

## Today's News - Monday, June 1, 2009

- ArcSpace brings us Pugh + Scarpa in Santa Monica, and Morphosis in Maryland.
- Calys finds San Francisco's SPUR "an honest piece of architecture."
- Hawthorne x 2: he looks into the labyrinth of controversies, political and aesthetic, surround L.A.'s new arts school (was Prix the right pick?).
- His take on why Century Plaza hotel is worth saving from a plan for "a district still largely unwalkable," but would make it "newly unremarkable."
- Lewis says the imminent demolition of D.C.'s Brutalist church is not necessarily "a harbinger of things to come...with a creative facade makeover, even the brutal can be made beautiful."
- Hunt howls at the "disregard for Britain's greatest socialist architect."
- A call for Leeds not to cut down its "concrete jungle" (the "annoyance factor they provide to the old guard is almost reason enough to preserve them").
- Labor agreement saves Gehry's Beekman Tower (and many other NYC projects) from getting cut off at the knees.
- SOMs Pearl River Tower offers a glimmer of hope in polluted Chinese city (not all are convinced).
- Re:Vision Dallas finalists offer off-the-grid solutions for a city block that could be working models of sustainability for cities around the world (worth linking to images).
- An eyeeful of winning designs to transform old London barges into new homes.
- Atlanta's Civil Rights center picks a stellar landscape team.
- Erickson supporters make plea for reflecting pool at Museum of Anthropology; and developer hopes to actually build the late architect's 60-storey skyscraper in Vancouver.
- Climate change on our brain: U.S. Energy Secretary Chu wants to paint the world white to fight global warming; a new report documents the global impact of climate change on human society today; Yale researchers' study finds most polluted ecosystems can recover - in an amazingly short time.
- Zumthor compares work to love affair: "There's a kind of chemical reaction" (and the hard work comes after the infatuation).
- Australian Institute of Architects names new National President (she's young and green - in the sustainable sense).
- Architect magazine's new annual ranking of the top 100 U.S. firms (criteria create a few surprises).
- Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art named the RIBA Journal's Stirling of Stirlings.

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-- Pugh + Scarpa: [Step Up on Fifth, Santa Monica, California](#)  
-- Morphosis: [NOAA Satellite Operations Facility, Suitland, Maryland](#)

[SPUR Urban Center: the architecture of honesty: ...it is often the challenge of a limited budget that produces some of the most satisfying architecture...stands in stark contrast to the recent trend of ostentatious, yet poorly designed, buildings...You'll find a "building that wanted to be" an honest expression of its occupants... By George Calys -- San Francisco Planning and Urban Research; Pfau Long Architects \[image\]- San Francisco Examiner](#)

[Pass/fail for L.A.'s new arts school: ...Central Los Angeles Area High School #9...hardly just an example of innovative but expensive name-brand architecture...nearly every twist in \[the\] story line can be read in the architecture itself...Rarely has the firm's architecture seemed so visually dramatic -- or so politically out of touch. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Coop Himmelb\(l\)au \[slide show, links\] - Los Angeles Times](#)

[Century Plaza as L.A. statement: Why the hotel is worth saving from a plan to replace it with a \\$2-billion, mixed-use project...raising the complicated issue of whether it ever makes sense to protect not just discrete buildings but the planning values they embody...risks creating a muddle that is the worst of both worlds...a district still largely unwalkable but newly unremarkable. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Minoru Yamasaki \(1966\); Welton Becket; Pei Cobb Freed; Ken Smith; Rios Clementi Hale; Gensler - Los Angeles Times](#)

[The Triumph and Decline of a Truly Brutal Style: The historically landmarked, stylistically "brutalist" Third Church of Christ Scientist...is fated to meet the wrecking ball...church's fate is not a harbinger of things to come. The need to act sustainably and create greener architecture will ensure survival of most unloved concrete buildings...And with a creative facade makeover, even the brutal can be made beautiful. By Roger K. Lewis - Washington Post](#)

[Prioritising penguins: Should a modernist zoo pen survive while a fine example of the aesthetics of social justice is sold? Only in Britain: we preserve the Penguin Pool...lovingly cared for, even after the penguins have gone. Meanwhile...Finsbury Health Centre is being shamefully disposed of...Sadly, it is all in tune with our disregard for Britain's greatest socialist architect. By Tristram Hunt -- Berthold Lubetkin - Guardian \(UK\)](#)

