Lessons from Amsterdam to Abu Dhabi to improve our communities through innovative transportation planning + 9 great streets around the world and what they can teach us about how roads can become prime public spaces.

Washington "seems to have learned a lesson from New York" with the Urban Revitalization and Livable Communities Act that will fund parks to rebuild cities.

A Q&A with the four NYC commissioners who are making NYC a more livable city - and their unusual and "enlightened fellowship."

Helsinki wins title of World Design Capital 2012.

Hawthorne's take on the Swiss ban of minarets: now the focus of the "tense relationship" and debate between Islam and the West has shifted to architecture: "for supporters of the ban the towers carry heavy architectural and cultural weight."

Architect Watch: Mies Down in Chicago; Zumthor Up in LA. By Lee Rosenbaum -- Blair Kamin; Mies van der Rohe; Richard Meier; Peter Zumthor; Alejandro S. Lotufo; José María Sánchez García; Design Vanguard 2009: These people aren't kids; they're rising stars, provocateurs, and trailblazers. -- DnA_Design and Research Office; Taylor and Miller Architecture and Design; Merzproject; Office Kersten Geers David Van Severen; Jose Maria Sanchez Garcia [images] - Architectural Record

Mike's Angels: Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg can rightfully claim that he has made New York a more livable, inviting city. Here, he explains why he had the help. The four commissioners overseeing parks, planning, transportation, and building design have formed an enlightened fellowship... -- Adrian Benepe; Amanda Burden; David Burney; Janette Sadik-Khan - The Architect's Newspaper

State of the Cooper Union: 41 Cooper Square...Mayne has got it just right...This is high architectural drama, a luminous and exhilarating invitation into the structure's life and use. It is not building as bling. It is how architecture turns program and purpose into art. And it perfectly expresses the creative energy of New York. By Ada Louise Huxtable -- Morphosis; Gruzen Samton- Wall Street Journal

Come to Park; Stay for the Architecture: Art Basel Miami Beach and Design Miami fairs have brought thousands of art aficionados...But they will have to look beyond the usual venues to see one prominent new artwork: a parking garage... By Fred A. Bernstein -- Herzog & de Meuron; Raymond Jungles [image] - New York Times

Design Vanguard 2009: These people aren't kids; they're rising stars, provocateurs, and trailblazers. -- DnA_Design and Architecture; BIG | Bjarke Ingels Group; Min | Day; Mount Fuji Architects Studio; Tham & Videgård Arkitekter; Neri & Hu Design and Research Office; Taylor and Miller Architecture and Design; Merzproject; Office Kersten Geers David Van Severen; Jose Maria Sanchez Garcia [images] - Architectural Record

The freedoms of suburbia: Paul Barker's new mission is to rehabilitate the reputation of suburbia. Here, he explains why architects need to engage with this much-maligned space...we must go with the grain of popular choice, not stamp on it.

Commercial innovations lead way for green homes: First-generation sustainable concepts often innovated in commercial buildings and government offices are increasingly migrating to homes and condominiums. -- KMD Architects; Stevens Architects; SWA Group; Arup [slide show]- San Francisco Chronicle

Commercial innovations lead way for green homes: First-generation sustainable concepts often innovated in commercial buildings and government offices are increasingly migrating to homes and condominiums. -- KMD Architects; Stevens Architects; SWA Group; Arup [slide show]- San Francisco Chronicle

Architect Watch: Mies Down in Chicago, Zumthor Up in LA. By Lee Rosenbaum -- Blair Karmin; Mies van der Rohe; Richard Lacayo; Edward Lifson; Michael Govan; Renzo Piano; Rem Koolhaas [links] - ArtsJournal

Ron Arad Architects: Design Museum Holon inauguration date announced: January 31, 2010...overall mission of the institution is to explore the impact of design and its relation to urban spaces and everyday life. [images, links] - designboom

2012 Olympics showpiece: Big bubbles in the sky..."Clouds"...designed to broadcast real-time data and images on spherical, three-dimensional screens. While the images would float high above the city, the sound would be broadcast at ground level. -- Carlo Ratti; Senseable City LabMassachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) [slide show] - CNET

Call for papers: MillionTreesNYC, Green Infrastructure, and Urban Ecology: A Research Symposium to showcase research and projects that contribute to accumulating knowledge on the socio-ecology of urban landscapes, green infrastructure and public health; deadline: January 8, 2010 - MillionTreesNYC.org
Phone box has new life as library: A traditional red phone box has been recycled into one of the country's smallest lending libraries - stocking 100 books. "This facility has turned a piece of street furniture into a community service in constant use"...Phone boxes have been turned into art installations, a shower and even a public toilet. [image] - BBC

INSIGHT: Alignment: Sustainability and Historic Preservation: Retrofitting existing buildings is a vital strategy for significantly reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions globally. To many, it is THE strategy. By Elaine Gallagher Adams, AIA, LEED AP - ArchNewsNow

-- Exhibition: "Donald Judd: Furniture," Sebastian + Barquet, New York, NY

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