

NEWS

SMALL HOUSES DRAW BIG CROWD

The RDA architecture tour, held March 28-29, featured small houses, but drew the biggest crowd in the organization's 37-year history. Nearly 1,900 people viewed nine innovative houses, breaking the previous year's record of 1,500.

"This tour was timely. It tapped into the desire to live well while living small," said Linda Sylvan, executive director.

Lisa Gray, a former managing editor of *Cite*, wrote about the tour and the Cordell container house in her *Houston Chronicle* column a few days before the event, generating a spirited debate on the Chron.com website.

Harvey Builders managed to nearly complete the 99K House in 99 days. Though renderings have



Tour goers on the patio of the 99k House, under construction by Harvey Builders.

been printed in this magazine, the tour was the first time visitors could see the winning entry of the RDA co-sponsored competition come to life.

Tour goers ventured into Montrose and Rice Military as well as neighborhoods off the typical

architectural trail including the Fifth Ward and East Side. Mini Coopers, Smart Cars, and Priuses entered the land of Buicks and F150s.

Those who made the full perambulation returned to their own homes with an expanded notion of design, neighborhoods, and the city as a whole.

NEW STAFF TO SUPPORT WEBSITES

In April, RDA welcomed Zeke Minaya to the staff as web assistant and writer. Minaya brings with him a wealth of experience as a journalist.

He has reported in Iraq for *Stars and Stripes*, contributed to Pulitzer Prize-winning coverage for the *LA Times*, and covered news, politics, and crime for the *Houston Chronicle*. Raised in the shadow of Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, he left New York to pursue higher education, ultimately completing a Masters from the University of California at Berkeley School of Journalism. Minaya looks forward to helping create a dynamic web presence for the RDA and OffCite, as well as contributing to *Cite*.

BIG reactions to Lisa Gray's small house article

FROM CHRON.COM MARCH 31, 2009



ProudNativeTexican wrote:

I have wondered for years why some many people has such large houses. They are trying to keep up with the Jones. It might only be me but I don't find myself trying to impress others with my house, clothes, or vehicle. About all I do at home is sleep and shower so I really don't need much room.

3/25/2009 11:33:22 AM

Recommend: (14) (6)

[Report abuse]



JimPfromHouston wrote:

WOW Houston - From mc mansions to real container houses. Developers actually going small and going green. Not just talking... doing it- REALLY DONE IT?? Houston... you've come a long way baby. That has to be great for long term - low cost housing. Sounds like their clients got green houseing, with original design, sized for what they want, at a price point that they want. Outdoor shower sounds nice. Could there be clusters of these? Low cost, durable, livable, housing for people? Elderly? Students? Veterans? If any city or fed money comes for low cost housing - I hope they turn these people loose with it. They have turned talk into affordable green housing, right here in Houston.

3/25/2009 10:56:07 AM

Recommend: (12) (6)

[Report abuse]



docsteve wrote:

I'm not here to carry any particular banner. I just find these potrayed homes unattractive and certainly not practical on any scale. I'm 57 years old, relatively financially comfortable, but certainly not an extremely wealthy person. I enjoy living in a nice quiet, gated community, with well trimmed yards, and an iron-fisted HOA. Perhaps if I were the same 60's era long haired dude I once was, I might "grok" at this stuff. Somewhere along the way, I lost that person and turned into "the man". I like having nice home. McMansion? Ok... I like quarterpounders just fine. (too well, unfortunately)

Somewhere, somehow, it's become almost "hip" to deride the American dream of a nice home and success. It's as if somehow, we should be ashamed of being comfortable and happy. I know that not everyone is so well off. In fact, I came from a poverty stricken hom, awash in alcoholism and abuse. I just can't get too worked up or romanticise about living in a shoebox made out of shipping crates.

3/25/2009 2:22:51 PM

Recommend: (3) (8)

[Report abuse]



GreenInRichmond wrote:

"I like having a nice home. McMansion? Ok... I like quarterpounders just fine. (too well, unfortunately)"

Good, you keep eating those quarter pounders and when you are gone (which will be sooner than later) we will recycle your Mc Mansion into homes for people who care about the planet. You are the problem.

3/26/2009 10:55:35 AM

Recommend: (5) (0)

[Report abuse]

CIVIC FORUM

POST HURRICANE IKE PLANNING

July 15, 29 and August 12
Brown Auditorium
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

This series of Civic Forums will discuss the status of the city after Hurricane Ike and talk about strategies to prepare for hurricanes in the future through civic planning, data systems, and architectural engineering.

CALENDAR

LECTURES

GETTING HIGH: TOWERS IN ARCHITECTURE

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Brown Auditorium
7 p.m.
713.348.4876 or rda.rice.edu

PETER BUCHANAN
ARCHITECTURE CRITIC, LONDON
Wednesday, September 16

ALI RAHIM
DIRECTOR, CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE PRACTICE, NEW YORK CITY
Wednesday, September 23

WINKA DUBBELDAM
PRINCIPAL, ARCHI-TECTONICS, NEW YORK CITY
Wednesday, September 30

ROSS WIMER
DESIGN PARTNER, SKIDMORE OWINGS AND MERRILL, CHICAGO
Wednesday, October 7

RDA GALA

Hilton Americas
November 14, 2009