

Today's News - Monday, May 11, 2009

- ArcSpace takes us to Tinsel Town and Second Life (and the first virtual world architect to be included in a Tashen book).
- Ooroussoff finds revised WTC transit hub plan "heart wrenching...what once promised to be one of ground zero's most triumphant architectural achievements is hollow at its core."
- Calatrava calls transit hub a challenge; no comment on the politics: "I am just a simple architect."
- Mo' bad news at Ground Zero? A few planned towers may morph into 4-5-story "stumps."
- As for One WTC (a.k.a. Freedom Tower): "Its tortuous saga shows what can happen when too much is asked of a building."
- Glancey, Bayley, and an impressive handful of architects re: the endless saga of the Prince vs. architects - and his much anticipated RIBA speech: architects are "steeling themselves for another royal broadside"; "With a mixture of masochistic dread and horrified fascination, the profession is wondering what he is going to say now"; Boycott! (will it all be over tomorrow? it's been so much fun...)
- Ponce de Leon calls for finding new ways to address the challenges of our time - beginning with architecture schools - or the profession runs "the risk of relegating to other fields the cultural power of design as an agent for social change."
- Davidson dallies around Lincoln Center: the face-lift is "treating the buildings with clarity, tenderness, and, when it's needed, unsentimental rigor"; Pogrebin reports on its progress: "redevelopment is not without remaining challenges."
- Calys cheers SFMOMA's "ultra chic rooftop garden": it's "the detailing, the connections that separate the merely good from the excellent."
- Planting pavilions: SANAA for the Serpentine and newcomer Tina Manis Associates for the Art Fund.
- Bayley on the Design Museum's plans for Commonwealth Institute: is it really the right place? (Twentieth Century Society says the museum's "rapacious intent" makes it unsuitable for "so distinguished a building").
- Glancey glowers when important sites become available and all anyone thinks of are "shiny homes for the wealthy."
- Hatherley wonders why we "shout about preserving our buildings, but are strangely quiet on the issue of council housing."
- An in-depth look at FLW's Dallas theater, a.k.a. his "little Guggenheim."
- The auction gavel to be raised on bits and pieces of old Chicago Stock Exchange Building.
- Cannell offers "This Is Your Brain on Architecture": could neuroscience be the next big design trend?
- GSA honors National Preservation Month with a new website highlighting its historically and architecturally significant inventory of federal buildings (and lots of 'em).

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-- Michael Maltzan Architecture: Inner-City Arts, Los Angeles
-- Building in a Virtual World: Scope Cleaver: MaxMoney Building, Second Life

Post-9/11 Realities Warp a Soaring Design: The unveiling of an elaborate new model of the revised design of ground zero's transportation hub was heart wrenching...what once promised to be one of ground zero's most triumphant architectural achievements is hollow at its core. By Nicolai Ooroussoff -- Santiago Calatrava [images]- New York Times

Calatrava calls transit hub a challenge: ...said that overcoming the physical challenges involved in designing the transit hub at the World Trade Center site has been the most difficult endeavor of his 28-year career...declined to comment on the stalemate between the Port and developer Larry Silverstein..."I am just a simple architect"...- Crain's New York Business

Port Authority wants to dump three of five proposed skyscrapers for WTC site: The incredible shrinking World Trade Center will be cut back from five iconic skyscrapers to just two signature towers...In place of two Silverstein behemoths, each designed by a British lord and soaring 79 stories, the PA would erect a pair of short, squat buildings no taller than four or five floors - coined "stumps"... -- Daniel Libeskind; Foster + Partners; Rogers Stirk Harbour - NY Daily News

Rising at Ground Zero, a symbol of resilience: Freedom Tower was going to signify America's determination to rebuild quickly and steeply...Fascinated, the city and nation waited. And waited. And lost patience. And interest...Its tortuous saga shows what can happen when too much is asked of a building...- USA Today

Architects quake as Charles clears his throat: 25 years after the infamous 'carbuncle' speech, architects are steeling themselves for another royal broadside...although many of us might question the prince's architectural taste, it's hard to be 100% behind the modernist cause. The prince does tug on a strong thread of public taste... By Jonathan Glancey- Guardian (UK)

Reject the Prince of Pastiche and his ludicrous prejudices: ...he should recall the damage caused by his past pronouncements...With a mixture of masochistic dread and horrified fascination, the profession is wondering what he is going to say now...The prince is correct to criticise bad buildings. But they are bad because they are inept and ill-considered, not bad because they are new. By Stephen Bayley- Observer (UK)

