Today's News - Friday, October 15, 2010

- Why Zumthor is perfect for the Serpentine: it will make the Serpentine Pavilion a place of architectural pilgrimage. It could be a better choice of architect to revitalize the art-deco commission. [Christine Murray]

- Rybczynski finds Thom's Arena Stage in DC allows Weese's original "to maintain its dignity." It's "an audacious building that breathes fresh air into the nation's capital." [Sam Lubell, The Architect's Newspaper]

- Lubell on Beltzberg's L.A. Museum of the Holocaust: "It delivers a dose of raw emotional impact...bold gestures far outweigh any shortcomings." and proves "the raw emotional impact that architecture's spatial and tectonic qualities can deliver." [Lubell, The Architects' Journal (UK)]

- It looks like the controversial Gazprom tower in St. Petersburg is moving ahead, despite protests and UNESCO's objections. [By Christine Murray, The Architects' Journal (UK)]

- Architects and designers protest Tallinn, Estonia's plan to sell a design and architecture gallery to a private buyer. (Where will that leave the city as 2011 European Capital of Culture?) [By Christine Murray, The Architects' Journal (UK)]

- USGBC, LEED facing a class-action lawsuit for alleged fraud and deceptive practices. [The Architects' Journal (UK)]

- Call for entries: Philips Livable Cities Award (big cash grants). [The Architects' Journal (UK)]

- Weekend diversions:
  - Ouroussoff cheers MoMA's "Small Scale, Big Change": "the big surprise is that so many of the projects are actually good," and "makes a powerful case that it is possible to create work that is both socially uplifting and architecturally compelling." [By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- New York Times]
  - Large came away with a very different take: the exhibition "fails to engage with real-world questions of scalability, accountability and popularity in a forward-thinking way. MoMA is playing catch-up on a decade of design that fell under their radar, and it shows." [By Sam Lubell, The Architect's Newspaper]
  - Riano says the show "suggests also the extent to which the field is struggling to regain command of a once familiar set of skills...If architects could quantify the impact of their designs, the discipline would be much more powerful." [By Sam Lubell, The Architect's Newspaper]
  - Chaban cheers the Architecture & Design Film Fest in NYC this weekend: even "the festival's trailer should give you goose bumps. If not, check your pulse." [By Christine Murray, The Architects' Journal (UK)]
  - What went into creating the "lusty" Liquid Wall on display as part of "Innovate : Integrate" at NYC's Center for Architecture. [By Christine Murray, The Architects' Journal (UK)]
  - LaBarre offers an eyeful of "magically delicious" Irish design at the American Irish Historical Society in New York. [By Christine Murray, The Architects' Journal (UK)]
  - What went into creating the "lusty" Liquid Wall on display as part of "Innovate : Integrate" at NYC's Center for Architecture. [By Sam Lubell, The Architect's Newspaper]
  - Why Zumthor is perfect for the Serpentine: ...will make the Serpentine Pavilion a place of architectural pilgrimage...there could be no better choice of architect to revitalize the art-deco commission...[he] is a strange beast: half artist, half architect...his singular approach is alienating and arrogant, if alluring...my great hope is that [his pavilion] will widen the public's narrow definition of 'wow'...By Christine Murray -- The Architects' Journal (UK)

- Call for entries (deadline looms!): Philips Livable Cities Award (big cash grants).

- Weekend diversions:
  - Uncommon Ground: I have no issue with most of the work on view in "Small Scale, Big Change" at MoMA looks at projects that have had social impacts in a rebuttal to the complaint that architecture isn't focused enough on ordinary people's lives...the big surprise...is that so many of the projects are actually good...makes a powerful case that it is possible to create work that is both socially uplifting and architecturally compelling. By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- The Architects' Journal (UK)
  - weekend diversions:
  - Call for entries: Philips Livable Cities Award: ideas for "simple solutions" in Well-being Outdoors, Independent Living, and Healthy Lifestyle at work and home; chaired by Richard Florida; grants total €125,000; deadline: October 28 - BuildingGreen.com
  - Architects, Designers Protest City's Bid to Sell Gallery; Tallinn city government's decision last week to sell a design and architecture gallery to a private buyer has heated tempers in the arts and culture community. - Estonian Public Broadcasting / Eesti Rahvusringhääling
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- The Renaissance in Washington, D.C.: Part 2: How do you breathe new life into the U.S. capital's architecture? Hire a Canadian...the new Arena Stage quite literally envelopes the old...architectural strategy could be taken for impertinence, except that the glass enclosure is almost casually draped over the building, allowing [the original] to maintain its dignity...an audacious building that breathes fresh air into the nation's capital. By Witold Rybczynski -- Harry Weese; Bing Thom - State Crit: Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust: Beltzberg Architects delivers a dose of raw emotional impact at poignant new home for LA institution...bold gestures far outweigh any shortcomings...a memorable museum that broadens understanding not only of a horrible time but of the raw emotional impact that architecture's spatial and tectonic qualities can deliver. By Sam Lubell [images] - The Architect's Newspaper

