

Today's News - Friday, December 18, 2009

- Weinstein finds Stern's mammoth new monograph "particularly eye-opening" and "warrants our appreciative attention."
- It looks like Buffalo is moving ahead with its big Canal Side plans; RFP will hit the streets in January (we'll keep an eye out for it).
- San Francisco buys Treasure Island from the U.S. Navy and plans to turn it into "the most environmentally friendly development in the country."
- NYC breaks ground for its \$1 billion police academy (parking for 3,000 cars included).
- New Haven gives conditional approval for Foster's Yale School of Management - some tweaking required ("the modern design did not resonate with many of the neighbors, who said it looks like an airport").
- Jenkins on the Burj Dubai: "It is outrageous, wasteful, egotistical, ridiculous" - but he can't deny it's beautiful; on a more sober note, Dubai will likely be "a desert Detroit."
- Lubell's first impressions of CityCenter: "There are some architectural gems," but "it's sort of an architectural petting zoo."
- Jacobs hops aboard the Las Vegas Monorail: "I couldn't figure out why someone had decided to put an amusement-park ride pretending to be transit in this distinctly unamusing location. What were they thinking?"
- Byrne, Blumenauer, and Janette Sadik-Khan discuss how to create bike-friendly cities.
- Debating the future of Candela's Miami Marine Stadium: "It's one thing to save historic landmarks...but it's much more difficult to bring Modernist structures back into use."
- How some California architects are - and aren't - being helped by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.
- Eric Owen Moss to curate the Austrian exhibition for the next Venice Biennale.
- Call for Expressions of Interest: international competition to design an iconic kiosk for the City of Westminster, U.K.
- Weekend diversions:
- Overwhelmed by the mega-CityCenter? See it in miniature at the Bellagio (how more Vegas can it get?).
- Two takes on the Shenzhen and Hong Kong Bi-city Biennale: it "glories in the dizzying excess of China's urban growth"; for Chen, it's "the ultimate parable of turbo-charged, post-economic reform China."
- In L.A., "Folly - The View From Nowhere" offers a dazzling collection of large-scale eye candy.
- Davidson and Risen give (mostly) thumbs-up to Muschamp's posthumous "Hearts of the City": his "eccentricities are stimulating and infuriating in equal measure"; and it "reveals...a surprising (and ambitious) reading of 20th century culture."
- Brussat finds two tomes that "would make fine, subversive gifts."
- Bernstein says Dolkart's "The Row House Reborn" could change the way we think about preservation.
- One we couldn't resist: "The Decade's Top 10 Crazy Things That Didn't Get Built" (and their cause of death).

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Book Review: How to Make Versions of the Past Present: "Robert A.M. Stern Buildings and Projects 2004-2009": Stern might just be "the squarest of the hip, and the hippest of the squares." That might also imply that he is one of the sanest and happiest people in the profession. For that and more, this book warrants our appreciative attention. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow

Construction start eyed for Canal Side: ...\$300 million project in downtown Buffalo...expected to start by early June...calls for a major transformation of a 20-acre parcel...into a mix of canals, shops, restaurants, hotels and entertainment venues...RFPs for the design-build aspect to hit the streets in January and with bids due back by April. - Business First of Buffalo

San Francisco to get Treasure Island for \$105 million: ...struck a deal with the U.S. Navy...paves the way for the city to undertake one of its most ambitious development projects - remaking the closed naval base on a man-made island...into a model of sustainable development...with 6,000 homes, a gleaming 60-story high-rise and a new commercial town center - all with a goal of being the most environmentally friendly development in the country. - San Francisco Chronicle

Construction Begins on Police Academy in Queens: ...\$1 billion...complex will supplant the city's creaky, antiquated academy that opened in Gramercy Park in 1964. -- Perkins+Will [images]- New York Times

New Haven gives conditional OK for Yale construction plan: ...a modernist glass and steel School of Management complex by famed architect Norman Foster...the modern design did not resonate with many of the neighbors, who said it looks like an airport. -- Fosster + Partners - New Haven Register (Connecticut)

When this gaseous burp explodes in the desert air, we'll still have the Burj Dubai: ...a true wonder of the world, a fitting monument to Dubai as the capital of excess and irrational exuberance...the most astonishing man-made structure I have seen. It is outrageous, wasteful, egotistical, ridiculous; but ask if the Burj Dubai is beautiful and I cannot deny it. By Simon Jenkins -- Adrian Smith; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)- Guardian (UK)

Journey From The Center Of CityCenter: The Pros: There are some architectural gems...The Cons: ...it's not really a city center...it's sort of an architectural petting zoo; a collection of pretty objects with limited relation to one another. By Sam Lubell [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Backdoor Tour: The curious route of the Las Vegas Monorail is the product of an equally bizarre planning and development process...I couldn't figure out why someone had decided to put an amusement-park ride pretending to be transit in this distinctly unamusing location. What were they thinking? By Karrie Jacobs - Metropolis Magazine

