

## Today's News - Thursday, January 19, 2012

- Chipperfield pens his agenda (in English and Italian) for the Venice Biennale: "I am interested in the things that architects share in common."
- Hanscom gives thumbs-up (and down) to Obama's urban agenda: while agencies are shifting "away from subsidizing suburban sprawl" and there are "smart-growthers and new urbanists in key positions," there is also "a tale that might make you tear your hair out."
- CTBUH releases its annual tall-building trends report: more skyscrapers "were completed in 2011 than in any year previous," and a "global dip is no longer expected. The effect this will have on the skylines of the world will be tremendous."
- Chaban discovers the real reason there are no skyscrapers in the middle of Manhattan: "Like cavemen following mammoth across the Bering Strait, early developers were following their prey" (so much for the "Manhattan bedrock myth").
- Benfield cheers Washington, DC's "spiffy green waterfront" the city can be proud of: "It's about time" (great pix and links!).
- A group of Perth architects, urban planners, and historians has launched a campaign against the city's waterfront plans; its designer dismisses the criticism as "1970s claptrap" (with links to several detailed news stories).
- A much more positive response to a proposal for Cairns, Australia's waterfront.
- Trump threatens to dump his golf resort plans in Aberdeen, Scotland, if a proposed offshore wind farm goes forward, but some say the government should call his bluff + The Donald goes from capitalist to conservationist in "not an altogether convincing performance...how ironic it would be if the blowhard's grand vision was undone by a wind farm" (second is a most amusing read).
- Hotel architecture is "undergoing a transformation" - unless you're a contrarian: with the exception of some high-profile, 5-star properties, what's being designed is "mere drops in an ocean of mediocrity."
- Brussat brings us a tale of two resurrections in Dresden: "I would ask which aesthetic calls us more effectively to peace."
- Q&A with P+W's Syrett re: the development and applications of the firm's free online database of building materials that contain substances known or suspected to be harmful to health.
- Good news x 2 from AIA: it signs an MOU with Public Architecture and The 1% to advance pro bono service "as a fundamental component of practice" + AIA ABI goes up: it may not mean "we are in a full recovery mode," but "it's entirely possible conditions will slowly continue to improve" (our fingers and toes are crossed!).
- In the U.K., Design Council Cabe appoints a town planner and urban designer as its new director.
- We just couldn't resist the power of bird-song: a California town piping bird calls over a streetscape says it's reducing crime; skeptics are all aflutter (it does sound beautiful).
- Call for entries: National and University Library NUK II in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

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**La Biennale di Chipperfield: "Common Ground":** I am interested in the things that architects share in common, from the conditions of the practice of architecture to the influences, collaborations, histories and affinities that frame and contextualise our work...making collaboration and dialogue fundamental to the Biennale. By David Chipperfield [in English and Italian]- II Giornale dell'Architettura (Italy)

**President Obama and the forgotten urban agenda:** ...key federal agencies have begun to shift away from subsidizing suburban sprawl and toward reviving cities and creating dense, walkable, transit-friendly communities...smart-growthers and new urbanists in key positions...a quick list of some of the more notable things [he] has done for cities, followed by a tale that might make you tear your hair out. By Greg Hanscom [links]- Grist Magazine

**A Year in Review: Trends of 2011: Skyscraper Completion Reaches New High for Fifth Year Running:** Once again, more 200 m+ buildings were completed in 2011 than in any year previous, with a total of 88 projects opening their doors...global dip is no longer expected. The effect this will have on the skylines of the world will be tremendous... [images, links]- Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH)

**Uncanny Valley: The Real Reason There Are No Skyscrapers in the Middle of Manhattan:** Like a great mountain range, the city is arrayed around the twin peaks of Downtown and Midtown... "It's not an issue of supply, of where you can build. It's an issue of demand, or where you want to build." Like cavemen following mammoth across the Bering Strait, early developers were following their prey. By Matt Chaban - New York Observer

**A spiffy green waterfront begins to take shape in DC:** Washington, DC is finally getting a green waterfront development to be proud of. A 42-acre redevelopment along the Anacostia River, The Yards...It's about time. By Kaid Benfield -- M. Paul Friedberg and Partners [images, links]- Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)

