

Today's News - Monday, April 27, 2009

- ArcSpace brings us a Fuksas parish in Foligno, and Dublin's new convention center.
- Campbell finds out what some Boston architects are doing to get by: they "aren't used to being rich. They're in it to survive."
- Some frontline marketing strategies to help beat the recession.
- An interesting analysis of why China's grand plans for eco-cities are being scrapped (perhaps not all will agree).
- The skyline as marketing device: a look at Britain's changing cityscapes over the last 10 years: "how did fancy architecture become the calling card of choice for ambitious urban centers?"
- An eyeful of L.A.'s new housing projects for the homeless that move well "beyond the architecture of survival."
- Future Scotland debates at The Lighthouse worth keeping an eye on: "such opportunities for the public to influence policy-makers, planners and other building professionals are disappearing by the day."
- WSJ invites some architects to design the green home of the future (we can only hope they'll become reality one day).
- Pedersen offers high praise (and lots of pix) for the "youthful gusto" of students' winning entries in the Billes Architecture Home Design Competition.
- Finding irony in the Chelsea Barracks debate: "buttresses are flying in all directions"; the irony: the prince and the Modernists have actually "found a lot of common ground" in recent years.
- Heathcote on Prada's Transformer: "this strange event suits Koolhaas perfectly: a slightly ugly object set in the grounds of a beautiful palace in an ugly city."
- Meanwhile, Koolhaas reflects on recessions and fires: "I don't even know about the word 'downturn'... we have no stability anyway... That is why we are very good at improvisation."
- Jacobs expects van Berkel's pavilion in Lower Manhattan will be "one of those unexpected urban treats... a small token of civilization that represents this city's virtues far better than any number of starchitect condos."
- Making Pittsburgh's new Children's Hospital more user-friendly involved a lot more than just focus groups (great pix, too).
- King finds new Napa Valley wineries that "offer refreshing proof that even within the Napa wine scene, innovative contemporary design has a place" (great pix, too).
- Saffron cheers a photographer documenting the "the exuberant design that arose amid the cookie-cutter blandness of a bedroom community" in Northeast Philadelphia.
- Google doing good (again): a mapping project to identify wildlife-compatible sites for green energy projects.
- Meier decides to reopen his Long Island City model "museum."
- ULI Announces 2009 Awards For Excellence winners (a bit slim on details).
- Part of RIBA 175th anniversary doings: "Stirling of Stirlings" - vote for your personal favorite buildings from the last 175 years.
- Calls for entries: Unbuilt Architecture Design Awards; and One Good Chair 2009: "Fit Right Here" challenge.

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-- Massimiliano & Doriana Fuksas: Parish Church and Complex, Foligno, Italy
-- Under construction: Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Assoc.: Convention Centre, Dublin, Ireland

Architects search for blueprint to get by: Layoffs taking toll on profession: As building plans stall in a recession, architects tend to get hit first and hardest. That's proving to be brutally true in Boston...architects aren't used to being rich. They're in it to survive. By Robert Campbell - Boston Globe

Beating the Recession: Frontline Marketing Strategies: "Number one, don't panic."...From marketing leaders on the front lines, here are five strategic actions to combat the recession today and prepare for a competitive advantage on the other side. By Michael J. Reilly -- Perkins Eastman; Watkins Gray; HDR; Ratio Architects; VHB/Vanasse Hangen Brustlin - Society for Marketing Professional Services (SMPS)

China's Grand Plans for Eco-Cities Now Lie Abandoned: Mostly conceived by international architects, China's eco-cities were intended to be models of green urban design. But the planning was done with little awareness of how local people lived, and the much-touted projects have largely been scrapped. -- Arup; William McDonough - Yale Environment 360

Changing Cityscapes: The look of many British cities has changed over the past 10 years with an eruption of glass towers, dockside developments and quirky bridges...how did fancy architecture become the calling card of choice for ambitious urban centres? A city's skyline is now a marketing device. [images, links] - BBC

New housing projects for homeless go beyond basic shelter: New apartment complexes in downtown L.A.'s skid row offer homes that feel safe, encourage healing and look good...some of the most compelling housing in the city is being built for those who have none...move beyond the architecture of survival. They represent the architecture of ambition - the desire to do better, despite the odds. -- Koning Eizenberg; Michael Maltzan; Pugh & Scarpa [slide show] - Los Angeles Times

