

Today's News - Friday, June 26, 2009

- Of mega-regions and growing infrastructure problems: they already rely on each other, so it's time to start acting - and investing - like it or we're in for mega-problems.
- Speaking of infrastructure, in the U.K., new Crossrail chief's questioning the importance of design makes a number of architects very cross.
- No matter the design, a new bridge costs Germany's Elbe Valley UNESCO World Heritage Site status.
- Hawthorne departs Dubai to explore Abu Dhabi, and finds it "a proving ground for an experiment in forging a new, hybrid civic culture."
- Parks x 3: Saffron cheers "four visions for creating a green gem" on a small stretch of Philadelphia's riverfront (small, perhaps, but at least a step in the right direction).
- Work (finally) to begin on Louis Kahn's 1974 design for Roosevelt memorial park in NYC (not all are pleased - but a great slide show).
- Russell on Bette Midler celebrating her New York Restoration Project's 33rd oasis (only about 20 more to go).
- Off again/on again: work resumes on Zaha's Seville library (at least until the next court ruling).
- Stewart looks at Libeskind's prefab and what you get for your mucho millions.
- FLW wanted the Guggenheim to be red - or pink - or peach - or maybe blue (fab slide show).
- Weekend diversions: Q&A with Eliasson in Chicago re: the resonant work of Buckminster Fuller (and his own).
- Heathcote: "the show just doesn't hang together"; and Bayley: "mostly puerile tosh" (we think neither is impressed with "Radical Nature" at the Barbican).
- Page turners: Brussat finds Insall's "Living Buildings" "tremendously artful" and "a special feast for those enthralled by the beauty bestowed on architecture by age."
- A reissue of Banham's 1971 "Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies" just as timely today: it "changed the way people thought they could write about design."
- Sulzer's Prouvé tome is "an essential reference work."
- "Alvaro Siza, The Function of Beauty" keeps its focus on the present day (great slide show).
- Mehrotra celebrates "Bombay Deco."

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Megaregions and Megaproblems: ...officials and policymakers will need to figure out how to deal with their shared and growing infrastructure problems...The idea behind America 2050 is that places within these megaregions already rely on each other, and unless they start acting -- and investing -- like it, the fall of one place could likely result in the fall of many others. - PLANetizen

Anger as Crossrail chief questions value of design: Will Alsop, Richard MacCormac and Ian Ritchie point to Jubilee Line Extension's legacy...Just three weeks after taking up his post leading the £16 billion project, Terry Morgan gave short shrift to a question about the importance of good design..."We have to decide on how far we take the idea of a design legacy. That's where the costs go very quickly if you're not careful." - BD/Building Design (UK)

Germany's Elbe Valley Loses UNESCO Status: ...removing Dresden's Elbe Valley from its list of World Heritage Sites. The decision is the result of a bridge the city is currently building across the valley. But another German site may soon be added. [slide show]- Der Spiegel (Germany)

Abu Dhabi's fortune favors the bold: A waste-free, green-tech city on the sands of the Arabian peninsula? A Gehry Guggenheim and mini-Louvre to anchor a \$27-billion cultural center? It's a paradoxically forward-thinking vision...Masdar City and Saadiyat Island more than mere test beds for green-tech and high-art ambition. It also makes them a proving ground for an experiment in forging a new, hybrid civic culture... By Christopher Hawthorne -- Foster + Partners; Frank Gehry; Jean Nouvel; Tadao Ando; Zaha Hadid- Los Angeles Times

Four visions for creating a green gem on the riverfront: ...any of the shortlisted firms would do a first-rate job at Pier 11...all seem to appreciate the pier's place in the waterfront cosmos...It is reasonable...to expect the project to demonstrate that Philadelphia is not a place where design goes to die. By Inga Saffron -- James Corner/Field Operations; José Almiñana/Andropogon; W Architecture; Michael Van Valkenburgh; PennPraxis [slide show]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Work to Begin on Long-Delayed Louis Kahn Park: After decades of false starts...4.5-acre Four Freedoms Park in New York City to honor President Franklin D. Roosevelt, is scheduled to break ground in mid-August...However historic, the design has opponents on Roosevelt Island... -- Mitchell/Giurgola Architects [slide show]- Architectural Record

