Today's News - Thursday, May 14, 2009

- Ouroussoff ogles Piano's Modern Wing that weaves Chicago's "rich architectural history into a cohesive vision, one that is made more beautiful by its remarkable fragility."
- Russell, on the other hand, finds that though it is "impecably proportioned" and "brings an elegant aloofness to the cityscape, it also points to the infatuation of risk-averse trustees."
- Kamin has a high old time on Piano's bridge to Millennium Park, the Wing's "playful sidekick" that "delivers fun with a capital "F"" (let's hope they fix the wobble).
- Ouroussoff ogles Piano's Flying Carpet, Bridge Dress Up Chicago Art Institute: While the Modern Wing brings an elegant aloofness to the cityscape, it also points to the infatuation of risk-averse trustees…has perfected his way with daylight over the years…yet the very homogeneity of the light he produces takes the sanitizing tendency of museums to an extreme. By James S. Russell - Bloomberg News
- Lakefront Showdown: Cudahy's last attempt to dictate a design for the lakefront became a battle royal. Now he has the whip hand on what could be a far more notable building. -- Jim McClintock; Jim Shields/Hammel, Green and Abrahamson (HGA)- Milwaukee Magazine
- Making It Happen: By developing their own projects, Jared Della Valle and Andrew Bernheimer have succeeded in New York without going through the "right" schools or firms. Now, just as the economy collapses around them, they are completing their first two buildings in Manhattan. -- Delta Valle Bernheimer [images]- Metropolis Magazine
- Mies van der Rohe: demolish or not? A minor building by modernist architect is under threat in Chicago. It's what he might have wanted…It's probably the crappiest building Mies ever designed…[it] makes the usual architectural conservation debate even trickier…My solution to all this: reroute the subway system at colossal expense, thus making the Mies hut world famous as an obstacle of progress and a monument for conservation. Then turn it into a gift shop. By Steve Rose - Washington Post
- D.C. Lets Church Tear Down Brutalist Atrocity: …sided decisively with members of the Third Church of Christ, Scientist…despite efforts by historic preservationists to landmark the much-loathed structure…will be a huge victory for common sense and for the rights of property owners against a small band of preservation extremists. -- Araldo Cossutta/I.M. Pei- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)
- Capital Cove and its just desserts: A Capitol Center with a traditional look could have boosted the economy. Instead, ugliness drags it down…Architects, developers and civic leaders in the "Not Very Creative Capital" share much blame for helping the global crisis sink the local economy. By David Brussat - Providence Journal (Rhode Island)
- Bridge over troubled waters: the new SF Oakland Bay Bridge: In spite of all the politics and cost snafus…will be—an iconic structure identifying Oakland and the Bay Area. By George Calys – T.Y. Lin; Donald MacDonald - San Francisco Examiner

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Renz Piano Embraces Chicago: The new Modern Wing of the Art Institute of Chicago is the closest [he] has come in at least a decade to achieving a near-classical ideal...managed to weave the various strands of Chicago's rich architectural history into a cohesive vision, one that is made more beautiful by its remarkable fragility. By Nicolai Ouroussoff [slide shows]- New York Times

Renzo Piano's Flying Carpet, Bridge Dress Up Chicago Art Institute: While the Modern Wing brings an elegant aloofness to the cityscape, it also points to the infatuation of risk-averse trustees…has perfected his way with daylight over the years…yet the very homogeneity of the light he produces takes the sanitizing tendency of museums to an extreme. By James S. Russell - Bloomberg News

Brics, music and big skies: The builders of the original maltings at Snape were sufficiently wedded to the earth and the area to achieve an unselfconscious architecture. Now, architects building anew at this extraordinary campus for music [Aldeburgh Festival]...blends the industrial, the agricultural, the vernacular and the modern…"protecting the innocence of the place." By Edwin Heathcote -- Haworth Tompkins [images]- Financial Times (UK)

It's time to think outside the big box: Though the province has made it clear it wants to control development (sprawl) in southern Ontario, it has yet to address the issue of retail...The Neptis Foundation has moved boldly into this vacuum and produced a report, "Places to Shop and Places to Grow," that examines the effect of retailing on development...attempts to provide policy-makers with data needed to bring retail into line with the provincial goal of greater sustainability. By Christopher Hume - Toronto Star

Regeneration report calls for improvements: All new public projects including housing, schools, and hospitals will be subject to new design standards...begins to acknowledge some big problems in the nation's built environment...It remains to be seen whether the mooted improvements will address some thornier issues...By Edwin Heathcote- Financial Times (UK)

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Calling Ada Louise Huxtable! A recent review by Nicolai Ouroussoff neglects the messy nature of design authorship...authorial shorthand does a real disservice to the profession—and misses some interesting stories, too. By Martin C. Pedersen -- Freelon Adjaye Bond/SmithGroup [image, links] - Metropolis Magazine

Excess & Success: It's an awkward time for design. And that's a very good thing...the lust of the recent past for limited-edition design objects...has been redirected. Recycling is the mantra now, but so are durability, quality, and beauty...recent boom times have restored designers' cred as creative thinkers. And that's worth quite a lot. By Julie V. Iovine- The Architect's Newspaper

Building a McMini: It's the antithesis of the McMansion. Chad Ludeman's handsome homes are the smallest, most energy-efficient, and lowest priced he can build...it's just the sort of house America needs right now - a tight-as-a-drum box that cost a miserly $100,000 to construct and promises to subsist on $1,200 worth of energy a year. By Inga Saffron -- Postgreen; Brian Phillips/Interface Studio Architects [graphics] - Philadelphia Inquirer

California Grass: Eco-architect Mickey Muennig personifies the green glory of Big Sur: Part hobbit hole, part high-tech habitat, it's a perfect blend of old hippie values and the newest in green thinking. By Alastair Gordon [slide show] - Wall Street Journal

10 great green houses -- Whole Trees Architecture; Michelle Kaufmann; Lundberg Design; DeBoer Architects; Communitecture; Openspace Architecture; Arkin Tilt Architects; Cobworks; Sparano + Mooney; Pb Elemental Architecture [slide show] - Mother Nature Network

Call for entries: Chain of Eco-Homes Green Design Competition: create home design concepts for Greensburg, Kansas's "Living Laboratory" (international); deadline: August 15 - FreeGreen & Greensburg GreenTown

TED's Open Translation Project brings subtitles in 40+ languages to TED.com: ...project offers video subtitles, time-coded transcripts and the ability for volunteers worldwide to translate any talk into any language. -- TEDTalks - TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design)

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