Cities for Cycling: Creating Bike-Friendly Streets: "Cities, Bicycles, and the Future of Getting Around," at the Newseum...David Byrne...Congressman Earl Blumenauer...and Janette Sadik-Khan...discussed how to best integrate bike infrastructure into cities and build demand for biking..."Corbusier's idea was to kill the streets. Thank God he failed." - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

A Stadium Comeback: The debate over restoring one of Miami's most iconic venues heats up...Miami Marine Stadium has just been added to the World Monuments Fund's influential list of endangered places..."It's one thing to save historic landmarks...but it's much more difficult to bring Modernist structures back into use." By David Sokol -- Hilario Candela (1963) [images]- Metropolis Magazine

In for a Penny: Stimulus impact on architects still modest...even when architects aren't the prime player in a stimulus fund application, they have opportunities to assist in the pursuit. -- WRT/Solomon E.T.C.; Paulett Taggart Architects; HOK; AECOM [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Eric Owen Moss appointed as curator of Austrian exhibition for the Biennale di Venezia 2010: "Austria Under Construction: Austrian Architecture Around The World, International Architecture in Austria" - ArchDaily

Call for Expressions of Interest/EOI (international): Westminster is looking for a designer or architect to create a new iconic

London landmark...design a bespoke kiosk for West End street traders which could be rolled out to 45 kiosks across 18 sites along Oxford Street and Piccadilly Circus; deadline: January 8, 2010- City of Westminster (UK)

Bellagio exhibit a primer on CityCenter art, architecture: "12+7: Artists and Architects of CityCenter" features miniatures of CityCenter artwork and representative pieces of the mega-project's dozen artists, as well as seven architects. -- Rockwell Group; Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); Helmut Jahn; Foster + Partners; Pelli Clarke Pelli; Maya Lin- Las Vegas Review-Journal

China's urban art shows off skyscraping ambition: Exhibiting a rotting tofu hut alongside a dragon made of underpants, Shenzhen's third biennale of architecture glories in the dizzying excess of China's urban growth...extremely ambitious, yet awkwardly titled, Shenzhen and Hong Kong Bi-city Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture"... -- Ball Nogues; Bjarke Ingels Group/BIG; IDU; DnA; Bureau des Mésarchitectures [image, links]- Guardian (UK)

Architecture and Design's New Hot Spots: ...dual openings of the Shenzhen and Hong Kong...Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture...Shenzhen is the ultimate parable of turbo-charged, post-economic reform China...Hong Kong is the pragmatic older sister... By Aric Chen -- Jean Nouvel; Shigeru Ban; Patrick Jouin; Steven Holl; Toyo Ito; Ben van Berkel; Studio Pei-Zhu; WORKac; Bureau des Mésarchitectures [images, links]- Fast Company

Architectural follies at MOCA Pacific Design Center: "Folly -- The View From Nowhere" includes a collection of 100 images of large-scale eye candy: follies, which typically serve as memorials, meeting points or observation towers. -- Escher GuneWardena [images]- Los Angeles Times

Book review: Shaker of Movers: "Hearts of the City" by Herbert Muschamp...a posthumous collection of 20 years' worth of columns...[his] eccentricities are stimulating and infuriating in equal measure...barely feigns interest in mundane issues of functionality, and has little to say about how a new building stitches itself into a neighborhood. Passion is all. By Justin Davidson- New York Times

Critical Disjuncture: "Hearts of the City: The Selected Writings of Herbert Muschamp" reveals, beneath his lavish praise for Gehry & Co., a surprising (and ambitious) reading of 20th century culture. By Clay Risen- Architect Magazine

How to preserve the future of the past: In "The Future of the Past," Steven Semes proposes a new ethic for architecture, planning and preservation that is not really new, merely forgotten by those duty-bound to remember...Anthony Flint's excellent "Wrestling With Moses"...Both books would make fine, subversive gifts. By David Brussat- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Row Houses and Their Alterations Over the Years: "The Row House Reborn: Architecture and Neighborhoods in New York City, 1908-1929" by Andrew Dolkart...an important resource for both homeowners and preservation professionals. By Fred A. Bernstein- The Record (Columbia University)

The Decade's Top 10 Crazy Things That Didn't Get Built...and Cause of Death -- Calatrava; Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM)/Field Operations/SHoP/Diller Scofidio + Renfro/SANAA/Handel Architects; Frank Gehry; Herzog & de Meuron; Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); Thom Mayne/Morphosis; Renzo Piano; Swanke Hayden Connell [images]- Curbed New York



-- Zaha Hadid Architects: MAXXI museum, Rome, Italy
-- Rafael Viñoly Architects: Carrasco International Airport, Montevideo, Uruguay

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