

Today's News - Friday, November 4, 2011

- Zandberg zings Tel Aviv Museum's new wing: it's a "wow" at first sight, but ultimately a "beautiful waste of space" that is "all form and no function...its purpose seems to have been forgotten."
- LaBarre cheers an "iridescent music center" for a tiny village in Spain - that cost less than \$1 million (gasp!).
- The "real marvel" about the new addition to the SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah, GA, is the "drastic juxtaposition" between the ruins of an 1853 railway depot and the soaring, light-filled spaces.
- Rybczynski is on a roll about "how the Brits stole high-tech" from American architects and "made it sing."
- Woodman cheers Foster's "extraordinary proposal to overhaul the UK's transport infrastructure" + the ArcelorMittal Orbit "captures the present moment all too clearly - and what a frightening sight it is."
- Wainwright finds the "lunatic red" Orbit "so willfully grotesque that it is almost likable."
- More on the end of a decade of the U.K.'s starchitect-studded adventures in seeking the Bilbao effect in new regional fine-arts buildings.
- Hume discovers it's not a good idea to tell Libeskind his buildings look like one another.
- Lewis is (mostly) impressed with the 2011 Solar Decathlon entries that "suggested the kinds of sustainable, affordable homes that America's home building industry could be producing for small households decades from now."
- Q&A with Eco-Structure editor Weeks re: biomimicry, the importance of the post-occupancy performance of buildings, and why Ray Anderson deserves to be in a Hall of Fame.
- Many fear new rules could leave some NYC community gardens open to development.
- Jacobs Engineering swallows Philly-based firm KlingStubbins "to better compete with other big players."
- Winners all: Public projects dominate the Australian Institute of Architects National Architecture Awards 2011 + WAF 2011 day two winners are lots of building types.
- Weekend diversions:
- Russell tours the Skyscraper Museum's "Supertall!": "Though sleek, futuristic modernism prevails, cash-laden promoters ransack history to lay on gilded glitz."
- Moore finds things to marvel at "Building the Revolution": "The show is prophecy and elegy at once," though "as either prophecy or politics, the architecture largely fails."
- RIBA opens a Pavilion of Protest that presents "data from more than 1,400 students regarding the cost of tuition fees."
- In Hong Kong, an architect is set to open the Architecture Is Art festival: "We need to remind people that architecture is not just building and not just investment."
- Weinstein rounds up four new books on Japanese architecture that "reveal new twists in that heritage of design, many brought about by surprising fusions of vernacular materials and new technology."
- EDITOR'S NOTE: A reminder to U.S. readers (except lucky Arizona) to turn back your clocks this weekend (always such a depressing thing to have to do).

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A beautiful waste of space: Tel Aviv's new museum is a monument to modern architecture. But in melding shape and material, a building was formed that lacks spirit and is all form and no function...its purpose seems to have been forgotten. By Esther Zandberg -- Dan Eytan and Yitzhak Yashar (1971); Preston Scott Cohen - Ha'aretz (Israel)

What A Pearl: Low-Cost, Iridescent Music Center Opens In Spain: Get this - it cost less than \$1 million...MUCA was designed to be what the architects call a "low-cost landmark" for the tiny, 2,000-person village of Algueña. By Suzanne LaBarre -- Cor & Asociados [images] - Fast Company

SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah, Georgia: ...Sottile & Sottile's addition to the antebellum structure that houses the museum at Savannah College of Art and Design is a coup for this historic centre in America's deep south...the real marvel is the drastic juxtaposition between the original Greek Revival structure - including ruins of an 1853 railway depot - and the soaring, light-filled spaces... [slide show] - Wallpaper*

How the Brits Stole High-Tech: American architects invented the style, but Brits like Norman Foster made it sing. Excerpted from "The Biography of a Building: How Robert Sainsbury and Norman Foster Built a Great Museum" By Witold Rybczynski - Foster + Partners; Richard Rogers; Michael Hopkins; Nicholas Grimshaw; Renzo Piano; Erich Mendelsohn; Frits Peutz; Jean Prouvé; Richard Neutra; Pierre Koenig; Charles and Ray Eames; Killingsworth, Brady & Smith; Kevin Roche & John Dinkeloo; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Cedric Price; Peter Cook/Archigram; Ove Arup; Ian Ritchie [slide show essay] - Slate

It's time to foster change: Foster's radical proposal for the transport system could be the kickstart the industry needs...After 18 months of penny-pinching and emphasising the local, politicians may be prepared to think big...Britain wasn't always so aimless + Teetering on the edge of collapse, the ArcelorMittal Orbit captures the present moment all too clearly — and what a frightening sight it is. By Ellis Woodman -- Foster + Partners; Anish Kapoor; Arup - BD/Building Design (UK)

ArcelorMittal Orbit by Anish Kapoor, Cecil Balmond and Kathryn Findlay: ...tower revels in its ugliness, mocking the reserved spirit of the rest of the Olympic site...the lunatic red twin of Populous's white essay in leanness...so willfully grotesque that it is almost likable...If nothing else, it will no doubt be a favourite amongst those who play Venturi Scott Brown's game, "I can like something worse than you can like." By Oliver Wainwright [images] - BD/Building Design (UK)

