Today's News - Friday, May 4, 2012

- Weinstein finds Zardini and Borasi's new book "Imperfect Health: The Medicalization of Architecture" a "healthy tonic countering academically anemic architectural education."
- Rudolph's Orange County Government Center may have won a reprieve - but its future still remains in limbo.
- Goldberger ponders the fate of the OCCG: his buildings "can be harsh, and tough...But oh, can they be beautiful" (and the county executive wants to replace it with "a bland, pseudo-Georgian building, a sort of blown-up version of a Friendly's ice-cream store" - doesn't that sound yummy - not).
- Minces minces no words about NYU's "bloated" plan for Greenwich Village: facing well-organized local opposition, "the university has made changes," but it's "only made the proposal worse."  
- Talen looks at how zoning laws, building codes, and other regulations "have a powerful - and often negative - impact on urban areas; what's needed are "more adaptive, more form-based" rules "to produce better places."
- Pedersen uncovers who's behind efforts to repeal an energy-reduction law for federal buildings: one is a signatory of the 2030 Challenge, and another touts a Zero Energy Buildings Whitepaper on its website, putting them "in the uncomfortable position of being politically at odds with their customers. Not the best place to be."
- Nobel (back with a new column - yay!) parses 1 WTC's "tallest" claim: "Does it appear very tall? To my eyes it doesn't. Because, despite its tapering, it is fat" with "a dowdy profile" - but "it will look terrific at dusk."
- Saarikoski gives us the skinny on what sank the Guggenheim Helsinki: some "wanted a landmark attraction with a lot of eye-candy for wealthy tourists;" but opponents felt the Guggenheim Foundation "was merely trying to milk the naive Finns."
- Neustein offers a lively blow-by-blow of a debate between the architects of Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art addition and its critics ("Most architectural criticism is driven," sayeth the architect.)
- Bimbaum is brawling over UCLA's plans to possibly sell off "one of the rarest private Japanese gardens" in the U.S., a bequest to the university on the condition that it "retain the garden portion in perpetuity."
- An in-depth (and surprising!) look at architectural lineages: "architects beget architects, so it seems..." 
- Weekend diversions:
  - Heathcote, Searle, and Moore leave us chomping at the bit to cross the Big Pond to see "Bauhaus: Art as Life" at the Barbican: the show "helps put the fun back into functionalism" + it offers lessons for contemporary art education and its "lack of common purpose, the overweening bureaucracy, the disillusionment and grasping for fees, the box-ticking lostness of so much of it" + how the Bauhaus building "in a provincial town could have had so much effect" (all with great slide shows!) + one amazing infographic.
  - Two different takes on the Guggenheim's "stillspotting nyc" and SO-IL's "Transhistoria:" "you're likely to discover more than what is advertised" + its "a vaguely colonial exercise" with "staged rooms that make the absence of their original inhabitants palpable, transhistoria feels disconnected from the neighborhood's own natives."
- Goldberger gives Lange's "Writing About Architecture" two thumbs-up (with small niggle).
- Grecco's "Straphanger" makes a case against the car: it is "well-researched, nicely written and timely...He goes to his personal version of hell. But he also finds hope."
Constructive criticism: the week in architecture: The FAT collective get their teeth into Middlesbrough, and the master builders of the animal kingdom receive their due...Paul Noble's "Nobson Newtown"...is like Hieronymus Bosch meets Le Corbusier's Ville Radieuse...Exeter University has a new centrepiece... By Steve Rose -- Will Alsop; Felden Clegg Bradley; Branson Coates; Grimshaw; Wilkinson Eyre/Buro Happold- Guardian (UK)

All in the Family: Architectural DNA: Where there's an architect, there are probably a few more—from the same gene pool. Architects beget architects, so it seems...And if not begetten, then nearly so... -- Eliel Saarinen Eero Saarinen; Frank Lloyd Wright; Walter Gropius; Maya Lin; Lin Huiyin; Charles Eames; William Eames; Henry Smith-Miller/Smith-Miller + Hawkins Architecture; Theodore Smith-Miller/Elizabeth Houck; Silas Smith; Annabelle Selldorf; Herbert Selldorf; Donit Selldorf; Vica; Taal Safdie/Safdie Rabines Architects; Moshe Safdie; Rob Rogers/Jonathan Marvel/Rogers Marvel Architects; Andrea Bucher Rogers; Stefan Behnisch; Günter Behnisch- Architectural Record

"Bauhaus: Art as Life" at the Barbican Art Gallery, London; ...attempts to humanise that image of a technocratic will to modernity...bring to light a little publicised aspect of life at the Bauhaus: humour...It was, at least in its early years, nothing like the modernist machine of myth...show helps put the fun back into functionalism. By Edwin Heathcote -- Walter Gropius; Mies van der Rohe; Hannes Meyer; Carmody Groarke; APFEL [slide show]- Wallpaper*

"Bauhaus: Art as Life": Tracing the trajectory of the radical German art and design school from its founding in Dessau by Walter Gropius in 1919 to its closure in Berlin in 1933, the exhibition is superb...There is a lesson here about much contemporary art education: the lack of common purpose, the overweening bureaucracy, the disillusionment and grasping for fees, the box-ticking lostness of so much of it. By Adrian Searle [slide show]- Guardian (UK)

Infographic: The Bauhaus, Where Form Follows Function: The Bauhaus not only impacted design and architecture...but also revolutionized the way design schools conceptualize education as a means of imparting an integrated design approach.-- ArchDaily

Stillspotting Queens: Transhistoria: The sites are as gratifyingly diverse and surprising as the texts with which they have been paired...spaces are tied together by SO-IL's elegant and subtle design intervention...you're likely to discover more than what is advertised. -- Solid Objectives – Idenburg Liu; stillspotting nyc: queens [images]- Urban Omnibus

In Jackson Heights, "stillspotting nyc," an exploration by the Guggenheim turns into a vaguely colonial exercise: Like the Tenement House Museum, with its staged rooms that make the absence of their original inhabitants palpable, transhistoria feels disconnected from the neighborhood's own natives... By Lara Pellegrinelli -- Solid Objectives - Idenburg Liu/SO-IL- Capital New York

Eyes Have It: Paul Goldberger on Alexandra Lange's new book, "Writing About Architecture": ...a how-to book for a profession that has never, so far as I know, had one before...analyzes her key texts with great care and perceptiveness, and happily she is wide ranging in her taste...selected some of my favorite pieces of writing to use as her paradigms... -- Charles Moore; Jane Jacobs; Lewis Mumford; Ada Louise Huxtable; Michael Sorkin; Herbert Muschamp; Frederick Law Olmsted- The Architect's Newspaper

In "Straphanger: Saving Our Cities and Ourselves from the Automobile," Taras Grecoce makes a case against the car: Well-researched, nicely written and timely, the book follows his visits to 14 cities. Along the way...He goes to his personal version of hell...But he also finds hope. - Montreal Gazette

Book Review: "Social Media in Action: Comprehensive Guide for Architecture, Engineering, Planning, and Environmental Consulting Firms" by Amanda Walter & Holly Berkley: This practical handbook is invaluable for practitioners who realize that social media is not a passing phenomenon and can play a part in their business. By George Calys- ArchNewsNow

-- Zellerplus: Matthew Marks Gallery, Los Angeles, California

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