

## Today's News - Monday, March 30, 2009

- ArcSpace brings us Pei in Qatar, and 11 young architects' visions of an experimental city in China.
- Ouroussoff proclaims the time is now to reinvent American cities, and offers four urban centers that could provide a blueprint for success.
- Zandberg cheers that "a fitting Hebrew translation of the term urbanism has been found: ironism" (will ironic replace iconic, we wonder).
- Virginia bans cul-de-sacs in new developments (not all are pleased).
- Allowing squatters to find a place to call home could bring the market back into balance.
- International Code Council looks for inspiration in Brad Pitt's Make It Right homes in New Orleans.
- Campbell looks into his crystal ball to see what changes the future could bring to Boston's landscape.
- de Portzamparc's vision wins competition to re-envision Brussels' European Quarter from a concrete administrative ghetto into a glimmering "open city to the sky" (pix included).
- King cheers plans for a new San Francisco tower - except that the proposals are being kept under wraps: "Architecture is the most public art form we have...this is no time to pull down the shades."
- Saffron blames the poor economy for a poor design decision: "if you wreck a block when times are tough, it will still be wrecked when the good times return."
- A "brief golden age of community center architecture" in NYC may have come to a close, but its swan song is a beauty (also see 01.14.09 ANN feature).
- Heathcote visits the renewed Whitechapel Gallery and finds "there is no better, sharper or more accessible gallery in the city."
- An eyeeful of the proposals for D.C.'s National Museum of African American History on the National Mall.
- Kennicott spends some quality time with Ralph Appelbaum, "one of the most influential educators of our time," and how he has changed museum design.
- Safdie's Habitat '67 in Montreal designated a heritage site: "I'm feeling like a Grandpapa! It's very moving for me."
- Gallagher on another Detroit landmark about to bite the dust.
- Architects are "the latest dominoes to fall": layoffs have "conjured up memories of the 1991 recession, which eviscerated a generation of younger designers."
- RIBA in turmoil: "How do you get turkeys to vote for Christmas?"
- de Botton goes on (and on) about the need for artists who "can proclaim the intelligence, peculiarity, beauty, and horror of the workplace... the principal source of life's meaning."
- American Academy of Arts and Letters announces 2009 architecture awards.
- A reason to head to Moscow this week: 2nd Moscow Architectural Days.

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-- I.M. Pei Architect: Museum of Islamic Art, Al Corniche, Doha, Qatar  
-- Experimental Urban Vision: Huaxi City Centre, Guiyang, Southwestern China -- Atelier Manferdini; BIG; Diegues Fridman; Emergent/Tom Wiscombe; HouLiang Architecture; JDS; Mass Studies; Rojkind Arquitectos; Serie; Sou Fujimoto Architects; MAD

Reinventing America's Cities: The Time Is Now: The changes that are needed to rebuild the country's infrastructure may seem extravagant, but they are not impossible...[a] look at four cities...could begin to form a blueprint for making our cities more efficient, sustainable and livable. By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- Norten; Hargreaves; Krieger; Eskew; Gehry; Maltzan - *New York Times*

Decoding the city: At long last, a fitting Hebrew translation of the term urbanism - among the most commonly used in architectural discourse today - has been found: ironism...With the sobering up from the dream of suburbanization, and with the dawning of the era of environmental awareness, the city is looking for ways in which it can be reborn. By Esther Zandberg -- Gavriela Nussbaum; Oded Kotok; Nicky Davidov; Ton Winhoven - Ha'aretz (Israel)

In Virginia, Vision of Suburbia at a Crossroads: Targeting Cul-de-Sacs, Rules Now Require Through Streets in New Subdivisions...new regulations will improve safety and accessibility and save money..."It's not just about the money. It's about connecting land-use and transportation planning and restricting wasteful and unplanned development." -- Andrés Duany - *Washington Post*

Homesteaders in the Hood: Squatters are multiplying in the recession — what should cities do? The solution is not to chase squatters off, but to bring the market back into balance by helping them find a place to call home. By Eduardo M. Peñalver - *Slate*

Brad Pitt sponsored [Make It Right] homes attract International Code Council's attention: Lessons learned in New Orleans could help shape future amendments to the ICC's basic building codes, as well as its National Energy Conservation Code... - *The Times-Picayune (New Orleans)*

