Today's News - Tuesday, August 5, 2008

-- Weinstein's Words That Build Tip #5: includes our favorite new word (that's really not new): "beautyutility."  
-- Hawthorne continues his series on China; this time he takes on ethics, moral, and environmental issues facing foreign architects.  
-- Ouroussoff on the Bird's Nest: a "vision of the stadium as a gigantic social organism, rather than as a machine for mass hypnosis" and the architects' plans for the building's future (shopping mall, anyone?).  
-- Can the Gulf really buy culture? -- Dyckhoff takes on eco-town nay-sayers (they're not wrong about everything).  
-- The chief executive of U.K.'s National Housing Federation takes on Germaine Greer and those who think eco-houses are going to be ugly.  
-- Stahel offers a fresh look at the cradle-to-cradle approach to building sustainability.  
-- The Transition Movement offers a guide to create "transition towns" weaned off oil.  
-- Rawsthorn on Starck's goal to "introduce everybody to ecology," and his newest adventure: his Democratic Ecology products.  
-- Bernstein wonders if American's are really ready for green hotels.  
-- A Filipino scientist invents construction panel made from chicken feathers.  
-- New affordable housing projects in Boston "defy the tacky stereotype of government-subsidized housing."  
-- The fate of Baltimore's Brutalist Mechanic Theatre is still up in the air: landmarking would add a layer of design review the owners don't want to go through. -- Mecanoo wins big in Birmingham (a big surprise to many).  
-- An eyeful of Studio Pei-Zhu's design for a most unusual museum in China.  
-- A shortlist of four for $1 billion Zorlu Center in Istanbul.  
-- Q&A with Enrique Norten re: his retrospective in Monterrey, Mexico.  
-- Rockwell is working hard to make children's play really fun.  
-- Kendrick exposés materials to time, and uses time itself as a material.  
-- Shigeru Ban's hour-long Franzen Lecture.  
-- Bangalore architects transform a defunct jail into Freedom Park: no bushes trimmed to resemble elephants, but 6 acres for protestors and rallies.  
-- A traveling show of New Zealand architecture needs money to stay on the road.  
-- We couldn't resist: a Baywatch babe building a green hotel in Abu Dhabi (don't forget Pitt's doing the same in Dubai).  

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A Guide to Making the Transition Away From Oil
Through the Transition movement, Rob Hopkins has helped to set up dozens of "transition towns" in England, New Zealand, Australia...establishing resilience, or the ability of a place to endure and absorb shocks...[video links]- The Chronicle of Higher Education

Philippe Starck is tilting toward windmills:...developing cheap, attractive, energy-saving products to "introduce everybody to ecology." The first of his Democratic Ecology products...a miniature roof-top windmill...there are sound reasons for taking his product seriously. By Alice Rawsthorn- International Herald Tribune

Will Americans Accept Greener Hotel Rooms?
Compared to hotels abroad, the American hospitality industry does not yet have much of a culture of saving resources -- but some say changes are coming. By Fred A. Bernstein -- Raefter K. Wallis [images]- New York Times

Scientist invents construction panel made from chicken feathers: Hungry Filipino termites may have to look elsewhere if inventor finds partner to develop inedible composite panels -- Menandro Acda-BD/Building Design (UK)

Looking good: Developers add modern touches to affordable homes...defy the tacky stereotype of government-subsidized housing...meant not only to appeal to buyers, but neighbors wary of density and declining property values -- Utile; The Narrow Gate [slide show]- Boston Globe

Plans for Mechanic Theatre wait in the wings: A resignation and disagreements among officials delays the next stage for the shuttered theater...owners say they oppose landmark designation because it would add a layer of design review they don't want to go through. By Edward Guns -- John Johansen (1967); Shalom Baranes [image]- Baltimore Sun

Mecanoo scoops £193m Birmingham library: Dutch firm beats all-star line-up including Foster + Partners, OMA and Foreign Office Architects...new library has been highly controversial...there has been a campaign to save Birmingham's brutalist Central Library - designed by John Madin in 1974.- Building (UK)

Art Museum of Yue Minjun: Studio Pei-Zhu Designs Museum for iconic Chinese artist in Sichuan Province...will be one of 10 new museums on the same site...[slide show]- Architectural Record

The $1 billion race for Zorlu Center heats up in Istanbul...winner will be announced Aug. 20. -- ERA Architecture, Mimarlar Yapisi Tasarimi/ALUD; Calfer Bozkurt Architecture/Architekten Stuttgart; Tabanlioglu Architecture/Emre Arolat Architecture-Turkish Daily News

Q&A with Enrique Norten:...his research-focused design process takes center stage in a mid-career retrospective of his work that recently opened at the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo in Monterrey, Mexico..."INTENTIONS..." -- TEN Arquitectos- Architectural Record

The Architect-Designer Focuses on Child's Play: David Rockwell, the designer of grown-up amusements is focusing on child's play and children's playgrounds. Next month, he and his firm will break ground on the Imagination Playground...there is strong interest from other cities...-- Rockwell Group; KaBOOM!- Wall Street
Fashion icon: What do you get if you combine the starchitect Zaha Hadid and Chanel's Karl Lagerfeld? A handbag-inspired portable pavilion, of course. By Jay Merrick - Independent (UK)

Building and Time: The Architecture of Tom Kundig: materials are not only exposed to time but time itself becomes a material. – Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects - The Stranger (Seattle)


The Invisible Scaffolding: Nisha Mathew and Soumitro Ghosh are the new buzzwords in urban architecture: the focus at Freedom Park is not on lavish displays of flowers or bushes trimmed to resemble elephants. When it is finished, the former prison will be a green space unlike any other in Bangalore. – Mathew and Ghosh Architects [images] - Tehelka Magazine (India)

Enjoy freedom at this park: Freedom Park has been categorized under six broad areas: general, museums and exhibitions, contemporary art, retail, performance spaces and water features...will also have six acres of land as a dedicated space to hold protests and rallies. -- Mathew and Ghosh Architects - Times of India

Exhibition attracts world interest, but no money: An international exhibition of New Zealand’s architecture may have to return home early because it is running out of money, despite growing interest from major international cities. -- Tony Van Raat - New Zealand Herald

Baywatch beauty to build Abu Dhabi hotel: Pamela Anderson is set to become the latest Hollywood star to get involved in the UAE’s hospitality sector. - ArabianBusiness.com