

Today's News - Wednesday, March 17, 2010

- Q&A with Goldberger re: how politics, not buildings, are filling the void at Ground Zero.
- A Brit Insurance Design Award juror explains the difficulty in having to compare "one of the most sensitive and powerful pieces of museum design in recent times" (Chipperfield's Neues Museum) to Elemental's "transformative design" for social housing "conjured out of almost nothing" (the "iPhone of social architecture").
- Calys and Hawthorne chime in with more names added to SFMOMA's secretive shortlist.
- An eyeful of two variations on Libeskind's high-end, green prefab house (he calls it a "walk-in sculpture"; we call it mucho expensive).
- Kamin gives thumbs-up and thumbs down to Lagrange's new Chicago high-rise: a "traditional wonderland is topped with a mad hat"; it's "pretty good" on the ground, but "a major blot on the skyline."
- Hinshaw on a Seattle competition to re-imagine urban alleys that came up with "ideas we should apply around the city" (and elsewhere, we imagine).
- Solar Ivy: "an aesthetic approach to harvesting solar energy."
- Anderton talks to experts re: designing a "vibe": a city looking to art to revive its recession-hit storefronts; and good, and bad, news about LA buildings and their readiness for a Chile-scale earthquake.
- Jacobs takes on "Avatar": "I walked out of the theater concerned about the devaluation of the word 'beauty'" (Grand Theft Auto is better in many ways, despite the blood-letting).
- Public Architecture's 3rd annual survey of firms doing pro bono work for the public good.
- Pilloton and Project H profiled + the remaining itinerary for her Airstream trailer-housed Design Revolution Road Show (great links).
- Merging firms recast as Chan Krieger NBBJ.
- Society of Architectural Historians launches a new platform for its online journal (it's pretty amazing).
- City of Dreams Pavilion Design Competition announces finalists to design a pavilion on Governors Island.
- A good reason to head to Barcelona next week: SmartGeometry 2010 Conference to "encourage new forms of architectural and structural expression."
- Call for entries: Best Restoration of the 21st Century; and deadline looms for One Prize Award: Mowing to Growing.
- Happy St. Patrick's Day! (we're seeing green things beginning to sprout - yay!)

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Politics, Not Buildings, Fill World Trade Center Void: Q&A with Paul Goldberger: "New York came back after 9/11 in a pretty healthy way in spite of that 16-acre problem in the middle of it that remains such a serious problem." - National Public Radio (NPR)

Why a folding plug won last night's design awards: How do you compare a social housing scheme and a fashion collection? As a judge of the Brit Insurance Design Awards, I had to decide...it is always possible to create cultural monuments with millions of pounds; it is almost impossible to conjure transformative design out of almost nothing. By Justin McGuirk -- Alejandro Aravena/Elemental - Guardian (UK)

Ultra secret architect selection for SFMOMA: When asked why the process was so secretive, the museum public relations office could only say, "it's just to keep the process internal"...if the process were public and transparent, [it] would be open to all the kibitzing, sniping, and whining this town is capable of... By George Calys -- Koolhaas/Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA); Steven Holl; David Adjaye; Snohetta; Renzo Piano; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Foster + Partners; Peter Zumthor - San Francisco Examiner

Familiar list of architects for SFMOMA expansion: My quick reaction to the group of firms is that it is heavy on talent and museum experience but also predictable... By Christopher Hawthorne -- Renzo Piano; Koolhaas/Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA); Peter Zumthor; David Adjaye; Steven Holl; Enrique Norten/TEN Arquitectos; Foster + Partners; Snohetta; Diller Scofidio + Renfro - Los Angeles Times

"Villa Libeskind" Takes Prefab to the Extreme: ...high-end, green prefab housing...a "walk-in sculpture." [slide show] - Architectural Record

Elegance proves elusive; Elysian's traditional wonderland is topped with a mad hat: ...ridiculously overscaled top, which resembles a giant thimble or a Shriner's hat, is a major blot on the skyline...At ground level, the results are pretty good...a civilized piece of urban design...flops in attempt to fully transport the gracefulness of the base into the sky...comes up short as it reaches - in vain - for the high bar of vanished prewar elegance. By Blair Kamin -- Lucien Lagrange; Simeone Deary Design Group [images] - Chicago Tribune

How to make urban alleys work: An imaginative design competition focuses on one alley in Pioneer Square, coming up with ideas we should apply around the city. By Mark Hinshaw/LMN Architects -- Lesley Bain/Kit Kollmeyer; Animish Kudalkar/Brianna Holan/Clint Keithley/Yoshi Ogawa/LMN Architects [links to images] - Crosscut (Seattle)

The Ripple Effect: Solar Ivy: A Brooklyn-based architect takes an aesthetic approach to harvesting solar energy...PV "leaves" strung across a steel net that can be retrofitted to buildings of any shape and size. -- SMT [images] - Metropolis Magazine

DnA/Frances Anderton: Designing a "Vibe": ...you can't have a good nightclub without good design; City of Glendale looks for a curator of art for its recession-hit storefronts; good, and bad, news about LA buildings and their readiness for a Chile-scale earthquake. -- Victor Drai; Christian Schulz/Studio Collective; Alan Loomis; Nabih Youssef - KCRW (Los Angeles)

The Avatar Age: Is James Cameron's blockbuster beautiful? No more than Grand Theft Auto...I walked out of the theater concerned about the devaluation of the word beauty. By Karrie Jacobs - Metropolis Magazine

Third Annual Survey of Pro Bono Service by U.S. Architecture Firms

Completed: Survey by nonprofit Public Architecture shows architects across the U.S. putting their skills and talents to work for the public good...To date, Public Architecture has recruited nearly 750 firms to The 1% program.- PR Web

Changing the World, One Design at a Time: Emily Pilloton launches socially responsible design revolution...Product Design Initiatives for Humanity, Habitats, Health and Happiness, better known as Project H.- Voice of America (VOA)

Design Revolution Road Show: itinerary for mobile exhibition housed in 1972 Airstream trailer...through April 18 -- Emily Pilloton; Project H Design [images, links]- Design Revolution Road Show

NBBJ and Chan Krieger Sieniewicz Announce Merger: Newly-integrated design firm evolves from three years of successful collaboration...As part of the transition...the Cambridge office will operate as Chan Krieger NBBJ.- MarketWatch

Online Journal 2.0: Society of Architectural Historians has developed a new platform for its online journal that it hopes will close the gap between reading about important architectural examples and experiencing them...dubbed JSAH Online... [links]- Inside Higher Ed

Finalists for City of Dreams Pavilion Design Competition Announced: ...a gathering place for people to meet, learn about the arts programs on Governors Island. -- Echomaterico; Nameless Architecture; Ann Ha/Behrang Behin; Easton+Combs- FIGMENT/ENYA/SEAoNY

SmartGeometry 2010 Conference: focused on innovative design tools, technologies, and methodologies that allow and encourage new forms of architectural and structural expression; March 23-24; Barcelona, Spain- Bentley

Call for entries: Best Restoration of the 21st Century; open to all, but project must be in the U.K.; deadline: May 5, 2010- Country Life Magazine (UK)

Call for entries/deadline reminder: 1st Annual One Prize Award: Mowing to Growing: A Design Competition for Creating Productive Green Space in Cities; 1st prize: \$10,000; registration deadline: March 31, 2010- Terreform ONE



Kengo Kuma & Associates: The Opposite House, Beijing, China

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