

## Today's News - Tuesday, February 15, 2011

- Janz returns to Flint and finds some surprising answers to his question: "What is the place of an architect in a setting where few building permits are issued, where many more buildings are being demolished than designed?"
- Minneapolis has high hopes for its riverfront, naming winner in waterfront design competition.
- Q&A with Dieden: the "town builder" (and "guerilla developer") discusses urban highway removal, sustainability, and TOD.
- An ode to NYC's traffic commish Sadik-Khan, who "has turned conventional wisdom on its head...with her potent combination of smarts, chutzpah and political savvy" in transforming urban transportation (despite the naysayers).
- Hume x 2: Calgary's new mayor makes the city "the new leader of urban Canada; he "is one of those rare city politicians who actually loves the city" (as opposed to Toronto's mayor who "was elected on a promise to wage war on the city") + He bemoans a heritage report that "paints bleak picture" of Toronto's treasures: "You can make money out of heritage but it's still seen as an obstacle."
- It turns out to be a heritage sort of day: Glancey cheers National Trust's call to arms to save Lutyens' Castle Drogo, "the stuff of architectural sorcery" - but "the whole quixotic caboodle might tumble and fall. Should we care?" (hint: yes!).
- The U.K.'s "public lavatories are vanishing fast," but there is "a model that could keep the nation's loos flushing" (great slide show).
- Yesterday, "the wrecking ball paid a visit" to Steve Jobs' Woodside mansion (we've been reporting on this since '04, when he said it was "one of the biggest abominations of a house I've ever seen" by an architect he's never heard of - preservationists beg to differ).
- On brighter heritage notes: Moore marvels at "the rebirth of the gothic masterpiece," the St Pancras Renaissance Hotel, now "sumptuously" restored: "It is both magnificent and a little demented" (not necessarily a bad thing).
- King finds himself in Petaluma, where the post office is a health club and the old opera house is a martial arts center - and "this is as it should be": aged buildings are really "vessels shaped in one culture...often inhabited by later cultures in ways the creators could not have conceived."
- Kamin re: green credentials of Gehry's 8 Spruce Street and Gang's Aqua: Why does it matter? Because these "acclaimed skyscrapers" were "designed by two of the most highly-publicized architects of our time" and "can have enormous influence, not simply on architects but on developers."
- Rochon on Bali's Green School and the Canadian who "has given the world a remarkable new temple of learning" (but "you'll find no mention of any architect of record").
- OMA's AMO teams with WWF and Ecofys on "The Energy Report" which forecasts the "world could be entirely dependent on renewable energy" by 2050.
- What high speed rail can mean for community design.
- A fascinating look at London's brush with its own Robert Moses and plans for highways to nowhere.
- Pickrel fondly remembers Edgar Tafel, FLW's last apprentice and "history incarnate" (Edgar Tafel, FAIA: A Remembrance will be held at NYC's Center for Architecture Thursday afternoon).

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This Is Flint, Michigan: ...once a thriving manufacturing center...today a struggling survivor of post-industrial disinvestment...How should architectural education acknowledge the breakdown of the Rust Belt?...What is the place of an architect in a setting where few building permits are issued, where many more buildings are being demolished than designed? By Wes Janz [images] - Places Journal

Minneapolis Riverfront Redesign Team Selected: Tom Leader Studio and Kennedy & Violich Architecture has won a competition...RiverFIRST bested those by rivals Ken Smith, Stoss Landscape Urbanism, and Turenscape... -- TLS/KVA; Kestrel Design Group/Landscape Architecture; Proverb [images, links to details] - The Architect's Newspaper

Q&A: Michael Dieden: Building With Transit: Progressive developer discusses urban highway removal, sustainability, and transit-oriented development..."town builder" and "guerilla developer"... "When it comes to issues of NIMBYism, there are good and bad approaches." -- Creative Housing Associates; Moule & Polyzoïdes Architects and Urbanists - The Architect's Newspaper

Surprise: Big Old New York City Is the Cutting Edge for Urban Transportation and a Vision for a Sustainable Future: Thanks to Janette Sadik-Khan, NYC is setting an example for the rest of the country, innovating in public transportation and the pedestrian automobile dynamics....[she] has turned conventional wisdom on its head...with her potent combination of smarts, chutzpah and political savvy... - AlterNet.org

"Canada's mayor" sees the city positively: The recently elected mayor of Calgary, not Toronto, is the new leader of urban Canada...Naheed Nenshi is one of those rare city politicians who actually loves the city. By contrast, Toronto Mayor Rob Ford was elected...on a promise to wage war on the city. By Christopher Hume - Toronto Star

