

## Today's News - Friday, August 5, 2011

EDITOR'S NOTE: We'll be taking Monday's and Friday's off for the rest of August. We'll be back Tuesday, August 9. Happy Weekend!

- Eyre weighs in on the Trad vs. Rad kerfuffle (a.k.a. Traditional Architecture Group vs. Paul Finch): "There is no modernist conspiracy in how we judge architecture."
- Rybczynski bemoans security concerns trumping the "architectural grace" of grand public buildings: "the open-handed public entrance is an endangered species."
- Louisville's arts community bemoans the demise of REX Architecture's long-anticipated Museum Plaza project.
- A look at how Texas cities are "turning planning upside down" when it comes to creating lively new public spaces.
- Saffron cheers Philly's first foray into transforming parking spots into parklets - and hopes the trend continues.
- Merrick gets a preview of McAslan's new vision for the grande dame of Victorian rail at King's Cross, "a fine fusion of architecture and engineering," and "a triumph of determination over constraints."
- Allies & Morrison tapped to design a little sister for Shakespeare's Globe theater (roof included).
- We couldn't resist: a terrific video of the High Line Part Deux.
- Weekend diversions:
- Two takes on BMW Guggenheim Lab opening (a passed-out drunk included), and lots of Q&A's with the key players.
- Q&A with "The Life And Death Of Buildings" curator Joel Smith re: his Princeton exhibit for the 10th anniversary of 9/11: "he gravitated towards images of buildings aging in exactly the way that the Twin Towers never will" (amazing images!).
- A new exhibit (and "weighty art book") puts "Chicago's Gaudi" in the (long over-due) spotlight.
- Mays marvels over "Utopia Forever": while a few of the projects "are intellectual entertainments," many are "serious bids to address pressing contemporary issues...It's good to know that architects are pondering the future mindfully."
- Hawthorne hails Waldie's spare, poetic "Holy Land: A Suburban Memoir" and Jencks' ode to those who make up "the core of the so-called L.A. School."
- Q&A with Mehrotra re: his new book "Architecture in India 1990-2010," how "impatient capital" shapes a city's skyline, and why the future of Mumbai looks "grim."
- Dyckhoff gets two thumbs-up's for his "The Secret Life of Buildings" adventure in TV land: "like the rest of us, he's not happy...contemporary architects - not to mention critics, politicians - have forgotten what buildings are for" + It's "an intriguing and thought provoking" show.

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There is no modernist conspiracy in how we judge architecture: Getting ready for London 2012 is about focusing on the buildings, not heritage politics...The request referred to in Robert Booth's article that the communities secretary, Eric Pickles, should "instruct councils to ignore the watchdog's views until Paul Finch apologises and retracts his remarks" would be extraordinarily counterproductive if implemented.  
By Jim Eyre/Wilkinson Eyre Architects - Guardian (UK)

Sorry, This Entrance Is Closed: When security concerns trump architectural grace: The latest victim is the Eisenhower Executive Office Building...where the majority of the White House staff work...Although the proposed facility is intelligently designed by Kieran Timberlake...there is no getting around the fact that the building has lost its front door...the open-handed public entrance is an endangered species. By Witold Rybczynski - Slate

Museum Plaza decision surprises, saddens Louisville's arts community: ...now the second architecturally stunning project not realized at the waterfront site..."Who knows? They might pull something else out of the hat." -- Joshua Prince-Ramus/REX Architecture- Courier-Journal (Louisville, KY)

Houston is North America's Placemaking Capital: How Cities in Texas are Turning Planning Upside Down...focusing on creating lively new public spaces...infusing downtowns and neighborhoods with a new sense of vibrancy and, most surprising of all, doing it by working at a smaller, human scale. [images, links]- Project for Public Spaces (PPS)

Transforming parking spots to parklets: Philadelphia joins an urban trend: Parklets are the newest tool in a kit of low-cost amenities that cities have been using to make urban living more pleasant...If the pilot project proves successful...[the city] will look for other parklet locations...also asking neighborhoods to suggest intersections for permanent street plazas, like those on Broadway [in NYC]. By Inga Saffron -- Digsau Architects; Bill Curran [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

A new vision for the grande dame of Victorian rail at King's Cross: ...a fine fusion of architecture and engineering...unquestionably the most innovative piece of British transport architecture since Stansted airport in 1991, and Waterloo's Eurostar terminal in 1993...a triumph of determination over constraints...They've pulled it off, with English Heritage watching closely... By Jay Merrick -- John McAslan + Partners; Arup [images]- Independent (UK)

