

Today's News - Thursday, March 22, 2012

- We lose Giacometti, "one of the most important Swiss architects after WWII" (he was 104 or 105, depending on which report one reads).
- Peirce parses fading partisanship in cities making plans to be part of the new global economy: "Successful metros demonstrate an interesting interplay between placemaking and economy shaping" that could make them "America's prime wedge of global innovation."
- Brake, on the other hand, bemoans a transportation policy that has "effectively condemned many struggling Midwest and Northeast Cities to a slow death."
- Russell cheers Calatrava's bridge over Dallas's Trinity River, but it "could have been so much more than an ornament on the skyline."
- Meanwhile Calatrava's Peace Bridge in Calgary is (finally) ready for its close-up: while "a mere mention can be like a red cape to a bull, evoking rants about public spending, fancy-pants European architects" by some, others "just plain find the bridge neat."
- BMW Guggenheim Lab abandons plans for its next roost in Berlin after "scrappy Kreuzberg district" residents protest that it signals "rapid gentrification" and police give the project a "high hazard assessment."
- Davies ponders Gehry's University of Technology Sydney project: "Is good architecture all about marketing? ...it's everything you'd expect to get when you buy Gehry," and it "will have cachet but maybe not as much as UTS hopes" (then there's that pesky brick-laying puzzle).
- Two takes on two projects by an entrepreneur who "is almost single-handedly reviving downtown Detroit" - a good thing, but with major reservations: "Hi-tech blech? It's 2002 on the phone and Karim Rashid wants his graphics back," says Ellsworth; his "design choices are starting to make some onlookers a little squeamish," says Byrnes.
- King has high praise for the transformation of a 1925 concrete building into "a multilevel shrine to artisanal coffee" that puts "the old bones to good use."
- London gives the green light to Foster's Bloomberg HQ (the Roman Temple of Mithras included!).
- Chaban cheers the Drawing Center's centered plans for growth, finally bringing its "decade-long saga to a close" (Ground Zero not included).
- Brussat offers a fascinating tale (and great images) of Providence's brush with plans for airships to moor atop its "Superman Building."
- The AIA ABI runs in the black for the fourth straight month: "the architectural community might begin to exhale a sigh of relief."
- Three finalists named in the ideas competition to re-imagine 9 acres of the Seattle 1962 World's Fair site.

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[Obituary: Swiss architect Bruno Giacometti, younger brother of the artists Alberto and Diego Giacometti, 104: He was one of the most important Swiss architects after the Second World War.](#) - SwissInfo

[Cities, Metros Respond to a New Global Economy: ...facing real local problems, partisanship fades...Successful metros demonstrate an interesting interplay between placemaking and economy shaping...one suspects it will be metros themselves that will be America's prime wedge of global innovation.](#) By Neal Peirce - Citiwire

[Editorial> Track Record: Alan G. Brake bemoans transportation policy amid rising gas prices: ...recent funding decisions by the Federal Department of Transportation have effectively condemned many struggling Midwest and Northeast Cities to a slow death...the question becomes, how serious is the federal government about investing in struggling urban centers?](#) - The Architect's Newspaper

[Calatrava's \\$182 Million Bridge Favors Park Over Freeway: Aesthetics went out of style when America's voracious appetite for freeway lanes squeezed out every consideration but raw auto throughput. So the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge is a rarity today...its delicacy delights as it pops into view all over town...could have been so much more than an ornament on the skyline.](#) By James S. Russell - Bloomberg News

[Calgarians making peace with Peace Bridge as opening date nears: Sure, a mere mention of the bridge...can be like a red cape to a bull, evoking...rants about public spending, fancy-pants European architects and love-to-hate politicians. But many eagerly anticipate the Santiago Calatrava-designed crossing's long-delayed opening — from cyclists and nearby residents, to civic boosters and folks who just plain find the bridge neat.](#) - Calgary Herald (Canada)

