

Today's News - Thursday, November 19, 2009

- Hawthorne weighs in on just-released Bush presidential library design: it's "a handsome, contextual piece of architecture" with "little swagger" (that's a good thing).
- Dillon likes some elements, but elsewhere "things seem muddled and unresolved" (Laura B. says "will not be a shrine").
- Heathcote has high hopes for Qatar's "extraordinary experiments" that could "provide a counterbalance to the turbo-charged skyline of Dubai."
- Helsinki has its own towering plans - a whole bunch of 'em.
- Jacobs visits a Bowery reborn and finds it "a lesson in urban ecology" that represents "the ascendance of a new, more fluid, social aristocracy" (that's both good and bad).
- LAPD HQ "ploughs no new ground" which sadly proves "if Los Angeles were ever the center of innovative public design, those days are over."
- King x 2: a new garage makes him look twice: it "may be one of the most dynamic architectural buildings in the area"; and a big thumbs-up for new plan for Old Mint to "bring out the latent dignity of the robust classical design, rather than stressing 21st century glitz."
- UC Berkeley Art Museum plans still on track, but "whether we work with Toyo Ito & Associates or not is still to be determined."
- Armenia's Cafesjian Center for the Arts "is a mad work of architectural megalomania and one of the most spectacular museum buildings in ages."
- APA's report on how cities use parks to create safer neighborhoods.
- Boddy ponders winners of FormShift Vancouver Design Competition and wonders "how will these good intentions turn into buildings?"
- 2-parter: WPA 2.0: Working Public Architecture winner announced; and the jury weighs in on the next generation urban infrastructure.
- Poynor spends some quality time with Richard Rogers: though "buffeted" by a prince, the firm "forges ahead with new ideas for old problems that puts the architect's social responsibility" at its heart.
- Singapore hands out the President's Design Awards.
- Milka Bliznakov Prize winners put the focus on women in architecture.

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Little swagger in plans for Bush presidential library: Bush was a lightning rod of a politician. His presidential library is meant to be anything but...a handsome, contextual piece of architecture...above all a quiet, low-slung design that wears its influences from architectural history easily and proudly. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Robert A.M. Stern; Michael Van Valkenburgh [images]- Los Angeles Times

Bush Library building design plays off its environs at SMU: George W. Bush Presidential Center moves from state secret to three-dimensional reality...design stops short of being a copy of the university's predominantly Georgian vernacular...The most appealing element is Freedom Plaza...But elsewhere, things seem muddled and unresolved. By David Dillon -- Robert A.M. Stern; Michael Van Valkenburgh [slide show, links]- Dallas Morning News

George W. Bush Presidential Center design is unveiled: ...an exclusive interview with Laura Bush...an active year of planning the design for a 225,000-square-foot building to house her husband's presidential papers...will not be a shrine. -- Robert A.M. Stern; Michael Van Valkenburgh - Dallas Morning News

A blend of traditional and contemporary: Qatar has seemed determined to provide a counterbalance to the turbo-charged skyline of Dubai...extraordinary experiments...ambitious Education City...The plan and the architecture appear intelligent, restrained and distinctive...the "Heart of Doha" looks the most mature and serious of all. By Edwin Heathcote -- I.M. Pei; Jean Nouvel; Arata Isozaki; Legoretta & Legoretta; Arup; Aecom (formerly Edaw); Allies & Morrison; Mossessian & Partners; Adjaye Associates; John McAslan; Dar Al Omran; Michel Mossessian - Financial Times (UK)

Helsinki plans to build skyscrapers in Pasila district: Architect envisions 40-storey block reaching up over 150 metres...would be Finland's first real skyscrapers -- Cino Zucchi Architeti [images]- Helsingin Sanomat (Finland)

A Bowery Reborn: The neighborhood once home to flophouses and the Salvation Army becomes a target for development...a lesson in urban ecology...Who is this new place? ...represents the commercial leveraging of cultural shifts—starting with punk rock—and the ascendance of a new, more fluid, social aristocracy. By Karrie Jacobs -- Ada Louise Huxtable; Morphosis; SANAA; Carlos Zapata - Metropolis Magazine

Crit: LAPD Headquarters: Guarded Symbolism: ...gestures, however earnest and intended to signal a break from the LAPD's past, plough no new ground...What the city has acquired is a caution, not a symbol. If Los Angeles were ever the center of innovative public design, those days are over. By Greg Goldin -- AECOM [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Stucco garage in S.F. is a work of art: ...when the material is used in a way that shows how compelling it can be, we should pay attention - even if the building in question is something as mundane as a parking garage...may be one of the most dynamic architectural buildings in the area. By John King -- WRNS Studio [slide show]- San Francisco Chronicle

San Francisco Museum & Historical Society's priceless vision for Old Mint: The new insight is to use the restoration to bring out the latent dignity of Alfred Mullett's robust classical design, rather than stressing 21st century glitz...If all this sounds obvious, then you didn't see the previous design schemes. By John King -- HOK; Arup; Walter Hood - San Francisco Chronicle

UC Berkeley Art Museum rebuild still on: "Whether we work with Toyo Ito & Associates or not is still to be determined"... - Contra Costa Times (California)

Unveiling the Hanging Gardens of Armenia: The Cafesjian Center for the Arts is a mad work of architectural megalomania and one of the most spectacular museum buildings in ages. By Michael Kimmelman -- Alexander Tamanyan (1930s) [slide show]- New York Times

How cities use parks to create safer neighborhoods: Key points...to make the best use of greenery and open space, it must be positively incorporated into a community's design. - American Planning Association (APA)

Shifting Towards Sustainability: FormShift Vancouver Design Competition Explores Architectural Form: With these successes on the civic policy and urban planning fronts, eyes have turned towards architects: How will these good intentions turn into buildings? By Trevor Boddy -- Sturgess Architects; Romses Architects; Go Design Collaborative (Jennifer Uegama/Pauline Thimm) [images, links]- Arcade (Seattle)

WPA 2.0: Working Public Architecture Competition Announces Winners + Competition Jury on Next Generation Urban Infrastructure -- PORT architects; Nicholas de Monchaux; Lateral Office/Infranet Lab; Aershop/Darina Zlateva/Takuma Ono [images, links]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

The Way Forward: Buffeted by criticism from Prince Charles, Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners forges ahead with new ideas for old problems...This is a practice that puts the architect's social responsibility at the heart of the firm..."Let's deliver the physical things and the social things. Now's the time." By Rick Poynor [images]- Metropolis Magazine

4 individuals, 7 projects win President's Design Awards...for their national significance and creative value... -- Atelier Ikebuchi; Asylum Creative; LOOK Architects; Arup; WOHA; Exit Design; DP Architects/Maki & Associates; Nanyang Optical; Philips Design; RSP Architects/IJP - Channel NewsAsia (Singapore)

Women in architecture honored: International Archive of Women in Architecture Milka Bliznakov Prize winners...the book "A Woman's Berlin, Building the Modern City" by Despina Stratigakos; and the report "Odilia Suarez: The Exemplary Trajectory of an Architect and Urbanist in Latin America" by Martha Alonso, Sonia Bevilacqua and Graciela Brandariz. - Collegiate Times (Virginia Tech)



-- Tadao Ando: Punta della Dogana, Francois Pinault Foundation, Venice, Italy
-- Book: "Eye of the Leopard" by Dereck Joubert & Beverly Joubert

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