

Today's News - Tuesday, April 20, 2010

- Sharp offers a very sharp assessment of what lessons can be learned from the architectural reinvention of other ruined cities (from 1666 to last year) in rebuilding Haiti: "it seems clear that those governments that act quickly and incisively come out on top."
- An impressive line-up shows how "we can fight homogeneity and think of creative ways to preserve or recapture our unique communities" (plan to spend some time with this one).
- Bruce Katz re: the need for smarter investments from the public and private sectors in revitalizing metro areas.
- The CDC's Healthy Community Design Initiative aims to help build healthy communities by design.
- Speck plants roots in Lowell, MA, for a spell to help the Boston 'burbs recast itself "as a place where you can live without a car."
- A call to get serious about fixing Boston's Kennedy Greenway: it "desperately needs a nurturing hand, and all the parties must come together to provide one."
- Saffron on the "I-beam that changed architectural history" and its proposed transformation: it "would be the sole act of daring misbehavior in a wasteland of good taste" (whatever happens, Venturi and Scott Brown's reputations will survive).
- Denver's quirky new skyscraper "unfolds cinematically, with every random side a sequel. But is it a good movie" (or a traffic hazard)?
- Goldhagen on Boston's best little boathouse: it "looks more impressive even now than it did when it opened a couple of years ago."
- Rybczynski has a revelation in an empty Guggenheim rotunda: "For once, Goethe's old chestnut applies; this really is frozen music."
- Intriguing take on a Koolhaas lecture at Cornell: "His provocative paradoxes that once shook up thinking in the field now seem pasted together in a flippant and flimsy discourse riddled with ideological contradictions."
- An exhibition in Montreal, open for just a few days, shows off 60 projects that may - or may not - shape the city's future: some "impress by their height and scale - or their hubris, depending on your perspective."
- Earth Day approaches: Straw bale building making a comeback: "the lesson of the Three Little Pigs isn't to avoid straw. It's that you don't let a pig build your house."
- 40 years later, three environmental activists reflect on the state of the American green movement: "We're not back to square one...But we're in much worse shape than we were" (it's not all gloom and doom, though).
- An original Earth Day organizer reflects and looks forward.
- Kahn's Roosevelt Memorial, 36 years in the making because of "a perfect storm" of obstacles.
- Firms face dilemmas - and the law - when it comes to unpaid interns while internships become a "mushrooming" trend.
- AIA's EVP/CEO McEntee heading to the American Geophysical Union.
- Call for entries: A New Landmark for Aldgate international competition for the 2012 London Olympics.
- Well, we didn't make it to London over the weekend, but at least we were amused by a few clever survival strategies: U.K.'s "Dunkirk-style" rescue mission for holidaymakers; Frankfurt Airport offered clean underwear, airport tours, and art classes; and much more.

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New and improved: Rebuilding a disaster zone: The rebuilding of Port-au-Prince won't start for years, yet there's already hope it will herald a brighter future...What can we learn from the architectural reinvention of other ruined cities? By Rob Sharp -- Robin Cross/Article 25; Rodolphe el-Khoury; Jo da Silva/Arup; Make It Right; James Dart; Architecture for Humanity; John McAslan - Independent (UK)

The Neighborhoods Issue: Agriculture is the New Golf: Rethinking Suburban Communities, by Allison Arieff; The Great Desprawling Experiment: Can Tyson Corner show the country how to fix its suburbs?; Wiped Off the Hypothetical Map: Imagine the cobblestone streets of New York City's SoHo neighborhood uprooted and replaced by a six-lane elevated...; etc. - GOOD Magazine

Revitalizing America's Metro Areas: Bruce Katz emphasizes the need for smarter investments from the public and private sectors and how a shift to a low-carbon economy is vital for maintaining the country's competitiveness. - Brookings Institution

New Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Report Tells How to Design Communities to Support Good Health: ...the latest product of CDC's Healthy Community Design Initiative, aimed at combating soaring rates of asthma, diabetes, and obesity by improving the way communities are designed. [link to report]- LAND Online / American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

It takes an urban village: Planning firm seeks to recast Lowell as a place where you can live without a car..."I don't think of it as a suburb of Boston, or even related to Boston...it has the potential to be more self-reliant than a lot of other Boston suburbs." -- Jeff Speck and Associates - Boston Globe

