

Today's News - Thursday, September 2, 2010

- Bose (our Biennale buddy) takes us on a quick walk-through: on the whole, it seems "more ethereal and artsy."
- Memorial mania in America: "We've stopped putting great men on pedestals and started commemorating their victims."
- Rochon cheers Toronto's new Sugar Beach; it's too bad that "beautiful moments in its new public space" is "marred by the construction of ordinary architecture."
- A Detroit district defies the odds and thrives by building on its past.
- Pogrebin on DS+R's final touches for Lincoln Center: an "electronic infoscape" that makes the complex "more porous, inviting and immediate."
- Walker walks us through the five proposals for the St. Louis Gateway Arch: which might best transform it into "a true connector for the city."
- Kamin cheers a new park that "that makes a hard-edged area of Chicago much more livable" + it's "an exciting design that private citizens want to take care of" - a big bonus: pollution-eating pavers are self-cleaning and hog smog, too (though we're a bit confused about the park's name).
- King on a 1959 San Francisco library that is "a case study in where the preservation movement is...in danger of going too far...Sometimes we need to move on."
- Kahn's Trenton Bath House revived: it "exudes everything that worked in 20th-century architecture" and is "a monument to the search for a humanist architecture."
- Early 20th century architects of new Madras "had to fight their way to carve a niche for themselves" - and are still thriving today.
- Much to the dismay of some, Heatherwick's Seed Cathedral is not for sale - but the acrylic spikes will be distributed to schools across China.
- Liverpool gets thumbs-up for its first theater in many, many years.
- Impressive shortlists for five RIBA Special Awards 2010.

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Field Report: Venice Architecture Biennale 2010: Shumi Bose walks us through the good and the bad..."People Meet In Architecture"...the consideration of people and experience of architecture was pretty remote from most of the exhibits...call it a symptom of the recession - seem on the whole more ethereal and artsy -- Kazuyo Sejima/SANAA; Tetsuo Kondo Architects/Transsolar; Olafur Eliasson; Dominic Perrault; Philip Beesley; Tom Sach; Do Ho Suh [images]- Urban Omnibus

Mourning in America: New York is in the grip of memorial mania: We've stopped putting great men on pedestals and started commemorating their victims...In focusing purely on victimhood we are in danger of turning history into a random series of tragic events, instead of something that was purposeful and directed. By Tiffany Jenkins - The Spectator (UK)

Pink umbrellas, green cubes, lingering questions: Toronto's new Sugar Beach is fab, but the boxy Corus Entertainment headquarters beside it is corporate and clunky...the planned Bayside neighbourhood feels uninspired...Such is the unsettling truth of the central waterfront...beautiful moments in its new public space marred by the construction of ordinary architecture. By Lisa Rochon -- Claude Cormier Architectes; Diamond + Schmitt; West 8; Troika; Quadrangle Architects; Cesar Pelli; Stanton Eckstut; Adamson Architects - Globe and Mail (Canada)

A Detroit District Thrives by Building on the Past: Developers in Midtown are refurbishing older buildings, using tax credits and public financing, as much as they are building from scratch. -- McIntosh Poris Associates - New York Times

At Lincoln Center, Information Is Architecture: ...electronic infoscape...amounts to a great deal more than just signs...media elements are not just finishing touches: they are an extension, and in many ways the ultimate expression, of a wholesale reimagining of the complex as more porous, inviting and immediate. By Robin Pogrebin -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro [video]- New York Times

How St. Louis's Famed Arch Can Do More for the City: Five plans attempting to transform the Gateway Arch into a true connector for the city...meant to symbolize unity and free passage, prevents both from taking place...CityArchRiver2015 aims to change all that... By Alissa Walker -- Eero Saarinen/Dan Kiley (1965); Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)/Hargreaves Associates/Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG); Weiss/Manfredi; Behnisch Architekten; Michael van Valkenburgh; PWP Architecture/Foster + Partners/Civitas [images, links]- Fast Company

West Side story: A new park, with dynamic geometry and bold interactivity, creates an urban oasis amid wall-to-wall condos...Adams & Sangamon Park "gives you a place to go that is not your everyday boring life"...green space that makes a hard-edged area of Chicago much more livable. By Blair Kamin -- Site Design Group [images]- Chicago Tribune

New Chicago Park Hogs Smog: Pollution-eating pavers are self-cleaning, too, keeping down cleaning costs while clearing the air...Mary Bartelme Park...Creating a low-cost scheme was the priority, but creating an exciting design that private citizens want to take care of was the best way to ensure long-term upkeep. -- Site Design Group [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

San Francisco North Beach library a landmark? ...a case study in where the preservation movement is going - and how, in some cases, it's in danger of going too far...Could a restored branch be enlarged, as defenders claim? Yes, but only by making things around it worse...Sometimes we need to move on - and let a new generation add to the narrative. By John King -- Appleton & Wolfard (1959) [image]- San Francisco Chronicle

Reviving a Modest Masterpiece: The Trenton Bath House, just restored by Farewell Mills Gatsch, respects Louis Kahn's original design, even if his full vision remains unrealized...exudes everything that worked in 20th-century architecture...also is a disappointment...it is still a monument to the search for a humanist architecture. Its persistence and its failures indicate we are still on that search. -- Wu & Associates; Susan Solomon [images]- Architectural Record

The architects of new Madras: They had to fight their way to carve a niche for themselves as the architects of new Madras. Early 20th century architects...came up with functional and fantastic buildings...have become landmarks of Chennai, and the firms that strove to fulfill the needs of a rapidly industrialising society are still thriving... -- Sujatha Shankar; Jackson and Barker; Pithavadian and Partners; LM Chitale; CR Narayan Rao; RR Sarma; LM Chitale - Times of India

Shanghai 2010: 'Seed cathedral' will not be sold says Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO): Thomas Heatherwick's award-winning UK Pavilion for Expo 2010 Shanghai will not be rebuilt once it is dismantled, despite a host of interested buyers [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Everyman theatre plans approved: ...CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) described the design as "an exemplar in all aspects of its design." -- Haworth Tompkins [images]- Place North West (UK)

RIBA announces shortlists for five Special Awards 2010: ...honour the UK's best new school buildings, conservation projects, public spaces and smaller projects... -- Aecom; Carmody Groarke; # Haworth Tompkins; Hopkins Architects; Rick Mather; Julian Harrap; David Chipperfield; Architype; Cube Design; DSDHA; dRMM; Patel Taylor; Acme; Piercy Connor Architects/Billings Jackson; Anne Thorne Architects Partnership; Gumuchdjan Architects; Julian Cowie - Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)

The Art of Ennobling Communities: Interview with Sara Caples and Everardo Jefferson: These architects have proven time

and time again that architecture can transform reality and change attitudes. By Vladimir Belogolovsky [images]- ArchNewsNow



KK Letter: Work and time off in Beijing: ...working on the installation of the first Frank Gehry exhibition in China...an opportunity to combine work with a short vacation...We will be back on September 6th. -- Foster + Partners; Kengo Kuma; Arata Isozaki; Paul Andreu [images]

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