Into the future: What changes could coming years bring to Boston's landscape? A half century of suburban sprawl is drawing to a close. A new age of the city is dawning. But how will our future city look and feel? By Robert Campbell - *Boston Globe*

Rebuilding the European Quarter: Grand New Designs for Brussels: The ambitious design...aims to transform the European Quarter from a concrete administrative ghetto into a glimmering "open city to the sky." -- Christian de Portzamparc [slide show] - *Der Spiegel (Germany)*

S.F.'s next tower hidden from view: ...another competition...the grand prize a site with room for a 60-story tower...But only three teams bothered to respond...the public won't be allowed to glimpse any of the proposals until the city selects a winner...Architecture...is the most public art form we have...this is no time to pull down the shades. By John King -- Richard Meier; Arquitectonica; Solomon Cordwell Buenz - *San Francisco Chronicle*

Poor economy prompts a poor design decision: ...handed a developer a pass to build...garage-fronted rowhouses in Queen Village..."We needed to let the guy know we supported him"...would suggest that good urban design is a luxury we can't afford just now. Unfortunately, if you wreck a block when times are tough, it will still be wrecked when the good times return. By Inga Saffron -- Harman Deutsch - *Philadelphia Inquirer*

In a Brooklyn Housing Project, a Touch of Beauty: Saratoga Village, a public housing project in Bedford-Stuyvesant, represents a brief golden age of community center architecture...That era may have come to a close. -- George Ranalli

[\[slide show\]](#) - New York Times

Infusion of municipal spirit: Whitechapel Gallery, London: ...woven the disparate spaces and levels together wonderfully...There is no flashiness, rather a deep understanding of the architecture and spirit of an era of unsentimental municipal and philanthropic generosity...that now seems particularly timely. There is no better, sharper or more accessible gallery in the city. By Edwin Heathcote -- Charles Harrison Townsend (1901); Robbrecht en Daem; Witherford Watson Mann - Financial Times (UK)

Black History's Future: Grand Plans Unveiled For National Museum of African American History and Culture on the Mall...will most likely include water features and music halls, evocations of slave ships and the African past... -- Devroux & Purnell/Pei Cobb Freed; Diller Scofidio + Renfro/KlingStubbins; Freelon Group/Adjaye Associates/Davis Brody Bond; Foster + Partners/URS/Blackburn Architects/Harry Robinson; Moody Nolan/Antoine Predock; Moshe Safdie/Sulton Campbell Britt [\[slide show\]](#) - Washington Post

Ralph Appelbaum's Transformation of The Museum World Is Clearly Evident: ...one of the most influential educators of our time...chances are good that if you've been to a museum in the past two decades, you've seen his work, or the work of other designers trying to imitate his work. By Philip Kennicott [\[images, video\]](#) - Washington Post

Habitat '67 designated a heritage site by the Quebec government. -- Moshe Safdie - CTV (Canada)

Bids sought to demolish Lafayette Building in Detroit: Another downtown office building appears headed for the history books...across the street from the newly remade Westin Book Cadillac Hotel. By John Gallagher -- C. Howard Crane (1923) [\[image\]](#) - Detroit Free Press

Architects The Latest Dominoes To Fall: Slowdown Signals A Static Horizon: Laid-off construction workers reflect the slowdown. But the dismissal of architects is a bellwether, signifying slowed-down planning for projects that were just on the horizon...layoffs have conjured up memories of the 1991 recession, which eviscerated a generation of younger designers. - Washington Post

RIBA in turmoil as faction presses for "radical change": Senior figures lobby to free up cash during recession by restructuring and cutting jobs..."How do you get turkeys to vote for Christmas?" - Building (UK)

Nature's vital circles: Work dominates our lives, yet its places and processes are ignored by artists. Now, more than ever, we must learn to appreciate the world in which we labour...We need an art that can proclaim the intelligence, peculiarity, beauty and horror of the workplace and, not least, its extraordinary claim to be able to provide us...with the principal source of life's meaning. By Alain de Botton - New Statesman (UK)

American Academy of Arts and Letters announces 2009 architecture awards...Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture and Academy Awards in Architecture -- Juhani Pallasmaa; Stan Allen; Wendell Burnette; Jeffrey Kipnis - American Academy of Arts and Letters

2nd Moscow Architectural Days (MosArchiDays): "Here is Architecture!" April 3-12 - P-Arch Agency

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