Today's News - Thursday, June 24, 2010

- The TEDxOilSpill conference on Monday will explore new ideas for our energy future, and how we can mitigate the environmental catastrophe in the Gulf (an amazing line up of speakers, and live video feed for those of us not in DC) + Why "the same set of human characteristics that precipitated" the BP oil spill "may well hinder us very well may be the most fitting tribute to cars ever made."
- Hawkhorne offers up an interesting method to "build a better shortlist" for Broad's Grand Ave. museum - and who he thinks should be on it.
- Behnisch has big plans for a sports complex inside a gigantic, mothballed power plant in Toronto.
- So much for the end of the Automobile Age: China plans a museum you can drive through - "so the museum will promote bad driving, smog, and smug rich people. It very well may be the most fitting tribute to cars ever made."
- Polshek Partnership makes a name change to Ennead (yes, there is a definition having to do with nine deities in Egyptian mythology).
- It's featuring that top NSW Architecture Awards prize goes to a sustainable "piece of public transport infrastructure" - but critics say while the rail line "may have won the plaudits of architects and aesthetes who decide the Sulman Award," don't overlook the serious problems with the design of the line.
- Why Walk Through a Museum, When You Can Drive? Just when you thought - or at least hoped - the Automobile Age was coming to an end, and how we can mitigate the environmental catastrophe in the Gulf (an amazing lineup of speakers, and live video feed for those of us not in DC) + Why "the same set of human characteristics that precipitated" the BP oil spill "may well hinder us from stopping" climate change.

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Obituary: Mario L. Schack, noted architect, educator, design critic, 81: Award-winning winner influenced Baltimore's skyline with his work. By Edward Gasts -- RTK11; Marks, Cooke, Schack and Thomas (now Marks, Thomas Architects); MLS Associates - Baltimore Sun

Berkeley Art Museum names architect: ...Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive [BAMPFA] have named red-hot architectural firm Diller Scoffino + Renfro to design a visual arts center....would bolster cities efforts to position its downtown as a cultural destination...selection also is an implicit act of one-upmanship to a friendly rival across the bay: The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art [SFMM].

By John King -- EHDD - San Francisco Chronicle

How to build a better shortest: Eli Broad has kept a tight grip on the private architectural competition he has been overseeing for the new museum he hopes to build on Grand Avenue...imagine a very different group...one that might not only have produced a successful design for Broad but also given exposure to talented younger firms... By Christopher Hawthorne - Michael Mattan; eVolo Architecture; Frohn & Rojas; Daly Genik; Ball-Nogues Studio; Sou Fujimoto; Minsuk Cho; Ben van Berkel\US; Alejandro Aravena; Smiljan Radi
cal; Tao Yo; Peter Zumthor; Alvaro Siza; SANA; Herzog & De Meuron; Steven Holl; Thomas Phifer; Mecanoo Architects; David Chipperfield; Los Angeles Times

High Line 2 Sneak Peek: Lounging Lawn, Flyovers, and the "Chelsea Thicket": The designers of New York's famed High Line park have saved the best for second.... -- James Corner Field Operations; Diller Scoffino + Renfro [images, video] - Fast Company

Domino's $1.3 Billion Makeover Hits Trouble: An impressive amount of low-cost housing is just one of the extraordinary public benefits the design promises. Yet the size of the project is very large - and controversial...The New Domino tries to do right by the community, yet it comes at some compromise to the design. By James S. Russell -- Beyer Blinder Belle; Rafael Vinyo; Quennell Rothschild & Partners [images] - Bloomberg News

2 Sides Clash at City Hall Over Domino Housing Plan: The plan now before the City Council has strong support for its low-cost housing feature, but critics say it is too big and too dense. - New York Times

Nation missing the Shanghai Expo express: Shanghai's pre-eminent English-speaking arts producer, Australian Barry Plews, says the Australian pavilion at the World Expo is a "lame event"...His criticism follows the decision by architects and master planner... -- Wood Marsh Architecture; ThinkOT5 - The Australian

Singapore Rolls the Dice: The notoriously authoritarian country is building a casino: Michael Graves as master planner may come as a surprise...[he] characterizes the pedestrian landscape of the Sentosa resort, with its plazas and fountains, as a blend of Coney Island and Chicago's World's Columbian Exposition, but this is definitely not a White City.

What's in a Name? Polshek Partnership Will Find Out: ...will from now on call itself Ennead...a Greek term for a group of nine deities in Egyptian mythology, reflects the firm's reconfiguration as a collective of nine partners....Certainly, my name is always going to be associated with this office. It will be whispered, not spoken out loud." -- James Polshek - New York Times

Sustainability a focus of NSW Architecture Awards: ...it's fitting the top public architecture prize should go to a piece of public transport infrastructure. -- Hasselt; Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp; Cox Rayner Architects; Brian Hooper
High praise does not compensate for poor rail decision, say critics: The swish stations along the Epping-Chatswood rail line may have won the plaudits of architects and aesthetes who decide the Sulman Award...But rail experts say that, in making future plans, governments should not overlook the serious problems with the design of the line... - Sydney Morning Herald

Playgrounds Gone Wild: The era of the skill-challenging, danger-embracing, starchitect-designed play zone has dawned, and the city’s children are the better for it...the Parks Department has rediscovered the joys of risk...New York’s playgrounds are getting less predictable, more imaginative, and more complex... By Justin Davidson – KaBoom!, David Rockwell, Michael Van Valkenburgh - New York Magazine

Mess With the Imagination (Playground) of David Rockwell: ...a deployable playground-in-a-box that has been finding its way across the country. Now, he is just finishing a larger playground, sort of a showcase for the concept, at Burling Slip in Lower Manhattan. [images, video] - The Architect's Newspaper

Revitalizing Cities with Innovative Parks: ...14 ways to build out innovative parks in crowded cities...if the economic downturn ends soon, cities will reinvest in parks in a major way to fight sprawl, encourage smart growth, and create green infrastructure...require a "political not planning process. It has to be a political campaign." -- Peter Harnik/Center for City Park Excellence/Trust for Public Land - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Billings Headed Down Bumpy Road: Following strong spring, AIA billings index tumbles again, pointing to long, uneasy recovery - The Architect's Newspaper

TEDxOilSpill will explore new ideas for our energy future, and how we can mitigate the current crisis in the Gulf: ...will tackle the tough questions raised by the recent and ongoing environmental catastrophe...June 28 in Washington, DC [will include Live Video Stream] - TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design)

Oh, the Humanity: Why our reaction to the oil spill absolutely terrifies me: ...the recklessness that helped bring about the spill, and the political reaction that followed, seem to indicate a larger inability to prevent and cope with other large-scale ecological catastrophes - particularly climate change...the same set of human characteristics that precipitated the one calamity may well hinder us from stopping the other. - The New Republic

Exhibition: Jim McHugh: Let's Get Lost, Timothy Yarger Gallery, Beverly Hills, California

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