

Today's News - Wednesday, September 17, 2008

EDITOR'S NOTE: Early morning plans preclude posting the newsletter tomorrow. We'll be back Friday, September 19.

- A 3-part in-depth look at Piano's California Academy of Sciences (lots of images).
- Hess says San Francisco's insistence on name-brand architects has finally paid off by choosing Piano (he's not so hot for other starchitects' endeavors).
- Grimshaw designs "Airport City" for St. Petersburg, "white gold" roof included.
- Fate of Calatrava's WTC transit hub's soaring mezzanine still up in the air.
- Langdon minces no words about what he thinks about Gwathmey' Loria Center at Yale: the "building is weak, verging on incoherent."
- Litt finds new projects for hospital in Cleveland "are a mixed blessing in architectural terms."
- University of Texas at Brownsville has big plans for a life science and research zone.
- Doha, Qatar has high hopes for "The Laptop," the world's first underground stadium (pix prove the moniker).
- Is Calgary missing an opportunity by passing up a bridge by Calatrava?
- Minneapolis's new I-35W bridge to open tomorrow; opting for practicality over pretension - leaving some disappointed.
- Moscow chocolate factory re-born for those looking for high-end loft life.
- Prince Charles wants to heal London's Chinatown via feng shui.
- Q&A with Cameron Sinclair: "So many things are meaningless when you talk to someone who only wants clean water."
- Call for EOI to landscape U.K.'s Imperial War Museum.
- More Biennale: Hawthorne reports: "The star system doesn't cast much light, but some national pavilions shine." - U.S. curator Menking talks about his pavilion. - 10 things to see at the Biennale (and lots more). - Gehry wows 'em in Venice, takes home the Golden Lion; Poland wins gold, too.
- An in-depth look at why Benjamin Franklin was "America's first great urbanist" (who knew?).

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[Green Architecture's Grand Experiment - Part 1: The Building: California Academy of Sciences ...stunning new building...the largest public building ever to attain a LEED Platinum rating; Part 2: The Green Roof; Part 3: The Engineering -- Renzo Piano \[images, links\]- Metropolis Magazine](#)

[California Academy of Sciences: Underplaying the design may have been a better decision than to create another slouching, lumbering show-stopper...San Francisco's insistence on choosing name-brand architects has not paid off...But Renzo Piano is capable of being extraordinarily inventive in creating forms...to mine natural, cultural and psychological sources -- which have much to do with our pleasure and connection with buildings. By Alan Hess - Mercury News \(California\)](#)

[Grimshaw Designs "Airport City" for St. Petersburg: ...\\$1.5 billion expansion to the city's Pulkovo Airport...39-acre commercial site...scheme calls for offices, shops, and a hotel, along with a 1.6-million-square-foot terminal \[images\]- Architectural Record](#)

[Fate of the Calatrava Terminal Is Still Hanging: ...not yet solved the linchpin problem: how to build the underground mezzanine of the World Trade Center Transportation Hub...its schedule dictates the schedule of the memorial...- New York Times](#)

[Op-Ed: A Baffling Blot On Yale: Where the Art and Architecture building, designed by Paul Rudolph in the early 1960s, is strong and consistent, Gwathmey's building is weak, verging on incoherent...It has a lot of things going on, but it doesn't hold together. By Philip Langdon/New Urban News - Hartford Courant \(Connecticut\)](#)

[University Hospitals' new projects are a mixed blessing in architectural terms: ...\\$326 million...investment is fantastic news for the city's economy. But it's mixed news for architecture and city planning. By Steven Litt -- Cannon Design; OWP/P \[images\]- Cleveland Plain Dealer](#)

[UT Brownsville Planning \\$33M Biomed Complex: ...sets the tone for the university's future life science and research zone. -- SHW Group; SSP Design \[image\]- GlobeSt.com](#)

[The World's First Underground Stadium: If all goes to plan, 'The Wall' stadium in Doha, Qatar, will claim two firsts: The world's first underground stadium and the world's first open-air, air-conditioned stadium...has already gained the nickname 'The Laptop'... -- MZ & Partners Architects \[images\]- The Times \(UK\)](#)

[City hall full of dreamers: ...the prospect of the city spending tens of millions on two pedestrian bridges over the Bow River seems even more extravagant today than it did last week...Booming Calgary has been given a rare opportunity to make itself into a truly great city. Yet will \[it\] have a single architecturally significant building to its credit in five years? -- Santiago Calatrava - Calgary Herald \(Canada\)](#)

[New Minneapolis bridge practical, not flashy: ...new Interstate 35W bridge...may be getting kudos for opening ahead of schedule...But it's not generating a lot of excitement for its appearance...officials opted for practicality over pretension. -- Figg Engineering Group \[images\]- AP](#)

[At Chocolate Factory Site, a New Kind of Luxury Box: ...on an island in the Moscow River...the first old factory building to be converted into apartments -- with soaring ceilings and gritty details that would make any New York real estate broker tremble... -- Jean-Michel Wilmotte \[images\]- New York Times](#)

[Feng shui makeover for Chinatown: The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment has proposed "healing" parts of London's Chinatown using ancient Chinese traditions -- Ben Bolgar - BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

[Cameron Sinclair aims to marry design and development: Q&A about his global projects and the coastal communities threatened by the effects of global warming..."So many things are meaningless when you talk to someone who only wants clean water." -- Architecture for Humanity \(AFH\); Open Architecture Network - Charleston City Paper \(South Carolina\)](#)

[Call for expressions of interest: Imperial War Museum North \(Daniel Libeskind\) -- Competition to Develop External Spaces; deadline: October 23 - RIBA \(UK\)](#)

[Venice Architecture Biennale: The star system doesn't cast much light, but some national pavilions shine. Rarely...has the gap in tone between the two sections been as wide as it is this year. By Christopher Hawthorne - Los Angeles Times](#)

[William Menking, editor of The Architect's Newspaper and curator of the American Pavilion, talks about his Venice pavilion..."Into the Open: Positioning Practice" \[video, links\]- BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

10 things to see at the Venice architecture biennale +++ [images, links]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Frank Gehry's Curvy Buildings Wow Venice Biennale: ...won the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement for his curvaceous structures and is showing off the design of a Moscow hotel...Poland won the top Golden Lion for its pavilion...prize for the best installation went to Gregg Lynn Form, who recycles colorful plastic toys into bricks and other objects. The results are ugly, if ecologically friendly. By Colin Amery- Bloomberg News

Benjamin Franklin: City Slicker: The self-styled country mouse was in truth America's first great urbanist. By Jerry Weinberger - City Journal/The Manhattan Institute



- Herzog & de Meuron: Miami Art Museum, Miami, Florida
- Mecanoo architecten: FiftyTwoDegrees, Nijmegen, The Netherlands

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