

Please note that, due to the work involved in the CTBUH World Congress, New York: 'Renewing the Urban Landscape', October 16th – 19th, the next Tall Building News Update will be in November. There should be enough to keep you going in this one until then..... The Editor.

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TURNING TORSO TRIUMPHS

Santiago Calatrava's landmark Turning Torso tower is taking shape in Malmo, the centrepiece of a housing design showcase in the town's regenerated harbour area. The 190-m tall concrete and steel tower turns 90 degrees from bottom to top. Developed from one of Calatrava's own sculptures - seven cubes set around a steel support to produce a spiral structure - the building's core is a 'nucleus of internal elevators and stairs, through which the box units communicate...' Calatrava, who has just visited the site to inspect progress, has also designed interior spaces, including artwork. 'The facade is curved aluminum panels, with windows leaning either inwards or outwards...an exoskeleton around the building's front face is made of tapered white steel tubes...'

<http://www.arcspace.com/architects/calatrava/torso2/torso2.html>

Calatrava's concept for Turning Torso, outlined in 2000:

http://www.arcspace.com/architects/calatrava/turning_torso_index.html

Profile of the 'Bo01 development...one of the world's top destinations for urban designers seeking inspiration...the municipal dump has over 30 recycling categories...' Driven by the vision of Swedish architect Klas Tham, no two buildings are the same, and each is designed by a different architect...' A wind turbine supplies all Bo01's electricity. Rooftop solar collectors provide a fifth of the heat, and the rest is from geothermal sources...there are vacuum tubes to collect recyclable and organic waste...water is managed via a system of ponds, open channels, a moss-covered roof...'

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/features/story/0,11710,1558344,00.html>

CALATRAVA PROPOSAL FOR WINDY CITY

Meanwhile, staying with Calatrava, controversial proposals for a Santiago Calatrava-designed tower on Chicago's lakefront have been unveiled. The enormous spire on top of the 115-storey building - shaped 'like an oversized birthday candle' would reach over 2,000 ft, higher than both the city's Sears Tower and New York's Freedom Tower. Developer Donald Trump, who scaled back his own plans for a record-shattering Chicago tower of comparable height after the 9/11 attacks, was quick to react: 'Any bank that would put up money to build a building like that would be insane'. But the developer for the proposed Fordham Spire, Christopher Carley, hit back. Trump himself was planning the Chicago Tower at 1,360 feet, just 90 feet less than Sears. 'I wonder where the insanity limit is. It must be just over 1,360 feet...'

<http://msnbc.msn.com/id/8715644/>

Calatrava says the intention is not to create a record-breaker but to do something special for the 'heroic Chicago skyline...Nobody is saying it has to be the highest building in the country. The idea was to build a very slender, elegant building in this skyline...'

<http://tinyurl.com/98a34> (Registration required)

Calatrava's new Fordham Spire compared to Bart Prince's classic skyscraper with 'spiralling floor plates and oddly-centred antenna...'

<http://lifewithoutbuildings.net/2005/08/calatrava-comparison.html>

'The city where the skyscraper was born just can't get enough of these supertowers...'

<http://www.chicagoarchitecture.info/ShowBuilding/357.php>

CALCUTTA RISES

Frenetic economic growth and a demand for high-spec apartments for the city's burgeoning IT sector is driving a huge construction boom in Calcutta. With a projected population rise from a current 14 million to 21 million by 2025, the Metropolitan Development Authority has published a masterplan for expansion. To the east of the city, what was a decade ago empty marshland is now crammed with giant cranes. In south Calcutta, architect Dulal Mukherjee says the transformation is 'unbelievable...it's changing so fast...' Nearly 50 large building projects - 10 stories or above - are under construction now. But a starker indication of accelerating growth is the number of mid-rise projects. In 2000, around 300 schemes of five stories or more were built in the city. This year, at least 1,000 are going up. Land prices have almost doubled in two years, with flat prices up by 20 to 30%. And the signs are that development will get faster. The Confederation of Real Estate Developers Association forecasts a staggering mammoth 250 million sq. ft of new space will be built in the next five years in Greater Calcutta...

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1050724/asp/opinion/story_5027166.asp

DHAKA FALLS.....

Work has begun on the demolition of more than 100 'high-rise' buildings - up to six storeys - in the Bangladeshi capital, Dhaka. The move follows a ruling earlier this year by the civil aviation authority, which said tall buildings around Zia international airport were a safety threat to air traffic. State officials have blamed unscrupulous developers and corruption among local planners for the rash of fast-track buildings. 'Dhaka is hemmed in by a network of rivers that makes expanding outwards difficult. It has increasingly turned to high-rise developments to accommodate an ever-growing population that has shot up from one million in 1971 to at least 12m and rising...'

