Today's News - Tuesday, July 22, 2008

-- Carson's "Bowling Alone in Urbanistaville" (on ANN) draws sharp words from New Urban News editor Steuteville (we do like to ruffle feathers!).
-- In Vietnam, a new draft Law on Urban Planning proposes to reinstate a chief architect - could he/she be foreign - or even need to be an architect?
-- SCIM to make over Bombay slums for 125,000 people: "the world's most extreme property makeover."
-- Risen raises questions re: plans for Vietnam Memorial interpretive center: what does it say about our "unease with abstraction?"
-- Gehry's Serpentine Pavilion raises deeper questions: "We need irony here, Frank!"
-- Architects present alternatives to massive (some say mediocre) plans for development in Lexington, KY.
-- Foster/Nouvel plans for London's Walbrook Square may be value engineered (a.k.a. "dumbed down") to the point that developer "may have to think about new architects." -- But Foster scores a big one in Budapest.
-- New Harley-Davidson Museum in Milwaukee is an industrial-chic imaginary factory.
-- Q&A with design-business guru Reigle offers tips for turning a slowdown to your firm's advantage.


Foreign chief architect – why not? Chief architect – no need to be an architect? The position of chief architect in Hanoi and HCM City existed for over 9 years before it was discontinued. The draft Law on Urban Planning proposes the resumption of this position.

Bombay slum dwellers' makeover by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM): It may just be the world's most extreme property makeover: 125,000 Bombay slum dwellers are about to have their homes rebuilt by one of the world's hippest architects.

Speak (Louder), Memory: Plans to add an interpretive center to Maya Lin's Vietnam veterans memorial betray a nation's unease with abstraction...why does the memorial need enhancing in the first place? Asked more directly, is the center an indictment of "the wall" itself? By Clay Risen -- Polshek Partnership; Ralph Appelbaum Associates [images].

Gehry's Serpentine Pavilion raises deeper questions: ...combines grandeur with history, but Tony McIntyre has issues with its structural honesty...We need irony here, Frank! [images].

CentrePointe alternatives unveiled: University of Kentucky College of Design invited young architects to take a crack at coming up with concepts that would show what is possible outside the much-criticized Webb Companies design, which some say is too large and mediocre. -- Heather Flood/Ramirez Diaz-Granados/F-Lab; Liz Swanson/Michael McKay; Paul Preissner/Qua'Virarch [images].

Outlook bad for Wallbrook Square 'clouds': ...may be cut back or even axed to save costs..."It is possible that they will dumb down the scheme. A consequence is that they may have to think about new architects..." -- Atelier Foster/Nouvel [image].

Budapest Development Hires Foster + Partners: 240,000 square meter mixed-use project on the Pest side of the Danube River will be an eco-friendly project and a prime example of sustainable...
Elvis, Evel Star in Harley's Industrial-Chic Milwaukee Museum: Rising from reclaimed industrial land in Milwaukee's Menomonee Valley, the new Harley-Davidson Museum is an imaginary factory clad in black brick and an exposed galvanized-steel skeleton. -- Pentagram [slide show] - Bloomberg News

Tales From the Downturn: Jack Reigle: ...design-business adviser and author of 'Silver Bullets: Strategic Intelligence for Better Design Firm Management' offers tips for turning a slowdown to your firm's advantage. The upshot? Focus on your strengths. - Architect Magazine

'Space bridge' puts Hartlepool on map: The tubular steel structure, resembling an outer-space wormhole, will span 520ft and is expected to have a polished surface that reflects its bleak surroundings. -- Anish Kapoor; Cecil Balmond- The Times (UK)

Bridge claims denied: The group behind the massive Tees Valley Giants project today dismissed reports of a Hartlepool “space bridge” as pure speculation. did concede the Hartlepool structure is likely to be a bridge. – Anish Kapoor; Cecil Balmond- Evening Gazette (Teeside, UK)

Fantasy islands: Cities at sea have long been a libertarian dream, but concerns over climate change have now pushed the idea on to the environmental agenda. Do they hold water? – Vincent Callebaut; Julien de Smedt- Guardian (UK)

LILYPAD, A Floating Ecopolis for Ecological Refugees: ...a prototypical auto-sufficient amphibious city... a tenable solution to the rising water levels...able to accommodate 50,000 inhabitants. -- Vincent Callebaut [images] - Archinect

21st century Noah arks on display: The festival of landscape objects, Archstoyanie, has taken place in the Kaluga region, south-west of Moscow. The event's theme was 'Noah's Ark' and designer rafts were in the spotlight. – Vladimir Plotkin; Totan Kuzenbaev [video link] - Russia Today

New House, Available for Delivery, Convenient to Museum: Burst* 008, a full-scale house for the Museum of Modern Art, was a photo finish for its two architects, Jeremy Edmiston and Douglas Gauthier. - New York Times

The many contradictions of Le Corbusier: An urbanist who lived in a fishing cottage, an iconoclast who invented the highrise, an architect who wanted to be a painter... Steve Rose goes in search of the man who designed the 20th century [slide show]- Guardian (UK)

Liverpool plans major design show on Le Corbusier... as part of Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture... will explore a little-known dialogue between the arch-modernist and the great classical English architect Sir Edwin Lutyens... - Building (UK)

Call for entries/nominations: 2009 Richard H. Driehaus Prize for Classical Architecture (international): $200,000 prize to an outstanding architect or firm whose work applies the principles of classicism, with respect to sustainability, to the built and natural environment; deadline: September 15- University of Notre Dame School of Architecture

The rise of the urban shepherd: ...volunteer shepherds recruited by Brighton and Hove city council as part of an initiative to reintroduce grazing
to its urban parks... - Guardian (UK)

Classic Nuance: Simon Hall at Indiana University: A new research facility fits harmoniously with neighboring historic campus structures. – Flad Architects [images] ArchNewsNow

-- Tod Williams Bille Tsien Architects: Visitor Center at Lincoln Center, New York, NY
-- Santiago Calatrava: Light Rail Train Bridge, Jerusalem, Israel

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