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OPINIONS SPLIT WITH GEHRY TOWERS IN HOVE, UK

New 'scaled backed final plans' for Frank Gehry's tower blocks on the seafront, now lower and fewer.

<http://society.guardian.co.uk/communities/news/0,16293,1569732,00.html>

'The Regency seafront of Brighton and Hove has seen nothing like this since the mad oriental domes of the Brighton Pavilion in the early 19th Century...'

http://www.hughpearman.com/articles5/gehry_brighton.html

Objections to Frank Gehry's proposed seafront towers. He may be 'a truly inspirational architect', but his scheme is 'plain silly. They are like crumpled balls of paper laid on top of each other...'

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,1571294,00.html>

Piers Gough responds to attacks by Simon Jenkins on the Frank Gehry seafront scheme. 'Surely one of the greatest architects in the world deserves better consideration...One can't help but suspect that a Regency Jenkins would have railed against the imposition of the Brighton and Hove terraces against the open downs...'

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,1578879,00.html>

Opinion split in Hove:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/4251268.stm>

ITALIAN RESISTANCE AT 'STAR ARCHITECTS' TOWERS

Some of Italy's leading architects have complained to the government about the number of foreign designers commissioned for high-profile projects. The appeal, signed by 35 Italian architects including Vittorio Gregotti, Guido Canella, Franco Purini, Aimaro Isola, Ettore Sottsass, Cesare Stevan and Paolo Portoghesi, urges the state to do more to promote 'the development in Italy of a new architecture'. They say national traditions are being eroded, and that Italian architecture is a 'vital cultural resource that must not be further thwarted or ignored...'

The last straw appears to be Milan's city council approval for the city's Trade Fair district development, the centrepiece of which will be three landmark towers designed by Arata Isozaki, Daniel Libeskind and Zaha Hadid. Critics say the design represents a 'globalised style of architecture that can be found anywhere in the world...'

Protesters warn of the 'architectural mongrelisation' of Italy. 'Architects like Foster can make skyscrapers in London, but he is not suited to making them in Siena. Italian architects are more capable of marrying the traditional with the modern in an Italian context...'

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/news/story/0,11711,1564900,00.html>

KUOKAWA'S CAPSULE TOWER TO BE DEMOLISHED?

Homeowners in Kisho Kurokawa's seminal modular housing project in Tokyo are disgruntled with the building and are calling for its demolition. 'The architect says his Nagakin Capsule Tower, built in 1972, has only a 50% chance of survival...'

<http://tinyurl.com/ao6ff> (Registration Required).

<http://www.kisho.co.jp/WorksAndProjects/Works/nakagin/>

TOWER COLLAPSE IN SOUTH ASIA QUAKE

With an estimated two million people left homeless, the aftermath of the earthquake that devastated the Kashmir region of Pakistan and India has left thousands of buildings in a perilous condition. Islamabad architect Faisal Arshad was an eye witness to the collapse of the high-rise Margala Towers. 'We rushed out of the house...The walls were shaking and everything was falling off shelves, the sound was horrifying. I went to Margala Towers, which is very close by, because I just couldn't believe it had collapsed...'

'As an architect, I noticed something interesting. If you look at the picture you will see that the complex has seven or eight units built together. Two of the link units are shattered. The buildings either side are still standing, which is quite peculiar structurally. Were the collapsed units properly integrated into the main structure? Islamabad is a place which wants to build more high towers - I don't think we are prepared for anti-seismic designs. This has to be a major concern...'

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/4322614.stm

Inquiry into the collapse of Margalla Towers. 'Slabs and beams were of inferior quality. Honeycombing was observed at various places...shuttering forms used were of poor quality and had bends and uneven surfaces...'

<http://www.pakistanlink.com/Headlines/Oct05/14/12.htm>

CTBUH CHAIRMAN IN Q&A

Frank Lloyd Wright's 1956 vision of a mile-high skyscraper could be closer than we think. In a Q&A with ArchNewsNow Ron Klemencic, chairman of the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, says that 'from a technical engineering point of view it could have been done then. Today, there is no definitive limit to how tall a building can go. Some researchers in Japan, where there's a well-documented shortage of real estate, have studied the opportunity for mile-high buildings....' He has seen 'exploratory plans' for a 130-storey building near Seoul.

Post- 9/11 caution in building high has given way to the realisation 'that we live in this free and open society, and we have to maintain our lifestyle as before', while he predicts a heated debate over the status of the Freedom Tower. Its spire 'tops out over 600 feet above the last floor of enclosed space - that's about one-third of the building that can't be occupied. There's a camp that would say that since so much of the structure is not available to be occupied, it should not be considered the tallest building in the world....'

<http://www.archnewsnow.com/features/Feature178.htm>

PERHAPS SUBURBIA ISN'T ALL BAD?

After two decades of being demonised by planners and architects, could suburban sprawl be on the verge of respectability? As suburbanisation becomes more dense - outside Los Angeles, for example - contemporary sprawl appears on paper to suggest 'a kind of creeping efficiency'. And despite the large-scale zoning that drives car use in the suburbs, sprawl is 'no better or worse than any other settlement pattern' says Robert Bruegmann, professor of art history, planning and architecture at the University of Illinois. 'When people have been able to afford it, people move out of cities. We now have tens of millions of people who can do what only a small minority once could do...'

Sprawl gives us 'decentralisation and democratisation...if you have enough money, living at high density is very alluring. There will always be some people who want to live in suburban settings no matter what. But if you have a spacious apartment on Fifth Avenue with a doorman, and you can get in a taxi or walk to the Metropolitan Museum of Art...millions of people would love to do that...'

