

Today's News - Monday, January 3, 2011

EDITOR'S NOTE: Happy New Year! We're glad to be back after a week away - with a lot of catching up to do (though we were getting used to life without that pesky alarm clock!).

- ArcSpace brings us an eye-ful of Maltzan's New Carver Apartments for the formerly homeless of Los Angeles that "explores how architecture can create new possibilities for its highly vulnerable, dramatically under-served residents."
- Russell minces no words about America dithering while the rest of the world gets on board with major rail projects: the U.S. "certainly isn't developing the design, construction and management capacity to build on a large scale to global standards."
- Hawthorne sees bigger problems than just the architecture for proposed L.A. stadium plans: it's developers who are shaping the city "one mega-project at a time. Is this any way to build a city?"
- Las Vegas architects and planners see the recession as an opportunity to reshape and improve the valley "to make it more functional, visually interesting, environmentally responsible and hospitable to community."
- Lewis offers up New Year's resolutions for "those who shape D.C.": "Throw away overly generalized plans and undertake fine-grain urban design, street by street and block by block."
- Kennicott's fine-grain take is that places like the Kennedy Center should study closely Lincoln Center's redesign: it "isn't just about remaking 1960s monumentalism for a new era; it offers a compelling alternative to cities that place fear above dynamism."
- For a New Yorker, Lincoln Center's re-do has given the "citadel of culture" a "friendlier face," making it a much more neighborly neighbor.
- Ouroussoff x 2 from the Middle East: he's not so crazy about Mecca's mega-plans for a "gargantuan and gaudy" makeover ("appalling" is another way to put it); while Aleppo, Syria is undergoing "one of the most far-thinking preservation projects in the Middle East, one that places as much importance on people as it does on the buildings they live in" (great slide shows for both).
- Moore bemoans Make's proposed Swiss bank HQ in London for being "an aloof fortress that ignores its responsibilities to the wider community...Bankers, it says, are people apart from the rest of us."
- Murphy is ready to do battle over Network Rail's plans to overhaul Edinburgh's two main railway stations, and offers up his own designs for the project.
- Davidson cheers on Stern's suggestion (that "casually shook out of his cuff-linked sleeve") of what to do with "Breuer's elegant bunker" once the Whitney moves downtown: make it an architecture museum.
- Preservationists rally (again) to protest demolition of all but six houses in the U.K.'s largest post-war prefab housing estate to make way for modern housing.
- Reviews of 2010 continue: Iovine cheers "a weird reversal of fortune" when civic projects "never had it so good."
- It was a "year of contentious architecture...plagued with debate."
- Litt says that while there wasn't a lot of new architecture in Northeast Ohio last year, there's a lot of exciting things in store because of steps taken in 2010.
- The best and worst of Ottawa: McDonalds and scaffolding get thumbs-up (go figure), while "cluttered streetscapes resemble web pages."
- What's in store for architects in the near future, or "will we ever get out of this hole?"
- Birnbaum hopes for a future where pundits give landscape architecture and public spaces as much critical ink in mainstream press as architecture.

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[Michael Maltzan Architecture: New Carver Apartments, Los Angeles: ...explores how architecture can create new possibilities for its highly vulnerable, dramatically under-served residents...](#)

[As U.S. Dithers, China, U.K. Pursue Major Rail Projects: So does the U.S. have the will to do anything about its sclerotic transportation systems?...America certainly isn't developing the design, construction and management capacity to build on a large scale to global standards. By James S. Russell -- Aedas; Parsons Brinckerhoff/STV Group/AECOM \[images\]- Bloomberg News](#)

[Los Angeles needs a game plan: AEG's plans for a new football stadium in downtown Los Angeles point to bigger problems: The city follows, not leads, and allows developers to shape Los Angeles one mega-project at a time. Is this any way to build a city? By Christopher Hawthorne -- Gensler; HNTB Architecture; HKS Architects \[links to images\]- Los Angeles Times](#)

[Recession could be opportunity to reshape, improve communities: Conventional wisdom would tell us we made this mess, so now we have to live in it. But it isn't so...architects, urban planners and sociologists say we can use this...pause in new construction, to begin reshaping the valley to make it more functional, visually interesting, environmentally responsible and hospitable to community. -- Robert Fielden/RAFI Architecture; Reed Kroloff; Eric Strain/assembleStudio; Jeffrey Dacks Architect- Las Vegas Sun](#)

[New year's resolutions for those who shape D.C.: Throw away overly generalized plans and undertake fine-grain urban design, street by street and block by block, taking into account not only localized physical conditions - topography, microclimate, views, access - but also social, cultural and economic circumstances. By Roger K. Lewis- Washington Post](#)

[Kennedy Center and others should take note of Lincoln Center redesign: ...change that should be studied closely...by anyone who cares about the peculiar freedoms of urban life...isn't just about remaking 1960s monumentalism for a new era; it offers a compelling alternative to cities that place fear above dynamism...The striking thing about the changes...is that they coexist with an architectural style...that defined those old and worn cliches. By Philip Kennicott -- Pietro Belluschi; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Philip Johnson; Wallace Harrison \[slide show\]- Washington Post](#)

