

Today's News - Thursday, December 18, 2008

- Rybczynski reports on the Urban Design After the Age of Oil conference: scientists are skeptical; planners are hopeful: "there is something of a disconnect between the global-warming problem and the available solutions."
- Mazria takes a 2030 Challenge Stimulus Plan to Capitol Hill (it sounds good to us!).
- A call for Obama to bring architects and design leaders on board.
- An in-depth look at how Behnisch Architekten is pushing architecture into new energy-efficient directions.
- A project that merges neuroscience, architecture, psychology, and virtual reality to "get better architecture before a single brick is ever laid."
- A detailed look at how RPI/SOM's CASE hopes to "to push building science into the 21st century."
- Harvard GSD and BMW team to explore how the car maker's elastic skin technology might be used for low-energy housing.
- A new urbanist future planned for Saarinen's Bell Labs.
- Dyckhoff dishes with Piano re: the London's Shard of Glass: "I like to fight gravity" (yes, it's being built, and could be "strikingly prescient" rather than the predicted "white elephant").
- Kennicott on the National Museum of American History overhaul: the building has "determinedly resisted" being made "more lovable," but architecturally, "mission accomplished."
- Russell is rapturous over the rebirth of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.
- Hales isn't quite so happy with the 9/11 Pentagon Memorial (but we're glad to see her!).
- Goldberger makes his pick of Architecture's Ten Best of 2008: "history will probably treat 2008 more kindly than it deserves."
- "Leading lights of British architecture" remember their picks of highs and lows of '08.
- Bad news last: November's ABI is abysmal (and we've not seen the bottom, yet).
- Gehry "drops ax on Atlantic Yards staff" (could mean any number of things).
- Hotel projects being abandoned in record numbers...except in Kolkata.

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[Can Cities Save the Planet? Scientists are skeptical. Planners are hopeful. The Dutch are pragmatic...there is something of a disconnect between the global-warming problem and the available solutions. By Witold Rybczynski \[links\]- Slate](#)

[Building stimulus on Capitol Hill: 2030 Challenge Stimulus Plan offers emission reductions, jobs, and economic benefits across the country...a federal investment of \\$85.56 billion each year for two years will create over 8 million new jobs and a new \\$1.6 trillion renovation market. By Edward Mazria \[links\]- Grist Magazine](#)

[Editorial: Promises to Keep: In revamping our nation's dying infrastructure, President-elect Obama needs to bring architects and design leaders on board. By Sam Lubell - The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Form Follows Performance: Stefan Behnisch pushes architectural form into new energy-efficient directions. -- Behnisch Architekten \[slide show\] - Metropolis Magazine](#)

[Get lost ... and get better architecture: Testing subjects in a virtual building could lead to improved design: The merging of neuroscience, architecture, psychology and virtual reality...project should provide a more realistic understanding of how people experience real-world spaces — before a single brick is ever laid... -- HMC Architects \[images, links\]- MSNBC](#)

[Making A Case For Innovation: The Center for Architecture Science and Ecology \(CASE\) is an innovative new program in which researchers and students at Rensselaer Polytechnic are working with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill \(SOM\) to push building science into the 21st century \[images\]- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[BMW technology tested for use on low-energy housing: Car manufacturer's elastic skin technology is hoped to prove viable as a building material -- Harvard University Graduate School of Design \(GSD\); RMJM- Building \(UK\)](#)

[Developer: Future of Lucent building in 'new urbanism': Zucker says Somerset wants to work with community...The first time \[he\] walked through the former Bell Labs building...he knew the Eero Saarinen-designed building could be revitalized for a new era by adapting it to a mix of pedestrian-friendly uses. - The Independent \(New Jersey\)](#)

[Renzo Piano: the top of his game: "I like to fight gravity" ...his Shard of Glass, the tallest building in Europe, is under way...come the Olympics London will be booming again...the Shard will not seem a white elephant but strikingly prescient. Its revival will horrify those who might have hoped the scheme was stone cold dead. By Tom Dyckhoff- The Times \(UK\)](#)

[A History Museum That's Stuck in Modern Times: Heroic efforts to make the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History a more lovable building...and the building has just as determinedly resisted them...\\$85 million overhaul is an improvement...On a purely architectural level: Mission accomplished. By Philip Kennicott -- Steinmann, Cain & White \(1964\); Gary Haney/Skidmore, Owings & Merrill \(SOM\) \[slide show\]- Washington Post](#)

[Cathedral of St. John, Reborn After 2001 Fire, Glows Once Again: ...awes with the sheer scale of human toil and imagination. This architectural mutt charms because it's like us: imperfect. By James S. Russell -- Heins & La Farge; Ralph Adams Cram; Building Conservation Associates; Polshek Partnership- Bloomberg News](#)

[Raw Ground: The new Pentagon Memorial addresses the events of 9/11 by honoring each of the victims that died there that day...in placing emphasis on the individual rather than the collective \[has\] created a place of remembrance that is more cemetery than memorial. By Linda Hales -- Kaseman/Beckman/KBAS \[images\]- Metropolis Magazine](#)

[Paul Goldberger: Architecture's Ten Best of 2008: Architectural history will probably treat 2008 more kindly than it deserves to be treated, only because there was architecture to talk about. -- Herzog & de Meuron; Norman Foster; Koolhaas/Scheeren/Office for Metropolitan Architecture \(OMA\); Renzo Piano; SANAA; Frank Gehry; Hartman/Skidmore, Owings & Merrill \(SOM\); Gwathmey Siegel; Walter Sedovic; Olafur Eliasson - New Yorker](#)

[I'll remember 2008 for...: Leading lights of British architecture tell which buildings and memories stand out for them. -- Bennetts Associates; East; Theis and Khan; Sheppard Robson; Wilkinson Eyre; Ryder Architecture; Glenn Howells; Hawkins\Brown; Tony Fretton; Gordon Murray + Alan Dunlop; Piercy Conner; Sunand Prasad; Gareth Hoskins; Tonkin Liu; etc. - The Architects' Journal \(UK\)](#)

[Down We Go: AIA Architecture Billings Index \(ABI\) hits new lows for second straight month: "It hasn't hit bottom yet. It could be some time before we turn this around"...architects nationwide were seeing some serious damage to their portfolios. \[links\]- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Architect drops ax on Atlantic Yards staff: Frank Gehry has axed nearly every employee working on the stalled project...It](#)

was unclear yesterday whether the relationship between Ratner and Gehry was over or merely put on hold because of the economy. - NY Daily News

More Developers Abandon Hotel Projects: ...the number of guest rooms abandoned in the construction pipeline rose 75% in November..93,219 hotel rooms...in various stages...from early or final planning to construction. - National Real Estate Investor (NREI)

World-class hotel in heart of New Town: ...one of the most contemporary hotel properties in India. The twin towers...will be Kolkata's first. The taller of the two will be 42-storeys and 142 metres high. -- Cervera & Pioz - Times of India

Best Architecture Books of 2008: 10 tomes from the superior to the indispensable. By Norman Weinstein -- Felix Candela; Jerry Yudelson; Bauman Lyons; etc. - ArchNewsNow



-- Competition winner: MVRDV: Gwanggyo Power Centre, Seoul, South Korea

-- Exhibition: Iwan Baan Recent Works: Contemporary Architectural Photographs, AA Gallery, London, UK

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