How to fix the Greenway: ...should be a 21st-century complement to the Boston Common...The progeny of the disastrously mismanaged Big Dig, the Greenway lacked proper planning when construction began more than two decades ago...desperately needs a nurturing hand, and all the parties must come together to provide one. - Boston Globe

I-beam at the eye of architectural storm: A plan to expose the steel span...of the ISI [Institute for Scientific Information] building has sparked an intense debate...whether something irreplaceable will be lost...proposal is a lot more interesting than the one there now...would be the sole act of daring misbehavior in a wasteland of good taste. By Inga Saffron -- Venturi Scott Brown; MS&R Design; Steinberg/PennPraxis; jBH3 [images] - Philadelphia Inquirer

1800 Larimer: Downtown Denver's quirky new skyscraper: Xcel Energy's new headquarters...An odd collage of shapes, colors and surfaces...Even people who love skyscrapers...find it disturbing. And no wonder. The structure...is intentionally jarring. -- RNL [images] - Denver Post

The Best Little Row House in Boston (Or, This Is What Architecture Really Is): ...Community Rowing Inc. boathouse that looks more impressive even now than it did when it opened a couple of years ago. By Sarah Williams Goldhagen -- Office dA; William Rawns; Ann Beha; Kling Stubbins; Anmahian Winton [slide show essay] - The New Republic

Nice Curves: What the Guggenheim looks like naked: ...a solo show by...Tino Sehgal left the rotunda empty. The stark space was a revelation...reminded me what a remarkable gift [Wright] left us...For once, Goethe's old chestnut applies; this

really is frozen music. By Witold Rybczynski- Slate

Thinking in Boxes: While the embrace of paradoxes has made Koolhaas' innovative theoretical raids on architectural complacency a salient point of departure for a whole generation of younger practitioners, [he] positioned his own ideas as the new complacency...His provocative paradoxes that once shook up thinking in the field now seem pasted together in a flippant and flimsy discourse riddled with ideological contradictions. -- Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA)- Cornell Daily Sun

Is this a glimpse of the future Montreal? "Le Montréal du futur"...opens Tuesday at Complexe Desjardins...Some of the 60 projects are already under way...others are waiting to be built or are still at the pipe-dream stage...Some are designed with maximum fun in mind...Other projects impress by their height and scale -- or their hubris, depending on your perspective. [slide show]- Montreal Gazette

I'll huff and I'll puff...: An old building material may be making a comeback: California is having a rethink, and may change its regulations to accommodate straw-bale construction..."the lesson of the Three Little Pigs isn't to avoid straw. It's that you don't let a pig build your house."- The Economist (UK)

Counting Wins and Losses on Earth Day: Three prominent environmental activists reflect on the state of the American green movement for the 40th anniversary of Earth Day..."We're not back to square one...But we're in much worse shape than we were..." -- Paul Ehrlich; Stephanie Mills; Dennis Hayes- Miller-McCune

Transformative Times: Earth Day 1970, Placemaking, and Sustainability Today: ...the desire for transformative change is once again intensifying...A key element of this reenergized push for social change is a new movement dedicated to making great places in our communities. By Fred Kent- Project for Public Spaces (PPS)

For Roosevelt Memorial, a Groundbreaking 36 Years in the Making: Delays are almost inevitable when it comes to public works, but it took 36 years for the ground to be broken for a new memorial on Roosevelt Island...project encountered..."a perfect storm" of obstacles. -- Louis I. Kahn- New York Times

The Unpaid Intern, Legal or Not: Labor Department says it is cracking down on firms that fail to pay interns properly and expanding efforts to educate companies, colleges and students on the law regarding internships...sees definitive evidence that the number of unpaid internships is mushrooming...- New York Times

Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer Christine McEntee departs AIA to lead American Geophysical Union- American Institute of Architects (AIA)

Call for entries: A New Landmark for Aldgate open international competition to design a New Aldgate, a temporary landmark...to stand for the duration of the 2012 London Olympics; cash prizes; deadline: May 28- The Architecture Foundation (UK)

Eyjafjallajökull Chaos: Britain is resorting to the Royal Navy in a 'Dunkirk-style' rescue mission for holidaymakers...Frankfurt Airport Offers Clean Underwear, Airport Tours and Art Classes - Der Spiegel (Germany)



SANAA: Rolex Learning Center, Lausanne, Switzerland

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