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/4194666.stm

TERROR, SECURITY AND DESIGN – MASS TRANSIT SYSTEMS

With security already a major issue for the London Olympic planners, the terrorist attacks on the London transit system have sharpened concerns, particularly over the proposed expansion of the Underground system. A Security Directorate is to be set up to review the preparations, 'with design and construction being a focus in the development phase up to 2008...'

<http://archrecord.construction.com/news/daily/archives/050707london.asp>

Public transit systems are among the most vulnerable and most difficult targets to defend from terrorists. Yet in the US since 9/11 'such systems have received just \$250m in federal funding to beef up security, compared with \$18 billion for the nation's airports...' Individual regions are taking their own initiatives. In Southern California, operators have built security fences along some stretches of rail, installed sensors and cameras at stations and stepped up patrols. New York City officers are sometimes assigned to every train at rush hour. The nation's capital has sensors to detect chemical attacks. In San Francisco's Bay Area Rapid Transit system, SWAT teams conduct random patrols...

<http://tinyurl.com/8lwpm>

Meanwhile in Chicago, Governor Blagojevich signed legislation to help ensure that people do not get trapped in stairwells of new hotels, schools and other high-rise public assembly buildings during fires. The legislation is in response to the October 2003 fire at the Cook County Administration building when six people died.

<http://www.chicagolandconstruction.com/news.asp?Article=5611>

WIND ENERGY – A TALL TALE?

A new generation of wind turbines is emerging - not just more efficient, but designed as architectural features. 'With Britain's plans for new wind farms proceeding apace in an effort to meet the target of 10% renewable-sourced energy by 2010, the debate has reached critical levels. And as long as propellers on sticks are the only option, pro and anti-wind farm camps are unlikely to ever agree...' Enter Nicholas Grimshaw Architects' Aerogenerator, 'a cross between a glider and a giant harp'. As tall as the London Eye, it spins on a vertical axis. One machine could generate up to nine megawatts of electricity, compared with an average of 2Mw from conventional turbines. 'From an architectural point of view, we saw it as an iconic element that could go in the entrance of a harbour or an industrial area. It doesn't have to be invisible...' And the focus is shifting from remote countryside sites to urban locations, with turbines incorporated into large-scale city projects. Recent examples include Terry Farrell's Green Building in Manchester, Wal-Mart's latest 'green' store (see story below), Marks Barfield Architects' spiral turbine in the core of their Skyhouse residential tower design, Make Architects' Spiracle Tower with its concealed vertical-axis wind generator at the top, and an EU-sponsored scheme (Project Web) to work up ideas for a 'purpose-built wind-powered skyscraper...'

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/features/story/0,11710,1530668,00.html>

'While 75% of the EU population lives in urban areas and our buildings account for over 40% of overall energy demand, there are virtually no wind turbines in our towns and cities where the majority of electricity is consumed...'

<http://www.bdsp.com/web/>

http://www.terryfarrell.co.uk/projects/learning/learn_theGreen.html

<http://www.marksbarfield.com/>

Meanwhile, Australian engineer Bryan Roberts wants to build 'a power station in the sky...a cluster of flying windmills soaring 15,000 feet in the air'. A helicopter-like rotorcraft powered by its own electricity could stay aloft for months in the troposphere where, unlike at ground level, winds are strong and constant. The key to operating success would be sequestering high-altitude space - 'sites 10 miles by 20 miles in size not currently used by commercial planes...'

<http://www.wired.com/news/planet/0,2782,67121,00.html>

A RENAISSANCE IN URBAN RESIDENTIAL LIVING?

One increasingly common characteristic of new skyscrapers seems to be missing from public debate. It's not their engineering-enabled, increasing height. Or their CAD-assisted curves. It's their purpose. Since its invention in Chicago at the end of the 19th Century the skyscraper 'almost by definition, has been designed to hold offices. Now the skyscraper is being reimagined - perhaps reborn - as a place to live. And its form is changing as a result, from blocky to tapering, promising a vitality in tall-building architecture unseen since the 1930s...'

<http://www.fortwayne.com/mld/journalgazette/living/12338314.htm>

INTERNATIONAL SNIPPETS.....

CHICAGO: Frank Gehry and fellow investors clinch the deal to buy the landmark SOM-designed 1958 Inland Steel Building.

<http://tinyurl.com/dkw72>

Image: <http://www.galinsky.com/buildings/inlandsteel/>

NEW YORK: Freedom Tower architect David Childs has failed to head off a copyright infringement claim. A claim that key design elements were lifted from architect Thomas Shine's work will now go to trial.

<http://tinyurl.com/bew89>

GROUND ZERO: The first rule of planning for pedestrians is no blank walls on the street, yet that's what's proposed on a grand scale in the redesign. 'We must ask ourselves what it says about our nation to produce a "Freedom Tower" hiding behind 20 storeys of solid concrete...'

<http://www.metropolismag.com/cda/story.php?artid=1489>

Compromised by 'inflated security concerns and a gluttonous developer...'