- Call for entries: Philips Livable Cities Award: ideas for "simple solutions" in Well-being Outdoors, Independent Living, and Healthy Lifestyle at work and home; chaired by Richard Florida; grants total €125,000; deadline: October 28 - BuildingGreen.com

- Real-Life Design: Erecting Solutions to Social Problems: "Small Scale, Big Change" at MoMA looks at projects that have had social impacts in a rebuttal to the complaint that architecture isn't focused enough on ordinary people's lives...the big surprise...is that so many of the projects are actually good...makes a powerful case that it is possible to create work that is both socially uplifting and architecturally compelling. By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- The Architects' Journal (UK)

- Uncommon Ground: I have no issue with most of the work on view in "Small Scale, Big Change"...main conceptual problem: the diversity of type creates a lack of cohesion and, ultimately, conclusion....The problem is this exhibition fails to engage with real-world questions of scalability, accountability and...
popularity in a forward-thinking way. MoMA is playing catch-up on a decade of
design that fell under their radar, and it shows. By Alexandra Lange -- Michael
Maltzan; Rural Studio; Diébédo Francis Kéré; Anna Heringer/Eike Roswag;
Noero Wolff; Urban-Think Tank; Elemental [images]- Design Observer

Relearning the Social: Leading architects were once fluent in the language and
practice of social change. With "Small Scale, Big Change" MoMA is attempting
to reengage...the language of the social...If architects could quantify the impact
of their designs, the discipline would be much more powerful... By Quilian
Riano -- Anna Heringer/Eike Rosway; Druot, Lacaton & Vassal; Urban-Think
Tank; Noero Wolff Architects; Jorge Mario Jauregui/Métropoles Projets
Urbanos/MPI; Estudio Teddy Cruz; Rural Studio; Diébédo Francis Kéré;
Michael Maltzan; Hashim Sarkis A.L.U.D. [images]- Places Journal

Curating with a Conscience: "Small Scale, Big Change" grapples with the
ethical side of architecture...While Kere's compressed-earth building may not
be applicable all around the world, and Rural Studio's $20k house in Alabama
might sound like an exorbitant budget for a home in Africa, the exhibition brings
these ideas to mainstream attention, and that's a hefty part of the battle. --
Diébédo Francis Kéré; Noero Wolff; Michael Maltzan; Estudio Teddy Cruz;
Hashim Sarkis A.L.U.D. [images, slide show]- Dwell

Big Screen Buildings: Architecture & Design Film Fest at Tribeca Cinemas
This Weekend: ...there are a number of riveting, yes riveting, films, including a
beautiful biopic about the unparalleled photographer Julius Shulman, a
heartbreaking one about gentleman designer and poverty architect Samuel
Mockbee, even one about an aluminum chair...the festival's trailer should give
you goosebumps. If not, check your pulse. -- Kyle Bergma [video, links]- New
York Observer

Lusty Liquid: Prefab prototype with solar collector: an inside look at the winner
of the AIA's Innovative Curtainwall Design competition..."Innovate : Integrate"
on display at New York's Center for Architecture through Jan. 15, 2011. --
Peter Arbour/RFR [video]- Engineering News-Record (ENR)

Irish Design: It's Magically Delicious: Ireland has never stood shoulder-to-
shoulder with powerhouses like Holland and Italy. That could
change..."MATERIALpoetry" at the American Irish Historical Society in New
York through November 18 show an acute appreciation of craft and a penchant
for the old Joycean mind-screw... By Suzanne LaBarre [slide show]- Fast
Company

"James Frazer Stirling: Notes from the Archive, Architect and Teacher"
explores British architect's legacy: [...][his] eclectic and dynamic style was met
with reluctance because it deviated from the monotony of the International
Style...incorporation of traditional elements...was a refreshing break from the
generic buildings of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier's
successors. - Yale Daily News

Design Research Unit: the firm that branded Britain: You may not have heard
of Britain's most successful design group, but signs of its work can still be
seen on streets, pubs, railways and tube stations – quite literally...at Cubitt

Ben Thompson's Retail Love Affair: Kenneth Caldwell basks in the modern
mystique of this definitive and nuanced biography "Design Research: The
Store That Brought Modern Living to American Homes" by Jane Thompson
and Alexandra Lange...a book as transparent yet nuanced as Thompson's own
concrete masterpiece of a building for D/R in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In
some ways, it is a tragic narrative about a creative man...No doubt there is a
larger tale yet to be told. - The Architect's Newspaper

Book Review: "Architecture and Beauty: Conversations with Architects about a
Troubled Relationship": Yael Reisner exuberantly interviews architects about
beauty. Any of you architects seen Mr. Keats Lately? By Norman Weinstein-
ArchNewsNow

Renzo Piano Building Workshop: Resnick Pavilion, LACMA Expansion -
Phase II, Los Angeles