Heritage report paints bleak picture: Same old, same old: Study finds Toronto isn't much good at dealing with its heritage...city agencies are underfunded, legislation is weak and political will lukewarm at best..."You can make money out of heritage but it's still seen as an obstacle." By Christopher Hume - Toronto Star

A call to arms for the castle that keeps fantasies alive: Let's support the National Trust's campaign to preserve the magnificent Castle Drogo as a haven from our 'margarine' world...the stuff of architectural sorcery...the whole quixotic caboodle might tumble and fall. Should we care?...Here is architecture writ as an imaginatively illustrated storybook [that] belongs to all of us. It might be flawed...it can be put right with today's building technology... By Jonathan Glancey -- Edwin Lutyens (1930) - Guardian (UK)

Now cross your legs: Britain's public lavatories are vanishing fast: The Emerald Isle provides a model that could keep the nation's loos flushing. -- Piers Gough; John Pardey Architects [slide show] - Independent (UK)

Steve Jobs' historic Woodside mansion is torn down: The wrecking ball paid a visit Monday...capping a protracted legal battle over the fate of the historic home..."what we are witnessing here today is the loss of a significant piece of California architectural history"... "we got the house demolition permit, and the demolition started today. What more can I say?" -- George Washington Smith (1926) [slide show] - San Francisco Chronicle

St Pancras Renaissance Hotel: The rebirth of a gothic masterpiece...has been sumptuously restored after generations of neglect...It is both magnificent and a little demented...it feels uncomfortable with its own hedonism. But these are details compared to the far more significant fact that one of the country's architectural marvels is returning to life...shows the power of fantasy in cities. By Rowan Moore -- George Gilbert Scott; Harry Handelsman/Manhattan Loft Corporation; RHWL; Richard Griffiths Architects - Observer (UK)

Petaluma, where the presence of the past is strong: The post office is a health club. There's a martial arts center in the old opera house...And this is as it should be. We look on aged buildings as treasures or landmarks or relics, but at the most basic level they're shells - vessels shaped in one culture...often inhabited by later cultures in ways the creators could not have conceived. By John King - San Francisco Chronicle

Gehry's 8 Spruce Street isn't pursuing LEED certification; Gang's Aqua is: Why bother checking up on both buildings' green credentials? Because these are two of the most acclaimed skyscrapers of our time, and they were designed by two of the most highly-publicized architects of our time. By Blair Kamin -- Frank Gehry; Jeanne Gang - Chicago Tribune

In Bali, a new school that's already a legend: Canadian jewellery magnate John Hardy has given the world a remarkable new temple of learning, its centrepiece made entirely from bamboo...you'll find no mention of any architect of record...The Green School model could be designed in Canada to magnificently align with all four seasons. By Lisa Rochon- [Globe and Mail \(Canada\)](#)

OMA forecasts green energy supply by 2050: ...world could be entirely dependent on renewable energy...Working with the WWF/World Wide Fund for Nature and Ecofys environment consultancy...hopes "The Energy Report" will inspire and encourage governments to find ways of ending reliance on fossil fuels. -- Reinier de Graaf/Office for Metropolitan Architecture/AMO [[link to report](#)]- [BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

What High Speed Rail Means for Community Design: Smart design can help ensure the public sees high speed rail as a viable transportation option. Well-designed stations and public spaces may also mean denser, mixed-use neighborhoods as well...can offer an important platform for community revitalization. -- TND Planning Group; Arup; Grimshaw Architects [[links](#)]- [The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects \(ASLA\)](#)

London: Roads to nowhere: Imagine a London where the best-known districts no longer exist, crushed by vast, elevated motorways. It's a chilling vision – and one that almost came to pass...If the planners had had their way [in the late 1960s], they would have wrought more destruction than the Luftwaffe could manage... -- Charles Bressey; Edwin Lutyens; Patrick Abercrombie; Robert Moses; Herbert Manzoni- [Independent \(UK\)](#)

Remembering "Edgar T": Farewell to Frank Lloyd Wright's last apprentice: To me, and many others, Edgar Tafel was history incarnate - propelling the past forward, granting us a tantalizing glimpse into the machinations of "the world's greatest architect"...at a zenith of his career. By Debra Pickrel- [Metropolis Magazine](#)



-- [BIG-Bjarke Ingels Group: New National Gallery, Nuuk, Greenland](#) -- [TNT Nuuk](#); [Ramboll Nuuk Arkitekti](#)  
-- [Grimshaw Architects: Newport Station, Newport, Wales](#)

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