

Today's News - Monday, December 15, 2008

- ArcSpace brings us eyefuls of MVRDV's oh-so green "power center" in Korea, and Baan's architectural photographs.
- Campbell's oh-so eloquent call for the "audacity of hope" for the Obama government "to create a great heritage of civic architecture."
- Hume says practically the same, calling for new infrastructure that maximizes "not just utility but also usability."
- There might be hope: Obama taps two savvy New Yorkers to head HUD and his new Office of Urban Policy.
- Even in lean times, grassroots efforts are leading the way in finding new uses for vacant lots.
- Hadid's Hoxton Square sparks an amusing take by Hatherley re: why we're "caught between the Scylla of the architecturally overbearing and the Charybdis of a blank, bland attempt to "blend in."
- Historic copycatting is slowly being replaced by an emerging field called "situated regionalism."
- Weighing the "thorny development options" for L.A. County's Marina Del Rey.
- As Connecticut turns its building code green, some push for a "rewording of the law, which they see as well intended but overzealous" (and mighty confusing).
- For the birds: some green architecture "flies in the face of conscientious green design."
- An in-depth profile of environmental crusader Majora Carter and her move to the national stage.
- Finding the fine balance between form and function in museum design (some hits, some misses).
- Ouroussoff waxes poetic about Pei: "I can't seem to get the Museum of Islamic Art out of my mind" (great pix, too).
- Hawthorne hails Maltzan's Inner-City Arts complex as "a small-scale essay on the power of architecture to create community."
- Moneo at Columbia University: he "has stolen quietly into New York with little of the fanfare that usually greets a 'starchitect.'"
- Rochon on why this year's student projects "wowed the Canadian Architect magazine awards jury" more than the professional entries.
- Near Glasgow, new hope for St. Peter's Seminary that was being "left to rot away."

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-- Competition winner: MVRDV: Gwanggyo Power Centre, Seoul, South Korea
-- Exhibition: Iwan Baan Recent Works: Contemporary Architectural Photographs, AA Gallery, London, UK

The audacity of hope for better public works: ...Obama announced plans for a "public works construction program"...Architecture is what's missing in [his] proposal. But maybe there's hope...Let's ask the Obama government to create a great heritage of civic architecture in this country. By Robert Campbell - Boston Globe

Time for intelligent, sexy infrastructure: ...faced with irreversible environmental damage, ideas about infrastructure must change...can be done more intelligently...there's pressure for it to do double, even triple and quadruple duty...The point is to maximize not just utility but also usability. This would be an infrastructure of pleasure as well as purpose. By Christopher Hume - Toronto Star

Bronx BEEP Tapped for Obama Gig: Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion to head the White House Office of Urban Policy as the director of urban affairs - New York Post

New York Housing Chief Is Chosen for Cabinet: Obama has picked the widely respected housing commissioner for New York City, Shaun Donovan, to be the secretary of housing...to head the Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD]- New York Times

Vacancy: What's to be done with all those empty lots during an economic downturn? Is there a way to activate land when development dollars are not available? It's incredible to see the kinds of grassroots efforts that are happening outside the official planning process... - Metropolis Magazine

Trapped between ego and blandness: Totalitarian architectural monuments or toadying to heritage? The choice is yours...we find ourselves caught between the Scylla of the architecturally overbearing and the Charybdis of a blank, bland attempt to "blend in." By Owen Hatherley -- Simon Jenkins; Zaha Hadid; Daniel Libeskind - BD/Building Design (UK)

Historic Architecture: People, Not Just A Building, Make For 'Place': ...a small group...has begun to challenge the practice of designing modern structures that simply strive to produce mirages of the past. The emerging field is called "situated regionalism." -- Kingston Heath; Howard Davis [image] - ScienceDaily

Rough Waters: LA County weighs thorny development options in Marina Del Rey: Locals fear the aging marina, once a "resort for daily life," is an all too tempting target for development...could add more than 3,700 residential units and 630 new hotel rooms... - The Architect's Newspaper

The Green Standard: Come January, Connecticut will become the second state, after California, to begin turning its building code green...building industry officials are calling on the state to turn back...pushing for a rewording of the law, which they see as well intended but overzealous. - New York Times

Fatal reflections: As 'green' architecture advances, glass buildings pose hazard to birds...The effect of such architecture "flies in the face of conscientious green design"... -- Hillary Brown/New Civic Works; Kate Orff/SCAPE; Bruce Fowle/FX Fowle Architects - Boston Globe

The Green Power Broker: Majora Carter, an environmental crusader, has come a long way from her native South Bronx. Now she's moving to a national stage...if richer communities suffered from air pollution as much as poorer neighborhoods do, affluent citizens would long ago have fought for alternatives to fossil fuels. - New York Times

Balancing Form, Function In Museum Architecture: ...the amount of money spent on museum construction has gone up five times in the past 15 years...But in buildings designed to showcase art, can form impede function? -- Daniel Libeskind; Christopher Hawthorne; Frank Gehry [images] - National Public Radio (NPR)

For I. M. Pei, History Is Still Happening: ...if Pei's methods seem anachronistic, they also offer a gentle resistance to the short-sightedness of so many contemporary cultural undertakings...His museum reminds us that building a culture, as much as a political or social agenda, can be an act of healing. Like all great art, it requires forging seemingly conflicting values into

[a common whole. By Nicolai Ouroussoff \[slide show\] - New York Times](#)

[Coming clean in the inner city: Inner-City Arts now occupies a group of buildings that make up a small-scale essay on the power of architecture to create community, and even a sense of wonder...simply by shaping space. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Michael Maltzan; Nancy Goslee Power; Ph.D; Marmol Radziner \[slide show\] - Los Angeles Times](#)

[Columbia University to Finish Section of Campus, 113 Years Later: ...completing the northwest corner of its campus with a 14-story science building that has little in common with its red-brick predecessors. -- José Rafael Moneo; Davis Brody Bond Aedas \[image\] - New York Times](#)

[Thinking far outside the box \(or the blueprint\): The imaginative scope and global reach of this year's student projects has wowed the Canadian Architect magazine awards jury. By Lisa Rochon - Globe and Mail \(Canada\)](#)

[New hope for St Peter's Seminary left to rot away: Endangered architectural gem could be saved through £11m redevelopment...archdiocese is in talks with the property developer Urban Splash... -- Isi Metzstein/Gillespie, Kidd & Coia \(1966\) \[images\] - Independent \(UK\)](#)

[Traditional Brick: A Contemporary Solution at University of New Hampshire: New forms and expressions with traditional materials create a forward-looking contemporary building that expresses the engineering disciplines it houses. -- Anshen+Allen \[images\] - ArchNewsNow](#)

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