

## Today's News - Thursday, March 1, 2012

- A handful of very interesting takes on the ramifications of Wang Shu's Pritzker win: "without a willingness to make up for the missed density elsewhere, his brand of anti-urbanization risks irrelevance."
- Reviewing tweets in China, his win "inspired equal parts bafflement and skepticism."
- The prize "may also help China dispel widely repeated criticism that it can't compete with other countries in creative disciplines."
- Wang's "designs might well serve as a symbol of hope that China's cultural traditions and its economic growth can go hand-in-hand."
- Transcript of his talk in L.A. the day the Pritzker was announced: "Architecture is not more important to me than life. I don't believe you can be a good architect if you don't have a good life."
- Flint on the goal of the 2012 TED Prize: grants to local projects which are most likely to spur the creation of The City 2.0 (despite the skeptics).
- Kotkin explains why "urban planning professors, 'smart growth' advocates and architectural aesthetes swooning over a high-density rental future" are off the mark in betting against the single-family house.
- San Diego has high hopes for a \$2 billion mixed-use development on a 230-acre former quarry: it is one of the country's largest examples of "urban infill."
- Sydney's 1 Bligh Street, Australia's first green skyscraper, is "informed by the architects' social and cultural intent...Let's hope that the building's success will further inspire Sydney developers to allow buildings to be design led" (great pix).
- Iovine finds Gehry's Signature theater divine: a "quietly potent new kind of space" that "exudes a workshop aesthetic and energy."
- Brussat offers some "fun facts" about Las Vegas: he loves Schwarz's "lovely new" Smith Center; not such kind words for CityCenter (where he gets lost); and the "Your Brain on Drugs" Building ("if only Frank Gehry would stay in Vegas, too").
- In Oklahoma City, Johansen's 1970 Mummies Theater "seems a likely candidate for demolition and redevelopment. But not if the AIA Central Oklahoma Chapter has anything to do with it."
- A slide show essay of parking garages by "visionary architects and developers" who "clearly think of parking facilities as something more than dreary necessities or financial investments."

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In Wang Shu's Pritzker Prize, a Radical Critique of Chinese Urbanization: He may be the first China-based architect to win a Pritzker, but his prize is no great honor to the Chinese government or its architectural zeitgeist...his more subversive message...is his stance on urbanization...But without a willingness to make up for the missed density elsewhere, his brand of anti-urbanization risks irrelevance in the face of hundreds of billions of rural Chinese banging on the city gates. By Stephen Smith- International Business Times

Prickly Pritzker: China's Newly Crowned Architect: While the pronouncement produced the obligatory congratulations here in the West, it inspired equal parts bafflement and skepticism in [China]...The ambivalence surrounding the international recognition...speaks less about their art than it does about a pervasive cultural anxiety surrounding Chinese artists. By Jiayang Fan -- Wang Shu- New Yorker

Will Wang Shu's Pritzker Win Prove Pivotal for China? ...the prize "sends a message that architecture is a cultural enterprise, not just a commercial enterprise, and that architects are creators of culture. That's very meaningful"... "Considering that the study of architecture didn't really begin to develop in China until after 1980s, it's on the fast side"...may also help China dispel widely repeated criticism...that it can't compete with other countries in creative disciplines. -- Lu Wenyu/Amateur Architecture Studio; Zhu Tao; Wang Wei; John Puttick/Make Architects; Zaha Hadid; Rocco Yim/Rocco Design Architects - Wall Street Journal

Chinese architect's win builds national pride: Wang Shu's win certainly comes at a very interesting time. As urbanization sees the mass demolition of historical villages for so-called "Lego-set" apartment blo...his designs might well serve as a symbol of hope that China's cultural traditions and its economic growth can go hand-in-hand. -- Luo Xiaowei; Lu Wenyu/Amateur Architecture Studio- NBC News

Wang Shu on "Building a Diverse World Following the Natural Way": Architecture is not more important to me than life. I don't believe you can be a good architect if you don't have a good life. -- Amateur Architecture Studio- Archinect

