

## Today's News - Wednesday, February 2, 2011

- Bevan on why "design is a neglected part of reconstruction" in disaster zones even though "aesthetic considerations are not a luxury, even in a crisis."
- St. Louis Arch park makeover cost estimate almost doubles (and not all are pleased).
- U.K.'s education secretary lashes out at architects (again): no big names will be designing schools "because no-one in this room is here to make architects richer" (is this tune getting tiresome, or is it us?)
- Curtis criticizes Holl's plans for Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art: the "scheme is hopelessly out of scale...external volumes are clumsy...Some good old Scottish common sense would have been in order" (ouch!).
- Huxtable finds Foster's MFA Boston expansion "a recessive solution of disappointing blandness...an unassailably logical solution, superbly executed and singularly lifeless" (double ouch! at least the art is great).
- On a kinder note, Rochon cheers the ARC wildlife crossing competition for pushing "us to think about the power of architecture to offset the invasion of roads into epic landscapes."
- Philadelphia Museum of Art's riverfront backyard to get a facelift ("the turtles can anticipate company in about 2013").
- A report from the Transforming Transportation conference on the explosive growth of BRT systems catching on around the world - and the growing issues they raise.
- Q&A with McLennan of the Cascadia Green Building Council and the International Living Building Institute "about his journey so far and the path ahead."
- A good reason to head to Melbourne at the end of the month: Green Cities 2011 Conference: Partnering for Solutions.
- Ordre des architectes du Québec (OAQ) Awards of Excellence in Architecture announced (circuitous links will take you to images).
- Call for entries: "New York Theater City" student design competition for a theater campus in Manhattan.
- We couldn't resist: Everything you need to know about Groundhog Day (it's today!): needless to say, Punxsutawney Phil didn't see his shadow, so spring will arrive soon (not soon enough!).

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Design a neglected part of reconstruction: Disaster zones...are a magnet for architects...the experience of the Victorian bushfires shows how difficult it is for architects to contribute effectively...Aesthetic considerations are not a luxury, even in a crisis. By Robert Bevan -- Architects Without Borders; Emergency Architects Australia; Bligh Voller Neild/BVN; John Wardle; Donovan Hill; Cox Rayner; Shigeru Ban; Samuel Mockbee- The Australian

Arch grounds makeover: \$578.5 million price tag includes gondola across river: ...estimated cost to expand and renovate the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial has almost doubled...before a single change has been made to the park..."I don't think we should be afraid of (the cost) because of the deficit"... -- CityArchRiver 2015 Foundation; Michael Van Valkenburgh [link to images]- Belleville News-Democrat (Illinois)

Michael Gove: Richard Rogers won't design your school: ...latest unprovoked outburst...education secretary has again targeted the profession in relation to profiteering from schools building..."we won't be getting any award-winning architects to design it, because no-one in this room is here to make architects richer." -- Rogers, Stirik Harbour; Studio Octopi; Surface-to-Air Architects- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Commentary: Glasgow Neighbors - Mackintosh vs. Steven Holl: A critic's thoughts on the new extension...for Charles Rennie Mackintosh's famed Glasgow School of Art...scheme is hopelessly out of scale...external volumes are clumsy, the surfaces of glass are monotonous and without relief, and there is little the human figure can relate to. By William J.R. Curtis [slide show]- Architectural Record

The Boston Museum of Fine Arts' New Art of the Americas Wing . . . : It's all about the art. It's not about the architecture. End of review - except for some persistent questions about museum design...a recessive solution of disappointing blandness...no subtleties or surprises, no risks taken...an unassailably logical solution, superbly executed and singularly lifeless... By Ada Louise Huxtable -- Foster + Partners - Wall Street Journal

Across the great divide: ...ARC (Animal Road Crossing) International Design Competition ...has rustled up inventive ideas for gracefully guiding wildlife over treacherous roadways...pushes us to think about the power of architecture to offset the invasion of roads into epic landscapes -- infrastructure gently aligned with nature... By Lisa Rochon -- Michael Van Valkenburgh/HNTB; Janet Rosenberg + Associates/Blackwell Bowick Partnership; Balmori Associates; The Olin Studio; Zwarts & Jansma [link to images]- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Backyard Front & Center on Boat House Row: No man's land behind Philadelphia Museum of Art gets a facelift...The challenge was to merge the needs of cars, park, and people...The turtles can anticipate company in about 2013... -- OLIN [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

The Explosive Growth of Bus Rapid Transit: ...120 cities now have BRT with bus corridors...more cities are catching on...there are growing issues as well, including "rushed implementation, tight financial planning, high occupancy rates, deterioration of infrastructure, and fare system fragmentation." -- EMBARQ; Institute for Transportation & Development Policy (ITDP) [links]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

The Green Migration: Q&A with Jason McLennan, CEO of the Cascadia Green Building Council and the International Living Building Institute about his journey so far and the path ahead. - Eco-Structure magazine

Green Cities 2011 Conference: Partnering for Solutions focusing on sustainability for the built environment; February 27 - March 2 in Melbourne - Green Building Council of Australia

2011 Ordre des architectes du Québec (OAQ) Awards of Excellence in Architecture announced -- Saia Barbarese Topouzanov architects; Les architectes FABG (Brodeur, Gauthier, Lavoie, architectes); Anne Carrier architect + Onil Poulin architect; Daoust Lestage; Marosi + Troy/Jodoin Lamarre Pratte/Labbé architect; YH2/Yiacouvakis Hamelin; Les Architectes Boutros + Pratte; Saucier + Perrotte [link]- Canadian Architect

Call for entries: "New York Theater City" student design competition to design an urban theatre campus in Manhattan; cash prizes; registration deadline: March 15- ArchMedium

Everything you need to know: Groundhog Day 2011: U.S. and Canadian Groundhog Day comes every year on February 2...it's likely the world-famous Punxsutawney Phil groundhog...will not see his shadow. And you know what that means: an early spring! Believe it or not. - EarthSky

Book Review: "Visual Planning and the Picturesque" by Nikolaus Pevsner. Edited by Mathew Aitchison: A rediscovered manuscript unveils a portrait of the famed architectural historian as neglected urban designer. His commitment to the picturesque aesthetic for buildings and towns is as urgently needed as ever. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow

Designers of the Year: Q&A with Verda Alexander and Primo Orpilla of Studio O+A: Today Contract magazine named Verda

Alexander and Primo Orpilla of San Francisco's Studio O+A Designers of the Year. We asked them about their experiences during the high and low points of the dot-com era and the ways high-tech continues to influence office design today. - ArchNewsNow



- BIG-Bjarke Ingels Group: Waste-to-Energy Plant, Copenhagen, Denmark
- MVRDV: Balancing Barn, Suffolk, UK

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