[Don't cut down our concrete jungle: Concrete buildings have become a lightning rod for traditionalists who see them as blots on the landscape...But adore or despise them they're an important part of our urban environment...if we're not careful we could nonchalantly wipe away great examples of an era of architecture which reflected a seachange in society and a crucial chapter of our history.- Yorkshire Evening Post \(UK\)](#)

[Savings on Labor Allow Work on Residential Skyscraper to Resume...on Beekman Tower, which will be Frank Gehry's first skyscraper and the tallest residential building in New York City...two dozen more projects are under consideration for the agreement. - New York Times](#)

[Supertower offers glimmer of hope in polluted Chinese city: Pearl River Tower in Guangzhou is being billed as a green beacon amid the pollution of China's construction boom...billed as the most energy efficient superskyscraper ever built. -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill \(SOM\) \[image\]- Guardian \(UK\)](#)

[Dallas to Revitalize Downtown With Nation's First 'Off The Grid' Urban Block: ...a working model of sustainability for cities around the world...three Re:Vision Dallas finalists... -- LITTLE; Atelier Data/MOOV; David Baker and Partners Architects/Fletcher Studio \[link to images\]- PR Web](#)

[Barge to the future: Architects PCKO and Baca have been named joint winners in the contest to convert five old London barges into new homes...victorious schemes will be 'developed and delivered' in a key location on the Isle of Dogs...as a 'showcase of innovation in waterspace development' \[images\]- The Architects' Journal \(UK\)](#)

[Center for Civil and Human Rights center picks landscape designers...to design the grounds of the \\$125 million museum](#)

and center for social change. -- EDAW Atlanta; Hood Design; The Freelon Group; HOK; Gallagher & Associates [image]- Atlanta Business Chronicle

Arthur Erickson supporters make plea for reflecting pool at Museum of Anthropology: ...say it's time to complete his vision..."He's been wanting that [to see the pool filled] for 30 years"... -- Noel Best/Stantec; Bing Thom; Simon Scott- Georgia Straight (Vancouver)

Developer trying to save building: There are hopes that a 60-storey skyscraper design by the late Arthur Erickson can still be constructed in downtown Vancouver...Speculation has been rife that the eye-catching Erickson tower will be shelved in favour of a less ambitious design, if anything is built at all.- Metro News Vancouver (Canada)

Steven Chu, Nobel prize-winning physicist [and] U.S. Energy Secretary: paint the world white to fight global warming...By lightening paved surfaces and roofs to the colour of cement, it would be possible to cut carbon emissions by as much as taking all the world's cars off the roads for 11 years- The Times (UK)

Human Impact Report: "The Anatomy of a Silent Crisis"...A comprehensive report documenting the global impact of climate change on human society today...aims to fill a void in both a general public understanding of climate change as well as to senior policymakers. [links]- Global Humanitarian Forum

Most Polluted Ecosystems Recoverable, Say Yale University Researchers: ...most polluted or damaged ecosystems worldwide can recover within a lifetime if societies commit to their cleanup or restoration. [link to study]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Pritzker Prize winner compares work to love affair: "There's a kind of chemical reaction"...He walks the site of a new project, observing, absorbing and brainstorming. "Dreams start...It's like falling in love." And as with love, the hard work comes after the infatuation... -- Peter Zumthor- Associated Press (AP)

Architects' peak body goes young and green with new female National President: A woman who represents the new face of the Australian architecture profession – dynamic, young, innovative and 'green' – has been appointed the Australian Institute of Architects' (RAIA) 70th National President. -- Melinda Dodson/GHD Architects - Australian Institute of Architects/AIA (formerly RAIA)

The Architect 50: A new annual ranking of the top U.S. firms (not just the big ones, mind you)...criteria for inclusion comprise a trifecta of critical goals for every practice: profitability, sustainability, and design quality. -- William Rawns Associates; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM; HOK; Rafael Viñoly; Perkins+Will; etc.- Architect Magazine

Rennie Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art has been named the RIBA Journal's Stirling of Stirlings in a vote to find the best building of the RIBA's 175 year existence.- BD/Building Design (UK)

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