

Today's News - Wednesday, September 28, 2011

- Dvir delves into the controversy swirling around the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design's decision to go with a starchitecture firm instead of homegrown talent to design its new campus in the heart of Jerusalem.
- Taylor looks into the boom in large-scale cultural facility projects that "get bigger and bigger beyond reason," and tend to "favor civic symbolism and iconic design over operating health," and are "subject to the whims and coercions of the experts" (like architects) who "swing into town to make them real."
- The new Auckland Art Gallery "is a grand design," but "some of the restoration comes with compromise."
- Iovine finds Obama's jobs speech may have been "music to the ears, but for architects the music is still playing in another room"; could it be he thinks that the public is wary of "capital-A architecture?" (two NYC projects "could easily fuel that impression").
- A report from a Harvard GSD conference re: making the case for sustainable streets: "Rather than dismiss the naysayers as unenlightened, city officials and design and planning professionals would do better to more carefully listen to and respect their concerns."
- ASLA amasses more than 475 green infrastructure case studies that demonstrate to policymakers the value of creating and investing in green infrastructure policies.
- Seattle x 2: Parklets are a great idea to steal from San Francisco as a simple and "easy way to make some great community spaces without a lot of drama."
- Hinshaw explains how Seattle "is killing retail by requiring too much of it": it's "time to open up the street fronts to creativity, whimsy, and home-grown funkiness."
- Australia is making a serious reach for the "holy grail of green buildings" with a 6-star rating - watch for the "green ratings war" to "become even fiercer."
- Hawthorne hails the new West Hollywood Library: "it is tough to think of many civic projects that can match its upbeat, gregarious appeal" that "managed to navigate the punishing public-sector construction process without sacrificing its ambition or design personality."
- Wonderful as it may be, part of the cost of the new library could be the loss of Edward Fickett's original library to make room for a park.
- Tischler sits down with Safdie to "discuss the challenges of designing a would-be icon of peace in a time of war."
- Kamin on Gehry's Winton Guest House almost ready for its close-up at its new home on a university campus.
- Ten women in architecture comment on being a woman architect.
- Thomas Leslie is first Pickard Chilton Professor at Iowa State College of Design.
- An accessible tree house builder wins the 2011 Paralyzed Veterans' Barrier-Free America Award (how cool is that?!?).

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'Starchitecture' vs. homegrown design: The Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design's decision to invite a foreign firm to design its new campus in the heart of Jerusalem - and the decision-making process it used in making that choice - have sparked a furor among local architects...Israeli firms did not stand a chance of competing... By Noam Dvir -- Kazuyo Sejima/Ryue Nishizawa/SANAA; Nir - Kutz Architects; Studio- Ha'aretz (Israel)

Wanted: 'Guardian ad item' for cultural facilities: ...the Cultural Infrastructure Project...explores many facets of large-scale cultural facility projects...They get bigger and bigger beyond reason as the planning proceeds...They come to favor civic symbolism and iconic design over operating health. And they are subject to the whims and coercions of the experts who swing into town to make them real (architects, acousticians, consultants, and such). By Andrew Taylor- ArtsJournal

Auckland's inside-out theatre: Eleven years and \$121 million in the making, the new Auckland Art Gallery is a grand design. But it hasn't been without its problems...This was to be a building to be gazed at, through and from...Some of the restoration comes with compromise... By Linda Herrick-- Grainger and d'Ebro (1884); Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp; Archimedia- New Zealand Herald

Editorial> The Stimulus Blues: Obama's jobs speech was music to the ears, but for architects the music is still playing in another room...could it also be that the president believes the American public is wary of Grand Projects, and therefore of capital-A architecture? Two New York projects could easily fuel that impression... By Julie V. Iovine -- Frank Gehry; Swanke Hayden Connell; Santiago Calatrava- The Architect's Newspaper

Making the Case for Sustainable Streets: Rather than dismiss the naysayers as unenlightened, city officials and design and planning professionals would do better to more carefully listen to and respect their concerns. Finding ways to educate the public...is critical. -- A Roadmap to Sustainable Infrastructures & Green Cities Conference [links]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