Contemporary Art and Question Marks in Britain: Firstsite is the latest and last in a series of 10 big-name-architect, regional fine-arts buildings to open in England during the past 10 years...a clear statement of hope for...the Bilbao effect...It's clear, too, that not every new art gallery designed by a famous architect is going to have the impact of the Bilbao Guggenheim. -- Rafael Vinoly; David Chipperfield; Herzog & de Meuron - New York Times

I'm Daniel Libeskind and you're not: Say what you like to [him], but don't tell him his buildings look like one another. "That's complete nonsense..."The museum in Dresden has nothing to do with the ROM...People see an angle in a building and they think they're all the same. They're blind." Perhaps... By Christopher Hume - Toronto Star

Solar home exhibit on Mall foretold future of efficient small dwellings: Some of the 19 Solar Decathlon...suggested the kinds of sustainable, affordable homes that America's home building industry could be producing for small households decades from now. By Roger K. Lewis - Washington Post

A Conversation With Katie Weeks, Editor of Eco-Structure Magazine: ...discusses biomimicry...the growing importance of the post-occupancy performance of buildings; and why Ray Anderson deserves to be in a Hall of Fame for turning a carpet company into an eco-friendly model of sustainability. - The Atlantic

City Rules Could Transplant Gardens: While New York City adopts increasingly progressive measures to promote sustainability, at least one "green" group remains unsatisfied. Some community gardeners...fear their plots of land could be snatched away at any time...could leave some...plots open to development. - Gotham Gazette (NYC)

Jacobs Engineering Expands Design Capability with KlingStubbins Purchase: ... justification for the purchase appears to be a desire to better compete with other big players. - Engineering News-Record (ENR)

Winners: Australian Institute of Architects National Architecture Awards 2011: Public projects dominated...34 awards and commendations were selected... -- Johnson Pilton Walker (JPW); Cox Architecture; Arkhefield; Total Project Group Architects; Hassell; WOHA; Neeson Murcutt Architects; Candalepas Associates; Kerry Hill Architects; NH Architecture; DesignInc; etc. - Architecture & Design (Australia)

WAF 2011: Day two winners announced: Four completed buildings and ten future projects have scooped awards at the World Architectural Festival. -- Studio MK27; Snøhetta; Architectenbureau Koen van Velsen; Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG); Oppenheim Architecture + Design; Sturgess Architecture; Kjellgren Kaminsky Architecture; Sharon Davis Design; Miralles Tagliabue EMBT; AGi Architects; Rocco; Integrated Design Associates; VK, 2050 A+P, Nhat My; Gustafson Porter [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

"Supertall" Buildings Defy Cash Crunch, Ape Condoms, Deface Mecca: Hubris and scandals color the history of buildings that stretch the limits of engineering. Yet the "Supertall!" exhibition at Lower Manhattan's Skyscraper Museum shows that the allure of high buildings is stronger than ever...Though sleek, futuristic modernism prevails, cash-laden promoters ransack history to lay on gilded glitz. By James S. Russell -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Adrian Smith; Wilkinson Eyre; Dar Al-Handasah architects; Gensler; TFP Farrells [images]- Bloomberg News

"Building the Revolution: Soviet Art and Architecture 1915-1935": The show is prophecy and elegy at once...As either prophecy or politics, the architecture...largely fails. It served an ideal of communism that fatally ignored its reality...They carry the idea that art and design can have a social purpose, which the best of them...actually achieved. By Rowan Moore -- Richard Pare; Vladimir Tatlin; Konstantin Melnikov; El Lissitzky; Liubov Popova; Rodchenko and Malevich; Aleksei Shchusev- Observer (UK)

Pavilion of Protest opens at RIBA: Collaboration between Zap Architecture and Sheffield University school of architecture: ...presenting data from more than 1,400 surveyed students regarding the cost of tuition fees. [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Hong Kong: Worst Architecture in the World? Mathias Woo has this bit of tough love for Hong Kongers: You don't appreciate good design...He hopes to change that with..."Architecture Is Art" festival. It starts Saturday and runs to Dec. 11..."We need to remind people that architecture is not just building and not just investment..." -- Zuni Icosahedron- Wall Street Journal

Japan Roundup: An island nation where the cool and the ordinary flourish together: ...four very different books about Japanese architecture since the 1980s reveal new twists in that heritage of design, many brought about by surprising fusions of vernacular materials and new technology - "21st Century Tokyo: A Guide to Contemporary Architecture"; "New Architecture in Japan"; "The Architectures of Atelier Bow-Wow: Behaviorology"; "Materials and Meaning in Contemporary Japanese Architecture: Tradition and Today." By Norman Weinstein- Architectural Record



Hagar Qim and Mnajdra Temples, UNESCO World Heritage Site, Island of Malta: To protect the 5,000-years-old temple ruins against further deterioration, engineers developed two special membrane roof structures, which now cover and protect the archaeological excavation. -- Walter Hunziker Architekten; formTL

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