

## Today's News - Friday, September 3, 2010

EDITOR'S NOTE: Monday is Labor Day (U.S.), so we will not be laboring - but we'll be back on Tuesday, September 7.

- Zandberg calls for architects and planners to "announce publicly that they will not continue planning new buildings in the settlements... Those who sketch the blue lines of master plans of settlements are bound more than anyone else by the red lines of conscience."
- Another handful of thoughtful takes on the Venice Biennale:
- Pearman found it "purely enjoyable" because, "for once, it's not all about the next big icon building."
- Pallister says it's "steeped in playfulness and sensuality...interested more in ephemera, experience and impermanence than in bombast, bling and lucre."
- Woodman thinks it's "the most beautiful ever" and "restores one's faith in the very idea of an architecture biennale."
- McKie sees it as a reminder of what it's supposed to be about: "providing a pleasant room to sit in, an agreeable place for people to meet."
- Menking, on the other hand, wonders if it's outlived its usefulness: "the question is whether design in the absence of urbanism is architecture or just design?"
- Tan wonders where people fit in "within these esoteric concepts."
- Bevan says it's "as if the architectural world has paused mid-step to think things through instead of moving immediately on to design the next office tower or airport terminal" (except, perhaps, the Australian pavilion that "bumbles like a stoned wombat negotiating a set of glass-top coffee tables" - how could we resist!).
- We also couldn't resist: a profile of Golden Lion winner Bahrain Pavilion (our fave!).
- Russell brings us back to the real world with how New Orleanians "need no longer cower in the shadows of their endless, dispiriting levee walls. They could begin living gracefully with their age-old aquatic enemy."
- Q&A with San Francisco planner Power and efforts to pedestrianize the city.
- D.C.'s Planning Commission gives (mostly) thumbs-up to revised design for the new African American Museum: it's now 17% smaller and more slender.
- Cornell taps Office dA to design permanent suicide barriers for bridges: it "wanted someone who could 'solve difficult questions creatively and beautifully.'"
- Brussat makes a connection between Cole Porter, George Orwell, and an "Ugly is Beautiful" movement.
- Weekend diversions:
- Burnham's City Beautiful comes alive in a PBS documentary airing this Monday.
- Lubell is "blown away" by the architecture at Burning Man - with pix to prove it.
- San Francisco kicks off its 7th Annual Architecture and the City festival "Investigating Urban Metabolisms" - the city as a living, breathing organism.
- A video tour of "Our Cities Ourselves" at NYC's Center for Architecture, seeking "humane, less techno-driven solutions" to urban issues.
- Houses you can wear at ARCAM Amsterdam Centre for Architecture.
- Gruber continues his thoughts on urban design (the field) and "Urban Design" (the book): city planning has a role, "particularly in situations where architects and their clients cannot be trusted to consider the functional urban context."

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**Architects out of Ariel:** ...the time has come for architects and planners to wake up and announce publicly that they will not continue planning new buildings in the settlements...Architecture is the implementer of political decisions...Those who sketch the blue lines of master plans of settlements are bound more than anyone else by the red lines of conscience. By Esther Zandberg- Ha'aretz (Israel)

**The Studied Avoidance of Building: Venice Architecture Biennale 2010:** This is one of the most purely enjoyable architecture biennales I've been to...Why so? Because, for once, it's not all about the next big icon building. By Hugh Pearman -- Kazuyo Sejima/SANAA; Transsolar; Olafur Eliasson; Janet Cardiff; Tony Fretton/Mark Pimlott; Junya Ishigami; muf; Piet Oudolf; Rem Koolhaas [images]- HughPearman.com (UK)

**Venice Architecture Biennale 2010: Kazuyo Sejima transforms the Venice Biennale into an architectural fairground steeped in playfulness and sensuality...**Many of the exhibits are interested more in ephemera, experience and impermanence than in bombast, bling and lucre. By James Pallister -- SANAA; Tetsuo Kondo/Transsolar; Olafur Eliasson; Koolhaas/OMA/AMO [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

**People Meet in Architecture: Sanaa's Kazuyo Sejima has curated the most beautiful Venice Biennale ever, which also serves as a fascinating enquiry into the relationship between architecture and human occupation...**restores one's faith in the very idea of an architecture biennale. By Ellis Woodman -- Janet Cardiff; Olafur Eliasson/Studio Mumbai; Tony Fretton/Mark Pimlott; Junya Ishigami; Office Kersten Geers David van Severen/Bas Princen; Christian Kerez; Caruso St John/Thomas Demand; Bahrain; Muf [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

**Meeting in Space: If people meet in architecture, architects meet in Venice...**in the temporary, imagined and potential spaces...a reminder that the end purpose of this huge gathering...is, after all, as simple as the theme suggests: providing a pleasant room to sit in, an agreeable place for people to meet. By Andrew McKie [images]- Wall Street Journal