How architecture can set our souls free: The built environment is a woolly phrase used by architects and planners to mean the things around us...Future Scotland debates are doubly welcome because such opportunities for the public to influence policy-makers, planners and other building professionals are disappearing by the day. By Barry Didcock -- The Lighthouse; Wayne Hemingway; Germaine Greer; Malcolm Fraser; Gareth Hoskins; David Page; EDI Group; Elder and Cannon - Sunday Herald (Scotland)

The Green House of the Future: We asked architects to draw up plans for the most energy-efficient houses they could imagine. They imagined quite a bit. --

Rios Clemente Hale; Mouzon Design; William McDonough + Partners; Cook + Fox [images, links]- Wall Street Journal

The Kids Are Alright: Billes Architecture Home Design Competition...working with Brad Pitt on the Make It Right initiative, gave architecture students a challenging brief, and they responded with youthful gusto...belated "judge's comments" on each of the winners, along with a plug for one of my favorites that failed to take top honors. By Martin C. Pedersen [slide show]- Metropolis Magazine

And the walls came tumbling down: Prince Charles is horrified at plans to build on the prime Chelsea Barracks...But what's he really up to?...Pritzker winners...accusing Charles of trying to "skew the open and democratic planning process"...traditionalist architects...taken up cudgels against the modernists, and buttresses are flying in all directions. The irony is that in recent years...he and the modernists...have found a lot of common ground.- The Times (UK)

Prada's new pavilion in Seoul: Koolhaas is an architect who has never seemed quite comfortable with the limits of building...impatient, he is uneasy with conventional ideas of beauty and he seems unconvinced by architecture's power to effect change...this strange event suits him perfectly: a slightly ugly object set in the grounds of a beautiful palace in an ugly city. By Edwin Heathcote -- Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA)- Financial Times (UK)

The Sky's No Longer the Limit: Rem Koolhaas reflects on the global slowdown's effect on ambitious projects; the aftermath of a fire..."I don't even know about the word 'downturn'...It's seems simply the end to a period...Architecture is in such a permanent state of flux and turmoil that we have no stability anyway...That is why we are very good at improvisation."- Wall Street Journal

Dutch Treat: A pavilion honoring the settlers of Lower Manhattan provides a fresh opportunity to Ben van Berkel...New Amsterdam Plein & Pavilion...will be one of those unexpected urban treats...a small token of civilization that represents this city's virtues far better than any number of starchitect condos. By Karrie Jacobs -- UN Studio [images]- Metropolis Magazine

The new Children's Hospital: Design elements combine to put patients, parents at ease: ...used techniques based in psychology, neuroscience, anthropology and architecture to come up with metaphors, visual imagery and insights that helped shape the new hospital's physical design, environment and overall branding message. -- Astorino Inc.; fathom [images, videos]- Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Modernist design at new Napa wineries: ...the debut this month of Cade Winery...and Hourglass...offer refreshing proof that even within the Napa wine scene, innovative contemporary design has a place. By John King -- Olle Lundberg; Juan Carlos Fernandez/Lail Design Group [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

Modernist gems of Philadelphia's Great Northeast: A local photographer records the exuberant design that arose amid the cookie-cutter blandness of a bedroom community. By Inga Saffron -- Betsy Manning/Architectural Wallflowers; George Neff (1950); Irv Stein/Frank Weise [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

New Google Mapping Project Shows Path to Green Energy: Pilot Uses Web-Based Resources to Identify Wildlife-Compatible Sites -- National Audubon Society; Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)- GreenSage

Meier Model Museum Reopens to the Public: ...will once again begin welcoming visitors to Long Island City model warehouse...by appointment on alternate Fridays beginning May 1- Metropolis Magazine

Success Despite The Economic Downturn: ULI Announces Ten Winners For The 2009 Awards For Excellence: The Americas Competition; Heritage Award Winner Also Selected- Urban Land Institute (ULI)

"Stirling of Stirlings": To celebrate this 175th anniversary year of the RIBA we are highlighting the best buildings of the past and pitting them against each other in a one-off architectural super-award...vote for your personal winner from seven 25-year periods...- RIBA Journal (UK)

Call for entries: Unbuilt Architecture Design Awards 2009: design professionals, design educators and design students throughout the world; deadline: June 4- Boston Society of Architects/AIA

Call for entries: One Good Chair 2009: "Fit Right Here" challenge: Design an original chair that embodies and enhances a particular place, anywhere in the world; cash prizes; registration deadline: May 30- Sustainable Furnishings Council

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