

Today's News - Wednesday, April 21, 2010

- Phifer's new building for the North Carolina Museum of Art (opening this Saturday) strives to nearly disappear.
- Hawthorne on Brasilia's 50th anniversary (today!): it was "built with an optimistic eye on the future," while today we design new cities "marked more by wariness and anxiety...defensive enough to seem nearly medieval."
- Niemeyer himself says he is sad the city fell short of his egalitarian vision.
- His "poetic monument" to the French Communist Party in Paris (with a Prouvé façade, no less) "still radiates unorthodox grace."
- Meanwhile, his fairground in Lebanon, a "forgotten, sprawling artifact of architectural modernism," faces an uncertain future.
- Pedersen is both inspired - and depressed - by what he learned at the Regional Plan Association conference: it "showcased some brilliant, pragmatic ideas," but there is "a huge gap between the technically possible and the politically feasible."
- PlaNYC's plans for TOD rezonings may turn out to favor parking over people (meaning more - not fewer - cars in our nabes).
- Kamin looks at Chicago's green roof program 10 years on: "the movement remains in its infancy, not only in numbers but in design quality...They're not all created equal."
- Litt visits a little Ohio town that "offers big lessons in little ways" for Cleveland's Uptown project.
- New £3 billion master plan for Chelsea Barracks goes traditional (sort of).
- Merrick marvels at LAVA's high-tech skins for buildings: "it's not all about sheaths or turning condominiums into architectural condomaximums."
- Filler on why SANAA "richly deserves" the Pritzker, and why this win makes up for previous gaffes and gives the prize "new luster."
- China plans to give Algiers a new opera house "designed in traditional Algerian style by Chinese engineers" (we can't wait to see what that looks like).
- Anderton discusses Apple worship and the art of branding with Andrew Blum and Sasha Strauss.
- The amazing Archigram Archival Project goes live (and free) online.
- U.S. DOE announces the 20 Solar Decathlon 2011 teams from around the world (and what they plan to build).
- Call for entries: Design Against the Elements international competition to develop sustainable and disaster-resistant housing in tropical urban settings; and a deadline extension for Architect magazine's R+D Awards.

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[Disappearing Act: North Carolina Museum of Art West Building by Thomas Phifer and Partners and Pearce Brinkley Cease + Lee: A new museum building strives to nearly disappear, deferring to the beauty of the artworks and the surrounding landscape. By Lisa Delgado - ArchNewsNow](#)

[Brasilia's embrace of the future seems so quaint: On its 50th anniversary, the Brazilian capital seems stuck in the past...built with an optimistic eye on the future...we are now designing brand-new cities...marked more by wariness and anxiety...than sweeping optimism...defensive enough to seem, for all its reliance on technology, nearly medieval. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Lucio Costa; Oscar Niemeyer - Los Angeles Times](#)

[50th Anniversary for Brasilia leaves architect 'sad': Oscar Niemeyer says he is sad the city fell short of his egalitarian vision...Brasilia today elicits both wonder and unease in visitors...reveals the fatal flaw in its designers' plan: the overpopulation of a city originally built for 600,000 residents which today is home to more than four times that, 2.6 million people. - Voice of America \(VOA\)](#)

[A Palatial 'House of the Worker': Oscar Niemeyer's poetic monument to the Communist Party in France: ...has a stylish flair that makes the structure very much at home in Paris...still radiates unorthodox grace amid the axial formality of the Parisian cityscape. By Michael Z. Wise -- Jean Prouvé \[image\] - Wall Street Journal](#)

[Can conservationists save Oscar Niemeyer's fairground in Lebanon? Once the pride of Tripoli...the international fairground became another casualty of the 1975 civil war. It hasn't recovered yet...faces an uncertain future...the site is a forgotten, sprawling artifact of architectural modernism...a conservation group has restored the park's flora and is now fighting for its architecture. - Christian Science Monitor](#)

[The Feasibility Gap: This year's Regional Plan Association conference "Innovation and the American Metropolis" showcased some brilliant, pragmatic ideas for the American city. Now how do we implement them? There is...a huge gap between the technically possible...and the politically feasible. By Martin C. Pedersen - Metropolis Magazine](#)

[How 'Transit-Oriented Development' Will Put More New Yorkers in Cars: ...parking requirements essentially exclude the possibility of developing traditional, walkable urban environments...the impact of these supposedly transit-oriented, sustainable rezonings will be just the opposite of PlaNYC's goals... - Gotham Gazette \(NYC\)](#)

[Ten years of green roofs in Chicago: Mayor Daley's green thumb and iron fist have produced impressive gains, but the movement remains in its infancy, not only in numbers but in design quality...They're not all created equal. By Blair Kamin -- Green Roofs for Healthy Cities; Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill \(SOM\); Parachin Design Studios; Aerotecture International; Conservation Design Forum; Swiss Design Group; Goettsch Partners \[images\] - Chicago Tribune](#)

[Mariemont, Ohio, offers big lessons in little ways for Cleveland's Uptown development: The Strand...makes the point that details, such as small outdoor spaces, can be critical in establishing a sense of place. By Steven Litt -- John Nolen \(1925\); Stanley Saitowitz | Natoma Architects \[images\] - Cleveland Plain Dealer](#)

[New £3 billion Chelsea Barracks masterplan revealed: ...based on traditional London streets, squares and gardens...in stark contrast to the earlier Rogers Stirk Harbour Modernist steel and glass towers design... -- Dixon Jones; Squire and Partners; Kim Wilkie Associates \[image\] - Evening Standard \(UK\)](#)

[Condom architecture: A team of Sydney-based designers are the pioneers behind an unusual proposal for encasing buildings with hi-tech sheaths...Will buildings with high-tech skins make architecture an increasingly superficial experience; or are we](#)

seeing the first strange expressions of a new kind of environmental design? By Jay Merrick -- LAVA/Laboratory for Visionary Architecture; Arup [images]- Independent (UK)

They Revived the Pritzker: ...the revelation of this year's surprise winners - Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa...has been cause for rejoicing among those who treasure the honorees' delicately calibrated and deeply humane sensibility...SANAA richly deserves an honor that now takes on new luster... By Martin Filler [images, links]- New York Review of Books

China to fund, build \$43 million opera house in Algiers: ...building was designed in traditional Algerian style by Chinese engineers... (AP)- Forbes

DnA/Frances Anderton: Apple Worship: The Apple brand has become so powerful that its Manhattan store is a tourist landmark. What's the secret to turning customers into devotees? Andrew Blum and Sasha Strauss discuss Apple-worship and the art of branding.- KCRW (Los Angeles)

Archigram Uncovered: Almost 10,000 images from one of architecture's most revolutionary groups go online in a free website...Archigram Archival Project...material from over 200 projects created mainly in the 1960s and '70s by this group of six of architecture's most influential figures: Warren Chalk, Dennis Crompton, Peter Cook, David Greene, Ron Herron, and Michael Webb. [link]- Canadian Architect

DOE Announces Solar Decathlon 2011 Teams: 20 Teams Representing Five Countries and Four Continents to Compete on the National Mall in Washington, DC, this fall [links to images]- U.S. Department of Energy

Call for entries: Design Against the Elements: international professional and student competition to develop sustainable and disaster-resistant housing for communities in tropical urban settings (winning design will be built as a prototype); cash prizes; registration deadline: September 24- Design Against the Elements (DATE)

Call for entries - Deadline extended: R+D Awards for innovative building materials, systems - building technologies of all types at every scale; new deadline: May 7; late deadline: May 12- Architect Magazine



SANAA: Rolex Learning Center, Lausanne, Switzerland

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