

Today's News - Monday, January 18, 2010

- ArcSpace brings us the Musée Louvre-Lens, and an Austrian steelworks' new HQ struts its stuff.
- Architecture for Humanity issues a call for the profession to respond to the Haiti earthquake.
- Gehry's withdrawal from Museum of Tolerance project "due to planning and financial disagreements," not politics.
- Developer invests \$7 million to "invite" Pei to design a museum in China.
- Rochon minces no words about what she thinks of Canada choosing "Cirque du Soleil's one-stop showmanship over a landmark Canadian architectural moment" for Shanghai Expo 2010 ("You dumb cluck.")
- Lewis looks forward to the new decade: "building efficiency will replace grandiosity" with a focus on retrofitting and repurposing existing building stock (but will media and the public be interested?).
- Saffron looks back: it might be "bleak out there at the moment," but the last decade will be seen as a time when some cities "tipped from dying to dynamic."
- And she looks forward with a profile of the Philadelphia Four: "rather than attempting to make our system greener, these architects are bent on overthrowing it."
- 10 practices picked to spruce up 12 of the Perth's "urban design failures."
- Detroit has some big plans to transform 44 acres of power plants and chemical factories into a wildlife refuge, juxtaposing "the hyper-urban with resilient nature" (it's happening elsewhere, too).
- A German professor devises a CO2 catcher: it "may be bulkier and less attractive than real trees, but they are thousands of times more efficient."
- Portland's federal building will soon be sprouting 250-foot-tall trellises.
- Q&A with "Green Metropolis" author Owen re: just about everything from density, downtowns, and driving, to why Thoreau sets a bad example.
- Hawthorne on how Gang's Aqua "brings a feminine touch to Chicago's muscled skyline" with "a fresh approach to skyscraper design...that suggests a changing of the guard in architecture that has as much to do with generation as gender."
- Crosbie cheers Roche's restoration and expansion of Saarinen's Ingalls Rink at Yale that proves sometimes the "quiet design is the best answer."
- Heathcote cheers Brit Insurance Design Awards shortlist: it's "as if design has finally been allowed to grow up...with ideas of real weight."
- Brussat hands out his roses & raspberries for 2009 (trying to be as upbeat as possible).
- RMJM hires "Fred the Shred," the "disgraced former Royal Bank of Scotland boss" + one incensed voice wonders: what were they thinking? "It's like saying your ambition is to be regarded as the world's worst architects."
- Kennicott reviews "Benjamin Latrobe: America's First Architect" (premiering tonight on PBS stations): historians "wonder what Washington might have looked like if it had found better accommodation with its first architectural visionary."

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-- Sanaa & Imrey Culbert: Musée Louvre-Lens, Lens, France
-- Dietmar Feichtinger Architectes: Voestalpine AG, Linz, Austria

Architecture for Humanity Responds to Haiti Quake: ...has issued a call to architects, interior designers, engineers, environmental scientists, agronomists, and landscape architects across the globe to donate their time and talent. - Interior Design magazine

Frank Gehry steps down from Museum of Tolerance project in Jerusalem: Other architects working on the project, however, say [his] resignation was not related to the protests...withdrew due to planning and financial disagreements. -- Kolker, Kolker, Epstein Architects - Ha'aretz (Israel)

leoh Ming Pei [I.M. Pei] to design Jiankang Palace ruins museum during the 6 Dynasties in Nanjing: ...museum will be his 75th design. - People's Daily (China)

Expo 2010 isn't supposed to be a circus act: It was shabby of the Harper government to choose Cirque du Soleil's one-stop showmanship over a landmark Canadian architectural moment...You dumb cluck. You allow a monumental nation-branding building to be conceived without an architect.

By Lisa Rochon -- Saia Barbarese Topouzanov Architectes; SNC-Lavalin; ABCP Architectes; Giampaolo Imbrighi; Foster + Partners; Bjarke Ingels/BIG- Globe and Mail (Canada)

For architects this decade, building efficiency will replace grandiosity: ...huge, costly luxury projects such as CityCenter and the Burj Khalifa (Burj Dubai) will be emulated infrequently during the second decade of the 21st century...architects are likely to be kept busy modifying, expanding and repurposing...existing building stock...will media and public interest in an innovative real estate retrofit match their interest in a multibillion-dollar, architectural tour-de-force? By Roger K. Lewis - Washington Post

