

Today's News - Monday, March 24, 2008

ArcSpace brings us a theater in Copenhagen, and the fifth volume of Actar's Verb series that looks for a new definition of the organic. – U.K. urges architects to design terror-proof buildings; architects none too thrilled (next up: iconic panic rooms?) – Chinese blogs mince no words about "the world's most audacious buildings" in Beijing. – Ourossoff on NYC's "building boomlet of name-brand designs": is it the "last testament to this century's first gilded age" or simply "gorgeous tokens of a rampantly narcissistic age"? – Saffron on the chances of a super-tall tower for Philadelphia. – Hume on the "suburbs' grim future." – A call for architects to create "architectural literature" instead of "pulp fiction." – There's no housing crisis in L.A., says Kaplan, other than price and product. – Dubai investment puts Grand Avenue plans in motion. – Meanwhile, for Los Angeles's Century City makeover, "modesty may be the new heroism." – New Canaan as the epicenter to save Modernist homes. – Hume on the tragedy of high-rises erasing history. – Architects and critics ponder: Are Australians visually illiterate? – Depends on who you talk to: one architect outlines plans for a new theater next to the Sydney Opera House. – But the former prime minister says "mitts off!" – Bayley ponders whether "a globetrotting celebrity architect is the right man to revamp the Commonwealth Institute." – Karim applauds Jeanne Gang's rising star. – An architectural genius or canny marketer? Russell quizzes Libeskind and sees both sides. – Heathcote hangs with Piano in Paris and gets a "a charming, articulate lecture" with nary a question. – Hadid takes Hong Kong by storm (that's Mr. Hadid, to you).

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[-- Lundgaard & Tranberg: The Royal Theater, Copenhagen, Denmark](#)
[-- Book: Verb Natures](#)

[Home Office urges architects to design terror-proof buildings: Government issues draft advice for public spaces. Proposals include panic rooms and steel barriers...a policy which architects have warned could blight the attractiveness of towns and cities...result could be an "inhuman" urban landscape which fosters division and paranoia... -- Piers Gough; Broadway Malyan- Guardian \(UK\)](#)

[Beijing simmering over 'the Egg': The lavish new National Center for the Performing Arts is considered odd-looking and tickets are too pricey for many here...21st century Beijing has become a showcase for some of the world's most audacious buildings. -- Paul Andreu; Rem Koolhaas; Herzog & de Meuron- Los Angeles Times](#)

[Nice Tower! Who's Your Architect? A building boomlet of name-brand designs is poised to transform residential New York...Decades from now these preening, sometimes beautiful, sometimes obtrusive towers could well be the last testament to this century's first gilded age...gorgeous tokens of a rampantly narcissistic age. By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- Neil Denari; Jean Nouvel; Frank Gehry; Herzog & de Meuron; Bernard Tschumi; Deborah Berke; Sulan Kolatan/William MacDonald/Kol/Mac Architecture \[slide show\]- New York Times](#)

[1,500-foot tower plan in Philadelphia heralds new era of super-tall skyscrapers: The most notable fact ...that its height isn't an issue for Philadelphians...the first question many are asking about the proposed American Commerce Center is: "What are the odds of its getting built?" Slim but better than zero... By Inga Saffron -- A. Eugene Kohn/Kohn Pedersen Fox \(KPF\)- Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

[The suburbs' grim future: ...what happens when low-income families are concentrated in post-war suburban communities where they are isolated and kept apart? The prospects don't look good. By Christopher Hume- Toronto Star](#)

[ASU Professor John Meunier calls upon architects to resist building 'pulp fiction' and instead create architectural 'literature'...There are already important achievements...Are these going to be swallowed up in a sickly sweet architectural stew of fictional mediocrity? There is a choice.- Arizona Republic](#)

[What Housing Crisis? The Problem in Downtown Is Not Demand, But Rather the Pricing and the Product...there are too few bargains for too many "me too" designs...price and product "correction." I feel, will undoubtedly result in a more economically diverse and ultimately a more interesting Downtown. By Sam Hall Kaplan- LA Downtown News](#)