How the 2012 TED Prize, The City 2.0, Aims to Crowdfund the Future: With a wiki to connect citizens, political leaders, urban experts, companies, and organizations, TED tees up the goal of improving the 21st century city...10 grants of \$10,000...will be awarded to 10 local projects which are most likely to spur the creation of The City 2.0. Skeptics might ask if glamorous institutions like TED...really has any business taking on the nuts and bolts of 21st century citybuilding... By Anthony Flint- The Atlantic Cities

Don't Bet Against The (Single-Family) House: Homeownership and the single-family house, Witold Rybczynski notes, rests on many fairly mundane things...Such considerations rarely enter the consciousness of urban planning professors, "smart growth" advocates and architectural aesthetes swooning over a high-density rental future...the multi-generational home — not the rental apartment — may well be the next big thing in housing. By Joel Kotkin- Forbes

Terraced Living in a San Diego Quarry: Civita, a \$2 billion mixed-use development...a high-water mark in sustainable community building...embodies a concept...called "a city of villages"...pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods made up of compact development, all within walking distance of transit stops...At 230 acres, it is one of the country's largest examples of "urban infill"... -- Carrier Johnson & Culture- New York Times

1 Bligh Street: Informed by the architects' social and cultural intent, Australia's first 'green skyscraper' is an outstanding, design-led building with deep commercial value...it is probably the first genuine product of international significance to be realised in Sydney...Let's hope that the building's success will further inspire Sydney developers to allow buildings to be design led... By Philip Vivian/Bates Smart -- Architectus; Ingenhoven Architekten [images]- Australian Design Review

Signature Design by Gehry: ...it is a pleasure when one of the world's most renowned, and scrutinized, architects, Frank Gehry, designs a quietly potent new kind of space as he has at the Pershing Square Signature Center on an Off-Broadway stretch of 42nd Street...exudes a workshop aesthetic and energy... By Julie V. Iovine -- Hugh Hardy/H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture- Wall Street Journal

What's built in Vegas stays in Vegas: After touring his lovely new Smith Center for the Performing Arts...we heard his plan for the next Caesars resort, LINQ...Schwarz said they'd nixed modernism as its style. Vegas, he said, will never again take the modernist plunge because the modernism of CityCenter could never be topped...fun fact No. 6...the Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health..."Your Brain on Drugs" Building...if only Frank Gehry would stay in Vegas, too. By David Brussat -- David M. Schwarz; César Pelli; Helmut Jahn; Rafael Viñoly; Daniel Libeskind; Norman Foster; Ehrenkrantz, Eckstut & Kuhn/EEK [images]- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Saving Johansen's Stage Center: After a period of neglect, efforts have grown to rescue the Oklahoma City theater that Harvard Five architect John Johansen considers his masterwork...1970 Mummies Theater has long been one of those love-it-or-hate-it buildings...seems a likely candidate for demolition and redevelopment. But not if the AIA's Central Oklahoma

Chapter has anything to do with it. -- Rees Associates Architects [slide show]- Architectural Record

Local architects aim to increase evidence of Edmonton's aboriginal population in art, buildings: ...has the second largest urban aboriginal population in Canada, but the impact of that culture and history almost invisible...largest tribute is tucked between an industrial site and a busy road...A project to include aboriginal history in Fort Edmonton Park is stalled until the sewer systems can be upgraded. -- Douglas Cardinal; Alfred Waugh; Richard Kroeker; Zoe Todd [images]- Edmonton Journal (Canada)

Baby You Can Park My Car: Parking lots and parking garages take up a lot of room in most cities and far too many of them are eyesores...visionary architects and developers clearly think of parking facilities as something more than dreary necessities or financial investments. They see them as opportunities to create something truly memorable - and as an overall design element and reflection of their cities. -- Bjarke Ingels Group/BIG; Aedas; Herzog & de Meuron; Petry - Wittfoht Freier Architekten; Moore Ruble Yudell [slide show essay]- Huffington Post

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



-- 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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