<http://www.politicalgateway.com/main/columns/read.html?col=407>

Postponed groundbreaking begins on the \$20 billion retail and entertainment behemoth, DestiNY USA. It 'aspires to be not only the biggest man-made structure on the planet but also the most environmentally friendly, as Frank Gehry's plans for the new Nets arena now acquire 'a ridge of a half-dozen skyscrapers as high as 60 storeys...'

<http://tinyurl.com/79tyu> (Registration Required).

LOS ANGELES: The media focus of the \$1.8 billion Grand Avenue scheme is Frank Gehry's proposed '40 to 50-storey' tower. But how should the city use the huge park which will be created next to it?

<http://tinyurl.com/exu4c>

The 1914 Herald Examiner Building is being turned into a residential and retail complex with two towers designed by architect Thom Mayne.

<http://www.ladowntownnews.com/articles/2005/08/29/news/news01.txt>

SAN FRANCISCO: Developers seeking to build high-rise towers are required to pay an additional \$50m towards affordable housing and job creation.

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2005/08/03/BAGFOE230T1.DTL>

VANCOUVER: With residential development now netting five times more per square metre than office space, will the city's core become a dormitory suburb?

<http://www.archnewsnow.com/features/Feature174.htm>

TORONTO: Unpublished plans by architects Brisbin Brook Beynon for a 40-storey condominium tower have already attracted opposition. Why is the city so scared of heights?

<http://tinyurl.com/cf34x>

LONDON: LIFE IN A GHERKIN?

Contemporary architectural masterpieces may look great. But what's it like to work in one?. Foster & Partners' 30 St Mary Axe (The Gherkin). 'We still all like boasting on the bus that we work in the building everyone's always oohing over. It's never difficult to persuade clients to come over and lunch in our private restaurant on the 40th floor. Job applications have increased too...'

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/features/story/0,11710,1525852,00.html>

An original 1930s tower and facade has been preserved - for the second time - in a rebuilding of the site by Rolfe Judd.

<http://tinyurl.com/9habb>

Meanwhile, London 'does not need more skyscrapers':

<http://news.ft.com/cms/s/ff550eca-03bb-11da-b54a-00000e2511c8.html>

COPENHAGEN: An exhibition celebrates the tower, from Babel to Taipei... and includes a model of the 1919 Tatlin Tower and 'view machines' with 360 degree panoramas of cities across the world.

http://www.arcSPACE.com/exhibitions/dream_of_tower/dream_of_tower.html

MOSCOW: Architect Sergei Tchoban defends the clustered skyscrapers of his Moskva-City development, with the 430-m Federation Tower as centrepiece. 'He doesn't think his design for Europe's tallest building will violate Moscow's vertical integrity. As far as he's concerned, the city never had any in the first place...'

<http://www.moscowtimes.ru/stories/2005/07/26/045.html>

JAPAN: A recent earthquake was powerful enough to sway skyscrapers 185 miles away in Tokyo. 'Though earthquake-resistant construction standards have undoubtedly mitigated the impact of quakes, the fragile nature of city lifelines continues to be a major problem...'

<http://aolsvc.news.aol.com/news/article.adp?id=20050815232609990004>

Picture gallery: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_pictures/4155736.stm

NORTH KOREA: An architectural history of Pyongyang, rebuilt after the Korean War ('just two buildings left standing in a city that had been home to 400,000'). Now 'concrete apartment blocks dominate the streetscape', along with the forlorn Ryugyong Hotel, conceived as the tallest building in Asia. 'The shell is finished, and a construction crane is visible right at the top, but all building work ceased long ago...'

<http://www.archined.nl/oem/reportages/noord-korea/noord-korea1-eng.html>

Ryugyong spec: <http://www.skyscraperpage.com/cities/?buildingID=177>

Images: <http://tinyurl.com/97v5u>

SHANGHAI: Latest image of Alsop/Arup's 250-m Towering Kiss.
<http://tinyurl.com/8bgta>

GUANGZHOU: Wilkinson Eyre has won an international competition to design the fourth tallest tower in the world (432 m) in Guangzhou:
<http://www.wilkinsoneyre.com/main.htm>

TAIWAN: Fumihiko Maki has been selected to design the Taipei Twin Towers development - 'one 350m tall with 86 stories, the other 256m tall with 64 stories'. It will become Taiwan's third-tallest building.
<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/biz/archives/2005/07/20/2003264300>

MUMBAI: Recent building collapses highlight the problem of a city crammed with old and dangerous structures. '19,000 buildings have been categorised as "dilapidated" and requiring immediate repairs...'
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/4176738.stm

SHADOW CITIES

At a blue-sky conference, architect William McDonough discusses Next Cities - 'they can grow, they can breathe, and they can be ecologically sound, just as trees, forests, and gardens are...'
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/4682011.stm>

FANTASY ARCHITECTURE: 'Serious' bid to build Tatlin's tower...
<http://tatlintowerandtheworld.net/tt.html>

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