**Western Australia Government dismisses design criticism of \$440 million Perth waterfront plans:** ...a group of Perth architects, urban planners and historians has launched a campaign against the plans...A leading architect of the waterfront design...dismissed all claims made by the critics as "1970s claptrap"... -- Linley Lutton/Urbanix Design; Richard Weller [image, links]- Architecture & Design (Australia)

**Cairns waterfront vision as world study centre:** A concept for an aquarium and associated research and education facilities...has been revealed by a Hobart-based...Adam Dyason of Jaws Architects...called EcO 5, Centre for Marine and Tropical Sustainable Innovation. [image]- The Cairns Post (Australia)

**Trump halts golf resort work for turbine decision:** The Scottish Government has been urged to "call Donald Trump's bluff" after the billionaire put work on his £750 million golf resort on hold until a decision is made on an offshore wind farm proposal near the site... "The choice is simple – it is between the children of the country growing up to be bed-changers and grass-cutters or growing up with the opportunity to be engineers, designers, developers and builders..." - The Herald (Scotland)

**"Trump will either win you over.... or run you over":** If the turbines get built – and it looks like they will – Donald Trump will have a majestic view of them from his golf course...They're going to tower over his links...The Donald...is now interested in wildlife. From capitalist to conservationist. Who'd have thought it? ...It's not an altogether convincing performance...how ironic it would be if the blowhard's grand vision was undone by a wind farm. By Tom English- The Scotsman (UK)

**Today's architects design, build experiences:** ...the disciplines of hotel architecture and design are undergoing a transformation...A Contrarian view: a once individualistic and spectacular marketplace that is dominated by sameness...with the exception of some high-profile, 5-star properties... "mere drops in an ocean of mediocrity"... -- HKS Hill Glazier Studio; Gettys; Graven Images; Gene Kaufman Architect; Stanley Turkel- Hotel News Now

**In Dresden, a tale of two resurrections:** The Dresdener Frauenkirche and the Bundeswehr Military History Museum represent the optimistic and the pessimistic sides of the controversial project of rebuilding...Daniel Libeskind was hired to repudiate the museum. He succeeded brilliantly. Understandable, but still deplorable on several levels. More pleasant to contemplate is the reconstruction of the Frauenkirche...I would ask which aesthetic calls us more effectively to peace. By David Brussat [images]- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

**What's Your Building Made Of? Perkins+Will's Transparency:** ...a free, online database of building materials that contain substances known or suspected to be harmful to health...Peter Syrett explains the development and applications...reflecting on architectural responsibility, the nature of scientific certainty and the role of buildings as instruments of public health. - Urban

Omnibus

AIA and Public Architecture partner to advance pro bono service: ...will encourage AIA members to pledge to The 1%, a nationwide program...a portal on The 1% website to launch later this year that will support and track AIA members' service contributions to communities in need..."until now the profession has never institutionalized pro bono service as a fundamental component of practice"... - American Institute of Architects (AIA)

Architecture Billings Index Positive for Second Straight Month: All regions except for the West showing improved demand for design services..."it's too early to be sure that we are in a full recovery mode...Nevertheless, this is very good news...and it's entirely possible conditions will slowly continue to improve as the year progresses." - American Institute of Architects (AIA)

Design Council Cobe appoints new director: Diane Haigh's replacement has worked for Prince Charles and the Mayor of London...Nahid Majid OBE trained as a town planner and urban designer and spent 17 years working in the public sector...before moving to the private sector. - BD/Building Design (UK)

A California City Is Into Tweeting - Chirping, Actually - in a Big Way: Lancaster Mayor Thinks Piped-In Bird Song Reduces Crime: The chirps subconsciously discourage criminality..."Everybody is now in a better mood, a better place...It has just been astonishing to us how the community has changed as a result of a one-half-mile stretch." Some people are skeptical. [sound]- Wall Street Journal

Call for entries: National and University Library NUK II in Ljubljana, Slovenia; open to citizens of the Republic of Slovenia or other EU member states and/or competitors who have a place of business in either; cash prizes; deadline: March 23 [in English and Slovene]- Chamber of Architecture and Spatial Planning of Slovenia (ZAPS)



-- MAD: Ordos Museum, Kang Ba Shi City, Inner Mongolia, China -- Ma Yansong  
-- Exhibition: Situ Studio: reOrder: An Architectural Environment, Brooklyn Museum, New York -- Ennead Architects

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