

Today's News - Monday, June 13, 2011

- ArcSpace brings us a luscious eyeful of Hadid's Riverside Museum in Glasgow (the aerials are amazing!).
- Moore has all good things to say about the transport museum, but it "would have been better still as part of a coherent Clyde regeneration plan."
- Another "swarm" of earthquakes strikes Christchurch; undoubtedly more buildings will have to come down (luckily, no loss of life this time - so far, anyway).
- Rochon rallies around Ai Weiwei with one of the most thoughtful, eloquent tributes and call for action that we've read so far ("Chinese planning visionaries were as enlightened as any hip museum director. Ai was their ace to play on the world stage.") - Your must-read for the day!
- Glancey x 2: his week in review looks at Kolkata/Calcutta eyeing its own London Eye, Chinese architects to transform a Covent Garden law court, and more.
- His take on the new "flatpack" Olympic basketball arena: it "might look flamboyant," but it "could democratize the Games" - it can be deconstructed and reused elsewhere (like cash-poor cities), with "the added bonus of promising to keep white elephants well at bay."
- White on Calgarians identifying with the quadrants they live in: "We are now living in a "what about me" (WAM) society"; he sees Calgary "quickly evolving into five distinct "cities," each with their own economic base, amenities and culture."
- Gruber takes on Santa Monica's Landmarks Commission that seems to want "to thwart the possibility for great design in a public place because of misplaced reverence for second-rate designs of the past."
- WNYC.org offers a round-up of the back story and different perspectives re: "Atlantic Yards and the Battle for Brooklyn."
- Meanwhile, NYC's High Line has a message for other cities: "Treat your urban ruins carefully. They may be more valuable than you think."
- Activists get serious about greening public spaces in Beirut.
- The challenges to LEED being the "gold standard in green": The real question "isn't which well-intentioned program does what," but "will it happen quickly enough to avert major global issues?"
- A look at Ingels' "often ingenious solutions to simple problems" and the challenge "to bring innovation 'to the spaces where we live and work'" - not just high-profile cultural projects.
- Three schools' very cool projects win Cooper-Hewitt/Ford Schools in Community Design Competition + 2011 Buckminster Fuller Challenge winners have the potential to make winners of us all.
- Call for entries: 2011 Project Spaces: The Other City: can architects and urban planners influence an equitable and social city?
- We couldn't resist: Rochon cheers new postage stamps that highlight the "muscular details of some of Canada's most monumental works of Art Deco architecture" that "transformed water filtration plants and bridges into civic works of art."

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Zaha Hadid Architects: Riverside Museum of Transport, Glasgow, Scotland, UK

Riverside Museum of Transport and Travel, Glasgow: Zaha Hadid's fine museum would have been better still as part of a coherent Clyde regeneration plan...The Hadid space, unified by a single hue of yellowish-green, is architecture, not equipment, a room, not a machine...It is a pleasingly old-fashioned museum, confident in the appeal of its exhibits... By Rowan Moore -- Norman Foster; David Chipperfield; Richard Horden/Horden Cherry Lee Architects [slide show] - Observer (UK)

Christchurch earthquake: More damaged buildings to come down: Another 50 buildings are likely to come down after the latest round of earthquakes hit the devastated city...Today's swarm of quakes has seen the scarred city suffer further damage... - New Zealand Herald

Ai Weiwei: Planting originality, reaping Beijing's fury: ...[he] wanted to prod China into a democracy...His art and architecture were a means to that end...When it came to understanding the power of architecture...Chinese planning visionaries were as enlightened as any hip museum director. Ai was their ace to play on the world stage...That Ai is nowhere to be found seems a bad piece of Dadaist theatre...Especially when architects are understood by leaders in many countries to be among the change-makers that every society needs to celebrate - not imprison...Go online and call for the release of Ai...forced to exit the room, but not disappeared. By Lisa Rochon -- Herzog & de Meuron; Eduardo Souto de Moura - Globe and Mail (Canada)

Constructive criticism: the week in architecture: A topsy-turvy week with Kolkata's [Calcutta] Eye on London, Chinese architects to transform a Covent Garden law court, Delhi designers the talk of Tyneside, and Watts Gallery to reopen. By Jonathan Glancey -- Neri & Hu Design and Research Office; ADP Architects; Cacket and Burns Dick (1908); Christopher Hatton Turner (1904); ZMMA/Zombory-Moldovan Moore Architects [images, links] - Guardian (UK)