**Venice 2010: Has the Biennale Outlived its Usefulness?** ...the question is, whether design in the absence of urbanism is architecture or just design? The great thing about the biennale is that there is always something for everyone to love (or to hate) regardless of their position...concerns about cost and exclusivity of its message are now getting more serious. By William Menking [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

**Where's everybody?** Clarissa Tan wonders if the Venice Architecture Biennale, which this year has the theme 'People meeting in architecture', may have forgotten about the human beings...where do people fit in? Is there space for humans within these esoteric concepts? -- Kazuyo Sejima; Keyang Tang; Transsolar/Tetsuo Kondo; Olafur Eliasson; Luca Molinari [images]- Business Times (Singapore)

**Not in the league of other nations: The 12th architecture biennale...**has a predominantly meditative, conceptual quality...as if the architectural world...has paused mid-step to think things through instead of moving immediately on to design the next office tower or airport terminal. Into this cerebral mood the Australian pavilion bumbles like a stoned wombat negotiating a set of glass-top coffee tables. By Robert Bevan- The Australian

**Golden Lion for Bahrain's Pavilion at the Venice Biennale of Architecture: "Reclaim"...**is an investigation on the decline of sea culture in the Island. -- Noura Al-Sayeh; Fuad Al-Ansari; Iapa studio [images]- Nafas. Art Magazine (Germany)

**New Orleans Needs Scenic Canals, Not Billions in Levees: Use the city's abundant empty land for landscaped water storage connected in a circulating system of canals and man-made bayous edged with greenery...**Its unique power is the promise that New Orleanians need no longer cower in the shadows of their endless, dispiriting levee walls. They could begin living gracefully with their age-old aquatic enemy. By James S. Russell -- Ramiro Diaz/David Waggoner/Waggoner & Ball [images]- Bloomberg News

**Q&A: The Streets of San Francisco: Planner Andres Power talks about pedestrianizing the city.** -- Sunday Streets; Pavement to Parks; David Baker; Janette Sadik-Khan; PARK(ing) Day; Rebar [images, links]- Metropolis Magazine

National Museum of African American History and Culture's revised design gets favorable reviews by National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC): ...one that is 17% smaller...Most of the shrinkage occurred through the elimination of space between the distinctive bronze coronas...now three instead of two, to almost ground level, delivering a slenderizing visual modification. -- Freelon Adjaye Bond/SmithGroup- Washington Post

Cornell Selects Architect for Permanent Bridge Barriers: ...will design permanent suicide barriers for bridges on and near campus...The University was not necessarily looking for an architect with bridge barrier experience...wanted someone who could "solve difficult questions creatively and beautifully" -- Nader Tehrani/Office dA- Cornell Daily Sun

Cole Porter, meet George Orwell: Anything still goes, and not least in the world of architecture today - unless, of course, an architect proposes building something people might love, or even understand. That does not go..."Ugly is Beautiful" can lead to other slogans that teach us to love ideas or policies that help us to resign ourselves to what we might prefer to change. By David Brussat- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

"City Beautiful" Comes Alive in Daniel Burnham Documentary: ...as suggested in the documentary "Make No Little Plans: Daniel Burnham and the American City," when ambitious visions are tempered with civic sensitivity, great things can happen...premieres nationally on PBS on Labor Day, September 6 [slide show, video]- Architectural Record

Burning Man Architecture Amazes: Proving our theory that the best architecture these days is installation architecture, the work on display this year at Burning Man is blowing us away. By Sam Lubell [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

7th Annual Architecture and the City festival: "Investigating Urban Metabolisms" explores the notion of the city as a living, breathing organism that is as multi-layered, intricate and in flux as the human body.- AIA San Francisco

"Our Cities Ourselves": 10 Architects Envision Urban Innovations: tour a show that asked architecture firms to imagine the future of transportation in cities on 5 continents. -- HCP Design; Varos-Teampannon/Kozlekedes; PALO Arquitectura Urbana; Adjaye Associates; Urbanus Architecture & Design; Budi Pradono Architects; Osmond Lange Architects/Ikemeleng Architects; arquitectura 911sc; Terreform/Michael Sorkin Studio; Fábrica Arquitectura/CAMPO aud [video]- Architectural Record

A house that you can wear? When fashion meets architecture: "Fashion & Architecture" at ARCAM Amsterdam Centre for Architecture...reflects a growing trend in collaborations between the two disciplines. -- Wouter Valkenier/V2A Architectuur & Stedebouw; Maurer United; Anouk Vogel landscape architecture; Zaha Hadid; Benthem Crouwel Architekten; Jeroen Bergsma/2012Architecten [images]- CNN International

More Thoughts on Urban Design (the Field) and "Urban Design" (the Book) by Alex Krieger and William Saunders: ...the field of Urban Design, seeking to combine city planning with architecture, has been ineffectual to the point of being counter-productive...City planning also has a role to play in the design of buildings, but not a role that requires "Urban Design." By Frank Gruber- Huffington Post

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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