

## Today's News - Wednesday, February 29, 2012

- Cary x 2: while architecture "has long wrestled with its elitism," the emerging field of public interest design "stands on the brink of becoming a self-sustaining profession and making a tangible impact on the world."
- He suggests a re-think of the Solar Decathlon: instead of building show houses, build them where people need them.
- Debate and controversy about the Eisenhower Memorial seem to overlook "two stones of 'heroic scale'" (one a gigundo bas reliefs of Ike addressing his troops on the eve of D-Day), and more details about how the project developed.
- Citizens of Aberdeen are voting - and will find out tomorrow if DS+R's controversial "Granite Web" (a.k.a. "Teletubbie Park") design for the City Garden Project will go forward.
- Stuart MacDonald minces no words about what he thinks: "Aberdeen doesn't need a 'McGuggenheim'" - the project "has become an object lesson in how not to do procurement"; the city "did have a more innovative alternative," but seems to prefer "bombast and grandiosity over elegance and simplicity."
- Belmont Freeman offers an oh-so-thoughtful take on the Cuban National Art Schools: while they are "masterworks of extraordinary beauty and importance," he fears the "excessive attention has occluded our view of post-1959 Cuban architecture to the extent that a larger and richer story is ignored" (great pix, too).
- Bernstein tools around the Smith Center for the Performing Arts: it might be "easy to dismiss as an art deco confection"; but Schwarz's "architecture is not about irony - it is entirely in earnest. And if that guarantees critical disdain, Schwarz is ready."
- The Smith Center "should help re-establish Las Vegas' place as a cultural destination...the housing collapse has made the city more affordable for striving artists, and galleries, playhouses, and dance workshops are flourishing."
- Grimshaw's Frost Museum of Science in Miami will be "an oasis in the midst of urban density" - sharks included (great slide show).
- King has high hopes a once-moribund corner in San Francisco will become a new hot spot that "signals a more experiential form of urbanity, one where grit and gloss can coexist."
- Behre cheers new life for what "may be the finest architectural work on the former Charleston Naval Base."
- There are high hopes for the recently discovered underground cistern in Houston's Buffalo Bayou Park; meanwhile, above ground a former "trash-strewn forgotten waterway" is being transformed into landscape infrastructure.
- Douglas Cardinal waxes poetic - and pragmatic: "Why do something that just adds to the misery of human beings? You have to choose if you want to make a difference with your profession or not."
- Calthorpe enters the debate about how to make cities safer for cyclists and pedestrians: "It starts with better design."
- Dyson minces no words about "lazy engineering behind fake energy efficiency": we need to "get people interested in engineering again. The rest should take care of itself."
- It's Leap Year Day, so how could we resist x 2: an irresistible eyeful of the more than 200 egg sculptures, designed by a who's who in art and design, scattered around London (until Easter weekend) in Fabergé's Big Egg Hunt charity fundraiser.
- ArchNewsThen (November 4, 2005): High Tech High-Los Angeles by Berliner and Associates, Architecture - recently translated into Bulgarian! (with link to original post).

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**Why 'The Death of Architecture' May Not Be Such a Bad Thing:** The field has long wrestled with its elitism...While architecture has divorced itself from related fields like environmental psychology, landscape architecture, and urban planning, public interest design seeks to reunite them...for the benefit of society...the emerging field...stands on the brink of becoming a self-sustaining profession and making a tangible impact on the world. By John Cary- GOOD Magazine

**How student-built solar homes can help solve US housing and energy crisis:** Few of the homes created by university teams in the Solar Decathlon are ever lived in – despite their extraordinary expense and tax on the environment. Instead of building temporary show houses, schools should build energy-efficient homes for local people who need them. By John Cary- Christian Science Monitor

**Frank Gehry Eisenhower Memorial Design Controversy Overshadows Two Stones Of 'Heroic Scale':** ...new images and documents released to the Associated Press reveal other key elements overshadowed by the furor and show how the controversial project developed. By Brett Zongker/AP [image]- Huffington Post

**Division grows over Aberdeen's 'Teletubbie Park':** Citizens of Aberdeen...will learn this week whether they have voted to accept up to £85m from one of the city's most successful businessmen...He has offered to donate £50m towards a £140m scheme to transform sunken Victorian gardens...into the futuristic City Garden Project, known as the "Granite Web" -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Keppie Design; Olin Studio- Financial Times (UK)

**Op-Ed: Aberdeen doesn't need a 'McGuggenheim' and shouldn't have to vote on it either:** City Garden Project...has become an object lesson in how not to do procurement...the city did have a more innovative alternative. It was all the things the American scheme is not: a beautiful, cutting-edge arts centre, sensitively integrated into the site...at a fraction of the cost...preferred bombast and grandiosity over elegance and simplicity. By Stuart MacDonald -- Diller, Scofidio + Renfro; Brissac Gonzales- The Scotsman (UK)