ASLA Releases More than 475 Green Infrastructure Case Studies: Not only do these projects showcase landscape architecture, but they also demonstrate to policymakers the value of creating green infrastructure policies and investing in these approaches. Green infrastructure and low-impact development (LID) approaches...can save communities millions of dollars... [links]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Parklets: a great idea for Seattle to steal: San Francisco has created a quick way to convert a parking space or two into pleasant micro parks...What are we waiting for? A simple project like this can...be a model for moving quicker, bolder and faster...an easy way to make some great community spaces without a lot of drama. - Crosscut (Seattle)

Seattle is killing retail by requiring too much of it: A better model, from Britain and Vancouver, is to concentrate stores on "high streets," turning others into mostly quiet residential streets. And there are other ways to animate streets than putting in struggling shops...it's time to open up the streetfronts to similar creativity, whimsy, and home-grown funkiness. By Mark Hinshaw- Crosscut (Seattle)

The holy grail of Green Buildings: The National Australian Built Environment Rating Scheme (NABERS) has now announced a new energy and water 6 star rating...When combined with the recently released IPD Green Property Investment Survey, which showed buildings with 4 star or above ratings returned 32% better than lower rated buildings, and the mandatory disclosure scheme, the green ratings war will become even fiercer.- Mondaq (UK)

West Hollywood Library among top work: ...offers a freewheeling tour through centuries of architectural history...it is tough to think of many civic projects that can match the upbeat, gregarious appeal...managed to navigate the punishing low-bid, public-sector construction process without sacrificing its ambition or design personality...a small, notable modern building from 1959 by Edward Fickett, may slow work on the park. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Johnson Favaro [images]- Los Angeles Times

WeHo No: Outcry over Fickett Library demolition in West Hollywood...Controversy is swirling around the fate of a 1960 library building designed by Edward Fickett and located in the new West Hollywood Park...was evaluated in a historical analysis for the new park Master Plan...concluded the library was not significant enough to avoid demolition... -- Johnson Favaro [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Amid So Much War, How Do You Design A New U.S. Peace Center? We sat down with Moshe Safdie, the designer of the new United States Institute of Peace, to discuss the challenges of designing a would-be icon of peace in a time of war. By Linda Tischler [images]- Fast Company

Gehry-designed Winton Guest House ready to open in Owatonna, Minn.: ...originally built on in the suburbs of

Minneapolis and has since been moved to the University of St. Thomas...will have its grand opening Oct. 16. By Blair Kamin [link to images]- Chicago Tribune

Women In Architecture: By Women In Architecture: ...comments from women who either presently work as architects or for some reason left the field... By Tom Mallory -- Marcy Wong Donn Logan Architects; MAKE Architecture; Mecanoo; Cary Bernstein Studio; Marks Barfield Architects; PLP Architecture; Ash Sakula Architects; Deborah Berke & Partners; Perkins+Will; Architectus & Ingenhoven Architects [slide show essay]- Huffington Post

Thomas Leslie is first Pickard Chilton Professor at Iowa State College of Design: ...recognized expert on the history of technology and architecture...intends to research and produce two publications...also plans an effort to revive the interdisciplinary pilot Design Science course...- Iowa State University

Accessible Treehouse Builder is Winner of Paralyzed Veterans' Barrier-Free America Award: ...has built 34 universally accessible treehouses in private camps and public parks across the country. -- James Roth/The Treehouse Guys; John Connell/2morrow Studios [image, links]- Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA)

INSIGHT: Small-Scale Solution to Alternative Energy Resistance: Why the assumption that an industrial-scale response is required to produce green energy in the vast quantities required to power this country is wrong. By Peter Gisolfi, AIA, ASLA, LEED AP - ArchNewsNow.com

Book Review: Pencils that Refuse to Die: Meditations about New Books on Architectural Drawing: Three recent books dealing with architectural drawing by pencil you need to read. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow



Moshe Safdie: Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, Kansas City, Missouri

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