Letter: Boycott Prince's architecture lecture: ...latest move displays the destructive signs of his earlier interventions, when he set out to scupper modern architecture...must now be resisted by the profession...his actions again threaten an important element of our democratic process. -- Peter Ahrends; Will Alsop; Ted Cullinan; Paul Finch; Tony Fretton; Piers Gough; MJ Long; Ian Ritchie; Chris Wilkinson- Guardian (UK)

Op-Ed: Disciplinary Transgressions: The field of architecture is poised to undergo dramatic changes...changes need to begin "at home" with our own cultural institutions—namely architecture schools...The value of design has increased in all aspects of society, at the same time that the pertinence of architecture has decreased. By remaining hermetic and, dare I say, self-absorbed, we run the risk of relegating to other fields the cultural power of design as an agent for social change. By Monica Ponce de Leon/Office dA- The Architect's Newspaper

Living With Lincoln Center: As it turns 50—and gets a face-lift—this complex chunk of city deserves rethinking. A critic's-eye view...a construction site again—as big as the World Trade Center, and nearly as complex...Unlike at ground zero, the answers have been honest, the solutions smart, and the results visible...Today it's hard to imagine clearing so much Manhattan real estate for people to dance and sing. By Justin Davidson -- Wallace Harrison; Philip Johnson; Max Abramowitz; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Wet Design- New York Magazine

Lincoln Center Upbeat About Face-Lift: When Lincoln Center kicks off its 50th anniversary festivities, it will, in a way, be celebrating the future more than commemorating the past...all around the campus are signs that the overhaul of the country's largest performing arts center, is in the home stretch...redevelopment is not without remaining challenges... By

[Robin Pogrebin -- Hugh Hardy; Diller Scofidio + Renfro- New York Times](#)

[Up on the roof: SFMOMA's ultra chic rooftop garden: Perching the garden on top of the museum's parking structure was the easy part; creating a functional and effortless flow between the existing building and the new would prove to be more difficult...it's the detailing, the connections, that separate the merely good from the excellent. By George Calys -- Mark Jensen/Jensen Architects; Mario Botta \[slide show\]- San Francisco Examiner](#)

[Planting Pavilions: It's SANAA for the Serpentine and a Brooklyn newcomer Tina Manis Associates for the Art Fund \[images\]- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Will this classic be fit for purpose? As a prime mover in founding the Design Museum, our architecture critic considers the merits of its move to a refurbished Commonwealth Institute...Twentieth Century Society, which says provocatively that the Design Museum, with its rapacious intent, is not a suitable tenant for so distinguished a building. By Stephen Bayley -- RMJM \(1962\); Koolhaas/Office for Metropolitan Architecture \(OMA\); West 8- Observer \(UK\)](#)

[Spare us more luxury homes: Whenever an important site comes up for sale, the only use anyone appears to think of is shiny homes for the wealthy. By Jonathan Glancey- BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

[Restoration this country truly needs: We shout about preserving our buildings, but are strangely quiet on the issue of council housing...Robin Hood Gardens or Park Hill are worth preserving, not only because of their design...but because their original function, as decent council housing, is as important as it ever was... By Owen Hatherley- BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

[50 Years Inside a Frank Lloyd Wright Theater: The Kalita Humphreys Theater is one of only three theaters designed by Frank Lloyd Wright — the only freestanding one, as the Dallas Theater Center likes to point out...clearly the great architect's "little Guggenheim"... -- Art Rogers \(1990\); Koolhaas/Prince-Ramus \[images, links, video\]- KERA, North Texas Public Broadcasting](#)

[Christie's to auction pieces of old Chicago Stock Exchange Building June 2: Befitting Chicago's history, their past is a bit murky..."I can't really say too much about how we got the property" -- Louis Sullivan/Dankmar Adler \(1894\)- Chicago Tribune](#)

[This Is Your Brain on Architecture: Neuroscientists are uncovering how the design of your home or office can make you smarter, faster, happier. Is brain science the next big design trend? By Michael Cannell \[images, links\]- Fast Company](#)

[GSA Observes National Preservation Month: ...has launched a new Web site and poster series highlighting its historically and architecturally significant inventory of federal buildings...more than 480 buildings listed in or eligible for the National Register... -- Cass Gilbert; Alfred B. Mullet; Robert Mills; Paul P. Cret; Mies van der Rohe \[images, links\]- U.S. General Services Administration \(GSA\)](#)

[WORDS THAT BUILD: Tip #14: Cluster symbolic and mythically-charged keywords in communication with clients. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow](#)

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