[Funding puts Grand Avenue plan in starting position: With \\$100 million from a Dubai fund, construction of the massive mixed-use development in downtown Los Angeles will begin next month -- Gehry Partners \[image\]- Los Angeles Times](#)

[Softening the Edge: Modernism may get an update in Los Angeles's Century City...amid contemporary trends of smart growth, new urbanism, and other movements that leapfrog backward to a pre-modernist sensibility, modesty may be the new heroism. By Josh Stephens -- Welton Becket; Minoru Yamasaki \(1975\); Rios Clementi Hale Studio \[images\]- Planning Magazine](#)

[Historians, architecture buffs push to preserve modernist homes: New Canaan, which has one of the nation's largest concentrations of modernist homes, is now the epicenter of a project to define the genre. -- Philip Johnson; Frank Lloyd Wright; Mies van der Rohe; Eliot Noyes; Marcel Breuer; John Johansen; Landis Gores; Ron Radziner- New](#)

York Newsday

[Urban tragedy unfolding as highrise to erase history: ...disturbing spectacle of a city...killing the very things that give it its character and constitute its identity...reveals a worrisome lack of self-confidence and sophistication. Regardless of what will replace these houses, the neighbourhood – and with it the city – will be diminished by their disappearance. By Christopher Hume- Toronto Star](#)

[The triumph of ugliness: Are Australians visually illiterate? That's the question that architects, designers and their critics have been pondering...Glenn Murcutt is in no doubt...The bottom line is ... does it really matter? -- Robin Boyd; Philip Drew; Elizabeth Farrelly; Harry Seidler; Ed Lippmann; Kohn Pedersen Fox \(KPF\)- Sydney Morning Herald](#)

[No room for compromise: Just as challenging as the cost of a new opera theatre for Sydney is the question of where to put it...it does demand courage; only the brave would dare build something near the sacred monument. By Ken Woolley.- Sydney Morning Herald](#)

[Mitts off our Sydney Opera House, writes Paul Keating: The former prime minister is outraged by a proposal...to build an 1800-seat opera theatre next to the Opera House and encroaching on the Botanic Gardens. -- Joern Utzon; Ken Woolley \[images\]- Sydney Morning Herald](#)

[Koolhaas comes to Kensington: Is a globetrotting celebrity architect the right man to revamp the Commonwealth Institute? ...has a moral and statutory obligation to make good the old building and says he will be 'appropriate'...but maybe a local hero would be more 'appropriate' here. By Stephen Bayley -- Robert Matthew and Stirrat Johnson-Marshall/RMJM \(1962\); OMA/Office for Metropolitan Architecture- Guardian \(UK\)](#)

[Gang's turf is secure: Just 44, rising 'starchitect' Jeanne Gang is the total package, infusing ingenuity into the profession — and the skyline...Aqua...will soar to a height of 82 stories — an exuberant exception to the banal cracker boxes around it...South Side community center...shows that low budgets should not breed low expectations. By Blair Kamin -- Studio/Gang/Architects \[slide show, video\]- Chicago Tribune](#)

[Libeskind Loses Ground Zero Battles, Remakes Skylines Worldwide: ...from Korea to Las Vegas to Milan...Architectural genius or canny marketer? Libeskind showed some of both in a recent interview... By James S. Russell \[slide show\]- Bloomberg News](#)

[A building tells a million stories: "Today architects are obsessed with form and shape, everybody is obsessed with invention...I believe in invention but I hate the idea of style...that architects can create a signature style, the repetition of their own forms, that's where you lose your freedom." By Edwin Heathcote -- Renzo Piano- Financial Times \(UK\)](#)

[A planet in her own orbit: Man is still building but a woman is leading the way forward today... "They referred to me as Mr Hadid then, they still do today." Hadid says wryly... "Architecture requires 100% dedication; if it doesn't kill you, then you're no good"- The Star \(Malaysia\)](#)

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