Bette Midler Whacks Weeds, Taps 50 Cent to Turn New York Green: ...a community garden next to an abandoned tenement, the 33rd oasis her New York Restoration Project has transformed from garbage-strewn wasteland..."We ended up with 51 gardens that were homeless orphans"...about 20 still need restoration. By James S. Russell -- Ken Smith; Walter Hood; Lynden Miller; Robert A. M. Stern; Armand LeGardeur - Bloomberg News

Court ruling fails to stop work on Zaha Hadid's Seville library: ...construction work can continue until a further legal ruling is made.- BD/Building Design (UK)

Dan's Den: Libeskind goes flatpack: If you've got a couple of million euros you don't know what to do with, why not buy your own Libeskind-designed house? Dan Stewart looks at what you get for your money [images]- Building (UK)

Fifth Avenue Shocker: The Building Wore Red: If Frank Lloyd Wright had had his way...the Guggenheim Museum wouldn't be near white...the model was red -- "the color of creation"...He also suggested

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

[Q&A: Olafur Eliasson: On the occasion of his show at Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art \(MCA\), the artist talks about the resonant work of Buckminster Fuller. \[images\]- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Green shoots in the city: "Radical Nature: Art and Architecture for a Changing Planet 1969-2009" at the Barbican...There are compelling fragments and the exhibition extends beyond the museum...The show just doesn't hang together. By Edwin Heathcote- Financial Times \(UK\)](#)

[Nature seen in a bilious shade of green: As an exercise in raising awareness of the planet's plight, "Radical Nature: Art and Architecture for a Changing Planet 1969-2009" fails on almost all levels...The impression...is one of self-indulgence, not practical intellect...mostly puerile tosh. By Stephen Bayley -- Joseph Beuys; Robert Smithson; Ant Farm; Buckminster Fuller- Observer \(UK\)](#)

[Book review: Gimlet eye on a restorers' bible: "Living Buildings " by Donald Insall...sums up what he has learned about restoration over his firm's half a century in business...Tremendously artful ...a special feast for those, such as me, enthralled by the beauty bestowed on architecture by age. By David Brussat- Providence Journal \(Rhode Island\)](#)

[Book review: Welcome to Banham's Los Angeles: In a reissue of his "Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies," we see how Peter Reyner Banham challenged stereotypes with controversial claims about the city's status...changed the way people thought they could write about design...making judgments that were not only spot-on but also predictive.- Los Angeles Times](#)

[Book review: Behind the Facades: "Jean Prouvé: Œuvre complète/Complete Works, Volume 4: 1954-1984" by Peter Sulzer...portrait of the final decades of Prouvé's life is more nuanced than the various non-academic biographies published to date...an essential reference work for an impressive and quietly influential footprint that stretches over three decades. By Robert M. Rubin \[images\]- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Book review: "Alvaro Siza, The Function of Beauty": Rather than provide an overview of his half-century long career...keeps its focus on the present day, delving in depth into 21 recently built and still ongoing works. \[slide show\]- Wallpaper*](#)

[Celebrating Bombay's Art Deco: ...architect Rahul Mehrotra, recently in Chennai to launch his latest book "Bombay Deco," talks about his works, conservation and his teaching practice at MIT in the US.- The Hindu \(India\)](#)

["Avenue of Light" as Urbanism: Soaring, illuminated sculptures by Cliff Garten Studio anchor major redevelopment efforts in the Ft. Worth's historic district \[images\]- ArchNewsNow](#)

[Market Research Strategies in Uncertain Times #1: Now More Than Ever: Why market research is so critical to a firm's success. By Frances Gretes- ArchNewsNow](#)



[-- Exhibition: Green Architecture for the Future, Louisiana Museum, Humlebæk, Denmark](#)

[-- Nearing completion: Eric Owen Moss Architects: Art Tower, Los Angeles](#)

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