[Back to the Lab: Guggenheim Cancels 'High Risk' Berlin Project: The "BMW Guggenheim Lab" is supposed to find new solutions for urban living. But some residents of Berlin's scrappy Kreuzberg district weren't happy about the project coming to their neighborhood. The organizers have now abandoned the location...discussions for an alternative venue are already underway...](#) - Der Spiegel (Germany)

[Is good architecture all about marketing? I don't know why the proposed Frank Gehry-designed Dr Chau Chak Wing building at University of Technology Sydney looks like a microwaved chocolate castle, but it certainly does "bizarre" to a T...it's everything you'd expect to get when you buy Gehry...will have cachet but maybe not as much as UTS hopes.](#) By Alan Davies/Pollard Davies - Crikey (Australia)

[Downtown Detroit's New Decor is An Atrocious Attention Whore: Dan Gilbert's real estate shopping spree is on the whole a pretty good thing for Detroit...how do you describe \[Chase Tower/The Qube\]? Hi-tech blech? It's a visual cacophony that I suppose is supposed to inspire..."It's 2002 on the phone and Karim Rashid wants his graphics back" says I.](#) By Kelly Ellsworth [images] - Curbed Detroit

[Is Dan Gilbert Too Tacky to Be Loved By Detroit? The entrepreneur is almost single-handedly reviving downtown Detroit, but his design choices are under fire...The Qube...new look is raising Midwestern eyebrows...The M@dison...is slightly more post-industrial chic...his marketing and design choices are starting to make some onlookers a little squeamish.](#) By Mark Byrnes -- Albert Kahn Associates (1959) [images, videos] - The Atlantic Cities

[Sightglass Coffee building a fine blend of old, new: When working with the stuff of everyday urban life, put the old bones to good use. And then? Exalt the here and now...a multilevel space that once housed a sign-making shop and now is a multilevel shrine to artisanal coffee..."it's creative reuse rather than taxidermy."](#) John King -- Boor Bridges Architecture [images] - San Francisco Chronicle

[Foster + Partners' Bloomberg Place approved: The City of London HQ proposal won praise from Cabe earlier this month: ...will provide 110,000sq m of office space across two buildings connected by a covered arcade...The Roman Temple of Mithras, moved in 1954 during a previous redevelopment, will be returned to its original location and made accessible to the public.](#) [image] - BD/Building Design (UK)

[Redrawing the Drawing Center: Soho Staple Stays Put Inside \\$8.6 Million Renovation: ..the project, known as ReDraw, could even serve as a model for other institutions...will bring a decade-long saga to a close.](#) By Matt Chaban -- Claire Weisz/WXY Architecture + Urban Design [slide show] - New York Observer

[When airships bouyed R.I.'s future: ...the Industrial Trust Building...was meant to honor Rhode Island's role in the development of lighter-than-air craft, and that airships were a commercial strategy to trump the state's business rivals...should be redeveloped as a museum...Rip off the cover-up walls, retrofit the artifacts that prove the Superman Building was meant to be not just a bank but an airport, and life will again flow into this building...](#) By David Brussat -- Matthew Bird; Noah Schwartz [images] - Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

[Billings Remains in the Black Four Months in a Row: With the moody Architectural Billings Index landing in positive territory for the fourth straight month in February, the architectural community might begin to exhale a sigh of relief.](#) - The Architect's Newspaper

[Urban Intervention Finalists Imagine Seattle Center 2.0: As part of the Seattle Next Fifty, the 50th anniversary of the Seattle 1962 World's Fair Century 21 Exposition, the Howard S. Wright Design Ideas Competition for Public Space...to re-imagine the 9-acre site... -- ABF; KoningEizenberg Architecture + ARUP; PRAUD \[images, links\]](#) - The Architect's Newspaper

[Book Review: Laboratory Architecture for Observing Nature at Play: Books on Luis Barragan's house and BNIM's Omega Center for Sustainable Living reveal how transparently daring designs teach Nature's processes.](#) By Norman Weinstein - ArchNewsNow



[Carrilho da Graça arquitectos: School of Music, Polytechnic Institute/Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal](#)

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