[A Citadel of Culture Shows a Friendlier Face: The newly renovated Lincoln Center campus...I gladly defer to those who know more than I about things architectural. But as someone who grew up going to Lincoln Center in its early years...I am delighted and surprised that the center has been able to make itself so much more inviting, to blend into the neighborhood. By Anthony Tommasini \[images\]- New York Times](#)

[New Look for Mecca: Gargantuan and Gaudy: The Saudi government is being criticized for construction projects in the historic core of Mecca that many find appalling...The Royal Mecca Clock Tower and a half-dozen luxury high-rises are being built...some critics see this as a capitalist makeover. By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- Sami Angawi/Hajj Research Centre; Frei Otto; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill \(SOM\) \[slide show\]- New York Times](#)

[Preserving Heritage, and the Fabric of Life, in Aleppo, Syria: ...one of the most far-thinking preservation projects in the Middle East, one that places as much importance on people as it does on the buildings they live in...The tricky question — and the one that may have the most longstanding impact for the Middle East — is whether Aleppo can carry its vision](#)

of social and historical continuity into the future. By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- Aga Khan Trust for Culture; GTZ [slide show]- New York Times

5 Broadgate, London: The proposed new HQ of Swiss bank UBS is an aloof fortress that ignores its responsibilities to the wider community...Ken Shuttleworth can't pretend his building is not big. But he could try to reconcile the scale of the new building with its surroundings...announces with maximum force...Bankers, it says, are people apart from the rest of us. By Rowan Moore -- Make [image]- Observer (UK)

Battle stations over new capital gateway: One of Scotland's leading architects has attacked long-awaited plans to overhaul one of Edinburgh's two main railway stations - and is putting forward his own striking designs for the project...said Network Rail's plans failed to contribute to the future of Haymarket as an urban place. -- Richard Murphy [image]- The Scotsman (UK)

An Architectural Plan: What to do with the Whitney's building after its art moves downtown...I hope the boards of the Whitney and the Metropolitan Museum of Art...consider an idea...Robert A.M. Stern casually shook out of his cuff-linked sleeve..."They should turn it into an architecture museum," he said. And so they should...Could there be a better place to ensconce such an institution than Breuer's elegant bunker? By Justin Davidson - New York Magazine

Largest postwar prefab estate to be demolished: Campaigners say key piece of history will be lost after only six of 187 houses built by German and Italian PoWs listed...The remainder of the Excalibur estate in Catford, London...set to be bulldozed and replaced by modern housing. [image]- Guardian (UK)

The Public Option: Parks and Libraries Soar: A bright library in Washington, a genre-bending garage in Miami Beach and a great new park in Brooklyn: In a weird reversal of fortune, civic projects have never had it so good... By Julie V. Iovine -- Davis Brody Bond Aedas; Maki & Associates; Herzog & de Meuron; Michael van Valkenburgh - Wall Street Journal

2010: The Year of Contentious Architecture: ...headlines showcased architectural projects pushing the envelope. Plagued with debate...the top five most controversial buildings this year. -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill; Frank Gehry; Daneshgar Architects; SOMA architects; HOK; Foster + Partners; Benoy [links to images]- elan Magazine

Art and architecture highlights of 2010 in Northeast Ohio: By 2013, or slightly sooner, the city will have a new Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, a completely expanded and renovated Cleveland Museum of Art, a downtown casino, a medical mart and a new convention center. Without actions taken in 2010, none of these things would be happening. By Steven Litt -- Farshid Moussavi/Foreign Office Architects (FOA); LMN Architects; Gustafson Guthrie Nichol; Jonathan Kurtz/Westlake Reed Leskosky; Charles Gwathmey/Gwathmey Siegel - Cleveland Plain Dealer

Best and worst of Ottawa buildings and urban spaces of 2010 + Ottawa's cluttered streetscapes resemble web pages, expert suggests: McDonalds...Cube-shaped scaffolding on Parliament Hill...etc. -- PKG Joint Venture Architects [slide show]- Ottawa Citizen (Canada)

Will We Ever Get Out of This Hole? For architects, the Great Recession hasn't really let up since its official start in December 2007. Countless projects are stalled or canceled, including Santiago Calatrava's Chicago Spire -- now a 110-foot-wide void...what's in store for architects in the near future and beyond. -- Vishaan Chakrabarti; SHoP Architects; Perkins Eastman; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); Gensler - Architectural Record

Redesigning Design to Make Room for Landscape: ...the public needs critics who focus on landscape architecture, planning and design, particularly about public space, just as we do for architecture...will design coverage...transcend traditional buildings as objects (Zaha's latest) or industrial design...and recognize the new possibilities that public landscape offers? By Charles A. Birnbaum -- Mark Rios; Brad McKee; Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.; Calvert Vaux; Gilmore Clark; Michael Rapuano; Michael van Valkenburgh; George Hargreaves; Mark Johnson; Ken Smith Workshop; James Corner Field Operations; W Architecture + Landscape Architecture - Huffington Post

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