**What Is It About the Art Schools?** I consider las Escuelas Nacionales de Arte [Cuban National Art Schools] to be masterworks of extraordinary beauty and importance in the histories of Cuba and modern architecture...I fear that the excessive attention...has occluded our view of post-1959 Cuban architecture to the extent that a larger and richer story is ignored. By Belmont Freeman -- Ricardo Porro; Vittorio Garatti; Roberto Gottardi; John Loomis; "Unfinished Spaces"; Roberto Segre; Rodrigo Tascón; Rafael Mirabal; Octavio Buigas; Mario Girona; Joaquín Galván; Antonio Quintana; Humberto Alonso; Fernando Salinas; José Fernandez [images]- Places Journal

**David Schwarz Plays Vegas:** With the Smith Center for the Performing Arts in Las Vegas, [he] brings an earnest take on a historical style to the capital of pastiche...it's easy to dismiss...as another ersatz vision for Las Vegas...an art deco confection...That means some critics will question its architectural bona fides...But his architecture is not about irony...it is entirely in earnest. And if that guarantees critical disdain, Schwarz is ready. By Fred A. Bernstein -- David M. Schwarz Architects; Paul Scarborough/Akustiks [slide show]- Architectural Record

**Smith Center for the Performing Arts should help re-establish Las Vegas' place as a cultural destination:** ...the housing collapse has made the city more affordable for striving artists...galleries, playhouses and dance workshops are flourishing...at least three museums are opening or undergoing significant renovations this year. (AP) [slide show]- Las Vegas Sun

**Miami's Frost Museum of Science Breaks Ground On New Shark-Infested Building:** ...a sleek hall of learning designed to catch the Biscayne breeze that will, in turn, help power it...visitors will be treated to sharks...in a jaw-dropping 600,000-gallon aquarium...an oasis in the midst of urban density in its new shared home with the Miami Art Museum on Museum Park. -- Grimshaw Architects [images]- Huffington Post

**Twitter a reason 10th and Market will be hot spot:** By numbers alone, these two projects will enliven a stretch of Market that for years has been moribund. More intriguing is what could happen on the ground...signals a more experiential form of urbanity, one where grit and gloss can coexist. By John King -- Handel Architects - San Francisco Chronicle

Old Navy base's best building renewed: It may be the finest architectural work on the former Charleston Naval Base...Built in 1905, this Renaissance Revival work is a highly eclectic blend of classical, arts and crafts and Italianate flourishes...emerging from a restoration back into office space. By Robert Behre -- Frederick Law Olmsted; Berenyi [slide show]- Charleston Post and Courier (South Carolina)

Romanesque "Cistern" Re-Discovered Under Buffalo Bayou Park in Houston: ...another one of those exceptional neglected spaces within a developed city that holds the potential to be transformed into "landscape infrastructure"...The Shepherd-to-Sabine section of the park...will transform a former "trash-strewn forgotten waterway" into landscape infrastructure. -- Kevin Shanley/SWA Group [images]- ArchDaily

'We need life around us': Douglas Cardinal says a life surrounded by just concrete and people can be devastating: "The architect really has a wonderful opportunity of bringing other people's visions into reality...We have the capability to design net zero energy buildings. Unfortunately, we don't even have clients that want to consider it...Why do something that just adds to the misery of human beings? You have to choose if you want to make a difference with your profession or not."- Ottawa Citizen (Canada)

Making Cities Safer for Cyclists and Pedestrians: Does New York City need a 'broken windows' approach, cracking down on minor traffic violations in order to prevent fatal ones? It Starts With Better Design: I agree that we need to intensify policing of auto infractions and make consequences for dangerous behavior more intense. But these policing efforts should be complemented by redesign of streets... By Peter Calthorpe + others - New York Times

James Dyson On The Lazy Engineering Behind Fake Energy Efficiency: He doesn't think we need a design revolution if we want to cut energy use and conserve scarce materials. We just need to go back to making durable products, and get people interested in engineering again. The rest should take care of itself. - Fast Company

The Big Egg Hunt presented by Fabergé will see over 200 beautifully painted and decorated egg sculptures placed all over central London until the Easter weekend: All the eggs are for sale and will be auctioned...hopes to raise over £2million for the charities Elephant Family and Action for Children. -- Peter Blake; Candy & Candy; Chapman Brothers; Zaha Hadid; Gordon Murray; Ridley Scott; etc. [images]- The Big Egg Hunt

ArchNewsThen (November 4, 2005): High Tech High-Los Angeles by Berliner and Associates, Architecture: A new charter school is an incubator for new ideas and new approaches to learning - and teaching - technology -- in Bulgarian (with link to original post).- Fat Cow

Two Books to Accelerate the Translation of Ideas into Practical Forms: New books on design research and transformational ideas through architectural history have potent practical uses: "The Designer's Guide to Doing Research: Applying Knowledge to Inform Design" Sally Augustin and Cindy Coleman; and "100 Ideas That Changed Architecture" by Richard Weston. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow

The Big Chill: Leers Weinzapfel Associates' Chiller Plants Reinvent the Art of Infrastructure Work: Thoughtful analysis, ingenuity, and the ability to envision design opportunities create a unique exercise in urban design to "make something of beauty." By Charles Linn, FAIA [images]- ArchNewsNow



-- Exhibition: "Alturas de Macchu Picchu: Martín Chambi - Álvaro Siza at work," The Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal  
-- UNStudio: Kutaisi Airport, Kutaisi, Georgia

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