Globe theatre to get sister building - with a roof: Plans announced for project which will allow year-round performances of William Shakespeare's plays...inspiration for the £8m, 320-seat design comes from two 1616 drawings...once thought the work of...Inigo Jones, now believed probably by his assistant John Webb. -- Allies & Morrison- Guardian (UK)

The High Line (Phase 2): A video -- James Corner Field Operations; Diller Scofidio + Renfro- Architect Magazine

BMW Guggenheim Lab: An Outdoor Workshop For Fixing City Life: ...as a crowd of toffs celebrated the opening...a drunken man passed out on the sidewalk...But for the fact that the poor guy barely seemed to be breathing, it might have been a clever bit of street theater to illustrate the Lab's provocative theme: comfort - and discomfort - in the city...key players explain the background of the project, and its key elements. By Linda Tischler -- David van der Leer; Maria Nicanor; Momoyo Kajjima/Atelier Bow-Wow; Jake Barton/Local Projects; Kristian Koreman, of ZUS (Zones Urbaines Sensibles) [images, videos]- Fast Company

BMW Guggenheim Lab: "Confronting Comfort" will explore both individual and collective comfort in the context of environmental and social responsibility...Guggenheim curators and all four members of Lab Team New York [talk] about issues of "segrification," hedonistic utility, and how the city operates like a living microbe. -- Atelier Bow-Wow; Maria Nicanor; David van der Leer; Omar Freilla/Green Worker Cooperatives; Charles Montgomery; Olatunbosun Obayomi/Bio Applications Initiative; Elma van Boxel/Kristian Korean/ZUS [Zones Urbaines Sensibles] [images, links]- Urban Omnibus

"The Life And Death Of Buildings" And What It Means To Travel: ...exhibition on view at the Princeton University Art Museum through November 6...When Joel Smith...was considering putting together an exhibit for the 10th anniversary of 9/11, he gravitated...towards images of buildings aging in exactly the

way that the Twin Towers never will. [images]- [Huffington Post](#)

Deconstructing Chicago's Gaudi: Edgar Miller is far from being a household name, despite the prolific architect's numerous contributions during the 20th century. Thanks to a new, weighty art book and exhibit at ArchiTech Gallery, Miller's name has resurfaced. [slide show]- [Chicago Tribune](#)

Architects still dare to dream of utopia: "Utopia Forever: Visions of Architecture and Urbanism" by Lukas Feireiss shows that wild visions about the city, technology and engineering proliferate...A few...are intellectual entertainments...Many, however, are serious bids to address pressing contemporary issues...It's good to know that architects...are pondering the future mindfully... By John Bentley Mays -- Vincent Callebaut; Yansong Ma/MAD Architects; OFL Architecture [images]- [Globe and Mail \(Canada\)](#)

Reading L.A.: D.J. Waldie's spare, poetic "Holy Land: A Suburban Memoir": ...[his] personal story cut against the grain of typical suburban history + Charles Jencks' "Heteropolis: Los Angeles, the Riots and Strange Beauty of Hetero-architecture: a thoughtful, sharp-minded book that includes some of the best descriptions I've yet encountered of the work of Frank Gehry, Eric Owen Moss, Frank Israel, Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi - the core of the so-called L.A. School... By Christopher Hawthorne- [Los Angeles Times](#)

Modernity and mega cities: Architect and Harvard professor Rahul Mehrotra on his new book "Architecture in India 1990-2010," how "impatient capital" shapes a city's skyline, the relevance of Gandhian ideas of space, and why the future of Mumbai looks "grim"- [Livemint.com \(India\)](#)

"The Secret Life of Buildings": Tom Dyckhoff...is an amiable, enthusiastic chap in standard-issue media spectacles...like the rest of us, he's not happy. His lament runs as follows: contemporary architects – not to mention critics, politicians and the man in the street – have forgotten what buildings are for.- [Independent \(UK\)](#)

The Secret Life Of Buildings Review: Brick S\*\*t House: ...an intriguing and thought provoking programme. Tom Dyckhoff is a likeable and engaging host and the mix of scientific experiments, alongside a social commentary on the way modern Britain lives makes for a promising series. His concept for the documentary is original and intrigues and concerns in equal measure.- [OnTheBox.com \(UK\)](#)

Book Review: Talkin' 'Bout (Not) My Generation: Uplifting Gen X Architects Showcase Pragmatic Optimism: In "New York Dozen: Gen X Architects" by architect Michael J. Crosbie, the framing of each architectural firm is extraordinary. By Norman Weinstein- [ArchNewsNow](#)



-- David Chipperfield Architects: The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield, UK  
-- J. Mayer H. architects: Metropol Parasol, Seville, Spain

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