The sensuous city: They used to be the mean streets...it's bleak out there at the moment...But once the dust settles, I suspect the last decade will be seen as a time when a select group of cities - Philadelphia included - tipped from dying to dynamic. By Inga Saffron - Philadelphia Inquirer

City's green groundbreakers: Architects champion new views of digital design and prefab construction...the Philadelphia Four...share a conviction that conventional building methods have become as obsolete as hunting and gathering...Rather than attempting to make our system greener, these architects are bent on overthrowing it. By Inga Saffron -- KieranTimberlake; Erdy McHenry; Onion Flats; Interface Studio Architects [slide show] - Philadelphia Inquirer

Ten firms wanted to fix Perth eyesores: ...head planner wants to pay 10 practices \$100,000 to spruce up 12 of the city's urban design failures...under the proposed Perth What if? Project. -- HASSELL; Donaldson + Warn; Cox; Iredale Pedersen Hook; Woods Bagot; Jones Coulter Young; Roberts Day Group; Urbis; Taylor Burrell Barnett; Urban Design Centre-Architecture & Design (Australia)

Strange Sanctuary: Old Factories Offer New Hope for Wildlife: Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge...encloses everything from power plants to chemical factories to a former missile site...44 acres will undergo a rigorous revitalization. - E/The Environmental Magazine

Can CO2 Catchers Combat Climate Change? A German professor has created a filter which extracts more than a thousand times more carbon dioxide from the air than a tree...devices may be bulkier and less attractive than real trees, but they are thousands of times more efficient. -- Klaus Lackner/Lenfest Center for Sustainable Energy- Der Spiegel (Germany)

Portland high-rise to get 250-foot-tall trellises: ...even in a city with a reputation for rainfed greenery as well as for green

architecture, the wall of the Edith Green-Wendell Wyatt Federal Building would stand out...part of a \$135 million remodeling, with most of the money from federal stimulus funds. -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill/SOM (1975); SERA Architects [image]- Washington Post

Interview with David Owen, Author of "Green Metropolis: How Living Smaller, Living Closer, and Driving Less Are the Keys to Sustainability"... "If you want to see people moving around under their own power under the sky, don't go to the country or the suburbs; go downtown." - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Jeanne Gang brings feminine touch to Chicago's muscled skyline: Aqua, the undulating, 82-story structure, brings a fresh approach to skyscraper design...skyscrapers and phallic symbolism are never far apart. Aqua doesn't shrink from that history...the building's significance is based on more than form. It suggests a changing of the guard in architecture that has as much to do with generation as gender. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Frank Gehry; Studio Gang- Los Angeles Times

Whale Addition No Fluke: Saarinen Associate Guided Design Of Yale's Ingalls Rink: The new underground addition and the sensitive adjustments to the restored rink interior...are great because they're virtually invisible...In this case, a quiet design is the best answer. By Michael J. Crosbie -- Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo- Hartford Courant (Connecticut)

Brit Insurance Design Awards Shortlist reveals pivotal moment for design: ...as if design has finally been allowed to grow up...manages to combine the usual consumer stylings with ideas of real weight. By Edwin Heathcote -- Tony Fretton; ARU; 6a; David Chipperfield; Zaha Hadid; MAD; Elemental; Kennard-Phillips; Shigeru Ban; PearsonLloyd- Financial Times (UK)

Roses and raspberries for 2009: Dr. Downtown always tries to be as upbeat as possible about Providence. By David Brussat -- Newport Collaborative Architects; William D. Warner Architects/Maguire Group; S/L/A/M Collaborative/StudioJAED; Haynes/de Boer Associates; Bay & Bay Architects [images]- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

RMJM hires 'Fred the Shred': ...disgraced former Royal Bank of Scotland boss Fred Goodwin to work as senior advisor on international business- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Op-Ed: A few bricks short of a hod to trust Sir Fred with this job: How else can you explain RMJM's astonishing decision to hire the world's worst banker, "Sir" Fred Goodwin of RBS fame, as an international adviser?- The Herald (Scotland)

TV Preview: Latrobe, designer of domes and columns gets his pedestal...didn't just import classical ideas from Europe into the nascent American republic. He enlivened and adapted them...historians interviewed in "Benjamin Latrobe: America's First Architect" wonder what Washington might have looked like if it had found better accommodation with its first architectural visionary. By Philip Kennicott -- Paul Goldberger; Michael Fazio [slide show]- Washington Post

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