<http://tinyurl.com/cqt38>

Essay: Vancouverism vs Lower Manhattanism: Shaping the High Density City. Trevor Boddy on how the debate about future cities has sidelined 'that revival of late 19th Century suburban ideals packaged as The New Urbanism...'

<http://www.archnewsnow.com/features/Feature177.htm>

INTERNATIONAL SNIPPETS.....

NEW YORK: Just weeks after 9/11, Norman Foster and clients the Hearst Corporation won approval for a bold new tower in Manhattan. It set the tone for a new wave of adventurous architecture...

<http://news.ft.com/cms/s/6c520bf8-2028-11da-b59e-00000e2511c8.html>

The tower is now taking shape on 57th Street, 'atop an original Deco Building designed by Joseph Urban in 1926 for William Randolph Hearst. Urban had foreseen the possibility of skyward expansion and provided steel columns stubbed up through the roof...'

<http://tinyurl.com/cws8m>

NEW YORK: The Helena, a 580-unit apartment building designed by FXFowle Architects, winner of the AIA 2005 Green Affordable Housing Award.

http://www.architectureweek.com/2005/0928/design_1-1.html

THE BRONX: Paul Rudolph's 1972 Tracey Towers, reassessed. 'In private homes, the complexity of Rudolph's architecture was exhilarating. But in a complex with nearly 900 apartments, occupied mostly by immigrants, the effect is very different...'

<http://www.archnewsnow.com/features/Feature180.htm>

LAS VEGAS: The 'tallest concrete residential structure west of the Mississippi', the Atelier V-designed Club Renaissance will be 61 storeys tall.

<http://tinyurl.com/dspjy>

NEW ORLEANS: Should we rebuild after Katrina using 'biomimicry'? The consultation process widens...'Notice how many trees stood among buildings that fell. When we go back to build, we have to ask those trees: How are you still standing?'

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2005/09/14/HOGGCEM3VR1.DTL>

Nature as Mentor. 'After 3.8 billion years of evolution, nature has learned: What works. What is appropriate. What lasts...'

<http://www.biomimicry.net/intro.html>

LONDON: Still swinging...the 1960s Post Office Tower, designed by Eric Bedford, is 40 years old.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/features/story/0,11710,1587469,00.html>

From 'Brave New World' to 'Communications Icon...'

<http://www.lightstraw.co.uk/ate/main/postofficetower/>

PORTSMOUTH: The delayed Millennium landmark The Spinnaker, designed by the Hedley Greentree Partnership, is popular with local people...

<http://property.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,23650-1735059,00.html>

.....but at the opening, the project manager is stranded in the lift...

<http://tinyurl.com/a93ay>
Spinnaker pics, cam: <http://tinyurl.com/7bj3p>

MALMO: 'Close up, Turning Torso is a disappointment. It's as if, having made his big architectural move - the twist - Calatrava wasn't sure what to do...'
<http://slate.msn.com/id/2128757/>

VIENNA: The Zechner & Zechner-designed control tower at Schwechat airport scoops a design award for its 'creative application of steel through technical innovation and ingenious construction...'
<http://tinyurl.com/dp78s>

MOSCOW: Exhibition of work by Zaha Hadid. 'With her painting of the Zhivopisnaya Tower in Moscow...she makes clear that her ambitions are as tall as they are broad...'
<http://tinyurl.com/a7bw5>

CHINA: This year alone, Shanghai will complete towers with more space for living and working than in all the office buildings in New York City. But China's heavy reliance on coal to power its overcharged economy 'has already made it the world's second-largest producer of greenhouse gases...'
<http://tinyurl.com/eylys> (Registration Required).

DUBAI: Entrepreneur Donald Trump brings his inimitable style to the Middle East. A joint venture with developer Nakheel will create the \$400m Palm Trump International Hotel and Tower. Its 'tulip design will incorporate a state-of-the-art exoskeleton frame...'
<http://www.ameinfo.com/70011.html>

BAHRAIN: The 240 metre-high Bahrain World Trade Centre will incorporate three giant wind turbines to generate electricity. Architect Shaun Killasaid the turbines will be supported by 30 metre bridge spanning the centre's two towers.
<http://tinyurl.com/7a4vz>

GHERKINS: 'Suddenly the skyscraper-as-gherkin is the New Paradigm...'
http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/this_britain/article320365.ece

THE SOUND OF ARCHITECTURE

BBC Radio 3 has assembled an eclectic internet archive of features on architecture, including some rare recordings of designers talking about their work. The cultural cache includes interviews with great architects living and dead, slideshows and video footage. Among recent additions are commissioned essays on significant London houses, Rem Koolhaas on his high-profile CCTV project in Beijing, and a discussion about the 'new brutalist' architecture of Peter and Alison Smithson. Other luminaries interviewed include Frank Gehry, IM Pei - 'the most important ingredient for an architect to do a good building is to have a good client...' - Renzo Piano, Nicholas Grimshaw and Daniel Libeskind.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/architecture/progarchive.shtml>

PARASITIC SPACE?

The latest prototype in 'parasitic space' is the Rucksack House, designed by Stefan Eberstadt. 'As mobile as a rucksack, this mini-home is intended to be an additional room that, with the help of belts, can be suspended from the facade of any residential building...' Using electricity tapped from the 'host' house, the timber-clad steel cage is suspended from steel cables run over the roof of the existing building and are anchored at the back. 'Within the cube, one has the impression of floating outside the confines of the actual dwelling in a space filled with light. Elements can be folded down from the wall to form furnishings...'
<http://www.europaconcorsi.com/db/pub/scheda.php?id=6104>

The Web House project, by m3 architects. 'An inflatable apartment space that attaches via weblike cords to the side of an existing tall building to provide extra space in overcrowded London...'
<http://www.we-make-money-not-art.com/archives/003650.php>

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