

Today's News - Tuesday, May 10, 2011

EDITOR'S NOTE: A briefer-than-usual newsletter today as we rev up to head down to New Orleans for the AIA convention. We'll be back on Tuesday, May 17 (with lots of catching up to do!).

- Heathcote takes on livable vs. loveable when it comes to rating cities, and the "the fundamental fault that lies at the heart of the idea of measuring cities by their 'livability.'"
- Kamin offers his assessment of Richard Daley's 20+ years as mayor of Chicago: his shining moments, mixed results, and biggest blunders.
- Huxtable's take on why Ito and Wright got it right in designing for an earthquake zones: their buildings' "extraordinary resilience was the result of a close collaboration between a creative architect and an equally creative engineer."
- King is glad San Francisco's Metreon is getting a makeover, but there's "an architectural lesson in the block-long complex...Once a developer makes a huge mistake, it's hard to set things right."
- Browning cheers the Queens Museum of Art expansion and the museum's role as a "community hero."
- Hawthorne's thoughtful take on the changing state of architectural criticism in the age of shriveling dailies the ballooning blogosphere (he's not as negative as one might expect).
- Zardini and Cohen on the CCA's "Architecture in Uniform" exhibition: it richly illustrates how architects "proved to be as strategically indispensable as did the scientists and engineers."
- Kapoor goes monumental with "Monumenta" at the Grand Palais in Paris, debuting tomorrow.

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Liveable v lovable: Vancouver's boringly consistent topping of the polls [of the best city to live in the world] underlines the fundamental fault that lies at the heart of the idea of measuring cities by their "liveability"... Our cities are our own - we make them inside us. No city means the same to two people so how on earth can we measure them? By Edwin Heathcote -- Tyler Brülé; Joel Kotkin; Joel Garreau; Ricky Burdett - Financial Times (UK)

Judging Daley's record on architecture and urban design: A great, but flawed, shaper of Chicago's cityscape...Historians will have the ultimately say about his complex legacy. Here is my assessment [of his] shining moments, mixed results, biggest blunders... By Blair Kamin [images]- Chicago Tribune

Why One Remained Standing: It would be easy to call the Mediatheque's survival a miracle, but it would be wrong. The building's extraordinary resilience was the result of a close collaboration between a creative architect and an equally creative engineer... By Ada Louise Huxtable -- Toyo Ito; Mutsuro Sasaki; Frank Lloyd Wright; Paul Mueller - Wall Street Journal

Metreon gets a makeover but can't escape its box: There's a rich cultural yarn in the saga...about how a gimmicky and failed world unto itself will be reborn...But there's also an architectural lesson in the block-long complex...Once a developer makes a huge mistake, it's hard to set things right. By John King -- Westfield Group [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

Community Hero: Queens Museum of Art: Today, the future of the United States looks like Queens, New York: multicultural, urban, not necessarily English-speaking or native-born. The QMA has long served this variegated community. It will reach out even more productively with its new expansion. By Gavin Browning -- Grimshaw Architects; Ammann & Whitney [images]- Change Observer

What Happens to Architectural Criticism When Dailies Shrive and Bloggers Take Over? ...I don't know if I would trade our uncertain, fragmented world of criticism for the old one, which provided stability, to be sure, but also allowed critics a certain untouchable, privileged isolation...What has emerged is an architecture criticism less contemplative, perhaps, but more nimble - and better attuned to its audience, in ways good and bad. By Christopher Hawthorne- Architectural Record

"Architecture in Uniform: Designing and Building for the Second World War" at the Canadian Centre for Architecture investigates the effects of the war on the built environment and on the field of architecture...architects proved to be as strategically indispensable as did the scientists and engineers. By Mirko Zardini and Jean-Louis Cohen [slide show]- Places Journal

Anish in Paris: Anish Kapoor has always thought big. But with a breakthrough installation set to debut May 11 at the Grand Palais, London's leading artist is going colossal..."Monumenta" will fill the height, length and width of the 145,000-square-foot hall. [images]- Wall Street Journal

Valerio Dewalt Train Architects: Rita Atkinson Residences, University of California, San Diego

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