Today's News - Friday, December 11, 2009

EDITOR'S NOTE: Early morning travel plans on Monday, so there will be no newsletter - but we'll be back Tuesday, December 15 (and posting from our home base time zone).

- Report from Istanbul: What lessons could its roving band of city experts offer Europe's fastest growing metropolis?
- Sydney to get its first Gehry.
- Farrelly thinks its "great to have a Gehry in Sydney, but hopes he has "another idea, not ichthyological; something with a magic more spatial than material."
- British experiments with converting old offices, church halls, and municipal buildings - but not all are convinced it's such a good idea (turning "crap buildings" into schools "isn't going to look very good)."
- Will design thresholds improve public buildings? Yes, says Margaret Hodge; no counters Robert Adam.
- Eyesful of new and notable performing arts centers.
- Call for entries: Urban Center of Sustainable Transports in Barcelona international student competition.
- NYT's 9th Annual Year in Ideas: Design.
- Weekend diversions:
  - Pearlman warns "don't let the marketing people put you off": "Earth; art of a changing world at the Royal Academy "is not a breast-beating show by any means."
  - Glancey gives (mostly) thumbs-up to the Serpentine's "Design Real": "Design might not be art - but maybe, in some ways, it's all the better for it."
  - Saarinen show at the Museum of the City of New York "offers a fascinating insight into this search for an aesthetic that could, simultaneously, express both egalitarianism and imperialism."
  - Dietsch drives through "House of Cars" at the National Building Museum and finds it "fascinating" with "hopeful signs of architectural reinvention."
  - Cool time-lapse video of NYC's first robot-built public art installation.
  - "Urbanisms: Steven Holl + Li Hu: 4 Projects in China" opens in one of them in Shenzhen.
  - Premiere screenings of "Make No Little Plans: Daniel Burnham and the American City" in Chicago (of course).
  - Heathcote's list of best books of the year.
- How do you solve a problem like the Royal Academy? How about an exhibition inspired by climate change? ..."Earth: art of a changing world..."don't let the marketing people put you off. And don't let the climate-change thing put you off, either...This is not a breast-beating show by any means. By Hugh Pearman [images]- HughPearman.com (UK)
- Will design thresholds improve public buildings? Yes, says Margaret Hodge, it's daft to settle for second best in public programmes; while Robert Adam counters that all they do is enforce the establishment view. - BDiBuilding Design (UK)
- How do you solve a problem like the Royal Academy? How about an exhibition inspired by climate change? ..."Earth: art of a changing world..."don't let the marketing people put you off. And don't let the climate-change thing put you off, either...This is not a breast-beating show by any means. By Hugh Pearman [images]- HughPearman.com (UK)
- Design Real: the Serpentine gallery goes back to the drawing board. A sculpted motorcycle jacket, an exquisite metal heart ... a new exhibition argues that good design can be beautiful as well as practical. But is it art?...Design might not be art – but maybe, in some ways, it's all the better for it. By Jonathan Glancey [images]- Guardian (UK)
- Saarinen: Captain America: New York exhibition reveals Eero Saarinen was nothing less than an architect of the US's ascent as a superpower...exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York offers a fascinating insight into this search for an aesthetic that could, simultaneously, express both egalitarianism and imperialism. - BDiBuilding Design (UK)
- A drive through garage designs of past and present: "House of Cars" at the National Building Museum proves that the parking garage can be an urban asset, even a beautiful structure to behold...fascinating exhibition...While these designs offer hopeful signs of architectural reinvention, they are still rare in the world of parking garages. By Deborah K. Dietsch - Washington Times
- E-Wall: Checking out New York's first robot-built public art installation...Pike Loop...An otherwise drab corner of the city suddenly seems a bit more colorful and strange... -- Gramazio & Kohler; Storefront for Art and Architecture; Janette Sadik-Khan [images, video]- Metropolis Magazine
- Steven Holl Architects Opens Exhibition in Newly Finished Vanke Offices: "Urbanisms: Steven Holl + Li Hu: 4 Projects in China" in the Horizontal Skyscraper/Vanke Center, in Shenzhen...tracks the process of designing...Nanjing Museum of Art and Architecture, Beijing Linked Hybrid, Shenzhen Horizontal Skyscraper, and Chengdu Sliced Porosity Block. - ArtDaily.org
Premiere of "Make No Little Plans: Daniel Burnham and the American City" Sunday, December 13 at the Gene Siskel Film Center in Chicago. [video link] Archimedia Workshop

Edwin Heathcote's books of the year: "The Freedoms of Suburbia" by Paul Barker; "On the Town: One Hundred Years of Spectacle in Times Square" by Marshall Berman; "Lost London 1870-1945" by Philip Davies; "Athanasius Kircher's Theatre of the World" by Joscelyn Godwin; "Tatlin's Tower: Monument to Revolution" by Norbert Lynton; "On Architecture" by Vitruvius - Financial Times (UK)


A new novel set within the looking glass: Villa Tugendhat is in many ways the protagonist in Simon Mawer's "The Glass Room"... renewed interest in the building created by Mawer's novel may help focus attention on its plight and ensure that the efforts made to preserve it... -- Mes Van der Rohe - The Prague Post

Space Chair Project: one armchair's 98,268-foot ascent into the stratosphere. [video] Toshiba

A Star is Reborn: Fox Oakland Theater and Oakland School for the Arts: A faded movie palace - and the surrounding neighborhood - gets a new lease on life. -- Architectural Dimensions; ELS Architecture and Urban Design; Starkweather Bondy Architecture [images] - ArchNewsNow

Best Architecture Books of 2009: 10 crucial volumes from the classic to the iconoclastic. By Norman Weinstein -- Steven Holl; Le Corbusier; Jerry Yudelson; Álvaro Siza; Vincente Guallart; Calatrava; Bauhaus; etc. - ArchNewsNow

-- Gehry Partners, LLP: Novartis Campus, Basel, Switzerland
-- Construction start: MVRDV: Rotterdam Market Hall, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

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Yesterday's News

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