kong Art and Design Festival: "DETOUR 2012: Design Renegade": ...aiming to provoke local residents into rethinking and reclaiming their public space...international and local artists and designers to explore and activate public life...(through December 16) -- John Bela/Rebar; Justine Topfer; Aiden Li; Candy Chang; James A. Reeves; N55; Andrew Kudless/Matsys - Artinfo Hong Kong

A life of their own: Escaping the context of the traditional white-cube gallery, American artist Oscar Tuazon responds directly to New York City's natural and artificial landscape through a series of three urban interventions collectively titled "People"...in Brooklyn Bridge Park...engages citizens through varied ways of use including sitting, touching, and playing... By Danielle Rago -- Michael Van Valkenburgh [images] - Domus

History comes alive in artist's renderings of Southland buildings: A Czech immigrant's work is on display in L.A. [District Gallery]...each work set in a particular period..."Timeless Treasures" features Iva Hladis' layered depictions of such past or present icons..."she's preserving the past and reminding people how beautiful these old buildings are"... By Martha Groves [images] - Los Angeles Times

Best Books of 2012: Top 10 must-have books on landscape architecture, urban design, and ecology: "Architecture Now! Landscape" by Philip Jodidio; "Designed Ecologies: The Landscape Architecture of Kongjian Yu" by William Saunders; "Lawrence Halprin's Skyline Park" by Ann Komara; "Recycling Spaces: Curating Urban Evolution: The Work of Martha Schwartz Partners" by Emily Waugh; "Visible | Invisible: Landscape Works of Reed Hilderbrand" by Douglas Reed and Gary Hilderbrand; "Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time" by Jeff Speck; etc. - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)



Zaha Hadid Architects: Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan

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