London 2012: The flatpack Olympics: The innovative 'Meccano' construction of the new basketball arena could democratise the Games...The structure...might look flamboyant, yet its construction...ensures that it can be deconstructed after the Games, with much of it reused...that such splendour...could work for events in cash-poor cities makes the idea...all the more attractive. It has, too, the added bonus of promising to keep white elephants well at bay. By Jonathan Glancey -- Wilkinson Eyre; KSS Design Group - Guardian (UK)

City divides as population multiplies: One of the unique features of Calgary is that...More and more Calgarians are identifying with the quadrant they live in...We are now living in a "what about me" (WAM) society...I see Calgary quickly evolving into five distinct "cities," each

with their own economic base, amenities and culture... By Richard White/Riddell Kurczaba Architecture- Calgary Herald (Canada)

Landmark Inflation: ...in the field of urban planning the most powerful "contemporary didacticism" is historic preservation...Santa Monica is a happening place for architecture, design and urbanism, but we have a Landmarks Commission...that wants to thwart the possibility for great design in a public place because of misplaced reverence for second-rate designs of Santa Monica's past. By Frank Gruber -- James Corner Field Operations - The Lookout News (Santa Monica, CA)

Atlantic Yards and the Battle for Brooklyn: ...the entire process has been endlessly complicated, and eight years later construction has only just begun. The Lopate Show and WNYC have been following the story over the years...the back story...different perspectives on the topic...listen to some... -- Michael Galinsky and Suki Hawley; Sharon Zukin; Witold Rybczynski; Charles V. Bagli; Municipal Arts Society- WNYC.org

New York City reclaims its ruins: High Line concepts are being considered for other cities across the country. And well they should. For the message the High Line sends is: Treat your urban ruins carefully. They may be more valuable than you think. By Nicolaus Mills - James Corner Field Operations; Diller Scofidio + Renfro- CNN

Green the Grey: Activists hold picnic on temporary grass...in Beirut's concrete Sassine Square...organized by the Beirut Green Project...they put on the event "because we feel that [green spaces are] a basic right anyone should have in a city ... and green public spaces are nonexistent in Beirut." - Daily Star (Lebanon)

Is LEED the Gold Standard in Green? A lawsuit challenges the claims of the nation's foremost green building effort...if energy performance continues to be an Achilles' heel for LEED, other more energy-focused green options exist, such as Energy Star...The real question...isn't which well-intentioned program does what: "The question is: Will it happen quickly enough to avert major global issues?" -- Henry Gifford; Edward Mazria/Architecture 2030- Miller-McCune

Bjarke Ingels's BIG Ambitions: The Copenhagen Architect Focuses on Building Community With His Modern Residential Projects: His buildings may have cutting-edge appeal, but in practice, he is trying to strip design "down to the essentials"...The challenge...is to bring innovation "to the spaces where we live and work" - what he calls "the other 99%." -- Bjarke Ingels Group- Wall Street Journal

Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Institute, and Ford Motor Company Announce Winning Schools in Community Design Competition: "The proposals illustrate how design can be used as a vehicle for change and civic engagement." ...a carry-all design for the homeless community...a Pet Waste Station to address a huge dog waste problem next to their school sidewalks...a Kinder-Garden Memorial, honoring a kindergarten teacher who passed away. [link to images, info]- Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum

Blue Ventures Initiative Demonstrating Economic Benefits of Marine Conservation Named Winner of 2011 Buckminster Fuller Challenge: ...a project of the Rainforest Foundation UK, was named Runner-Up, and Honorable Mentions were awarded to FrontlineSMS and Tara Akshar + . - Buckminster Fuller Institute

Call for entries: 2011 Project Spaces: The Other City: React to new challenges for urban space design of Paris (FR), Cluj (RO) and Kaiserslautern (DE)...can architects and urban planners influence an equitable and social city? What will new cross-border co-operations look like? deadline: June 26- wonderland

New stamps emphasize Art Deco design: Muscular details of some of Canada's most monumental works of Art Deco architecture are being downsized to fit on Canada Post stamps...emphasize the strength of Art Deco design that, during the Depression era, transformed water filtration plants and bridges into civic works of art. By Lisa Rochon -- Thomas C. Pomphrey; Ernest Cormier; George Lister Thornton Sharp [slide show]- Globe and Mail (Canada)

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