

Today's News - Thursday, May 24, 2012

EDITOR'S NOTE: We're starting our Memorial Day holiday (U.S.) a bit early and won't be posting tomorrow. We'll be back Tuesday, May 29 ('til then, you can find us digging in our too-long-neglected garden).

- Huxtable finds her "core beliefs turned upside down" at the new Barnes: "I have been waiting a long time for a building like this."
- Brin finds it "a curiously authentic, almost perverse tribute to the experience of the old Barnes."
- Lamster lambasts the "war against 60s architecture": "It is admittedly not always friendly to the touch," but "there are glories to be found in its heroic scale and its dynamic forms and spaces."
- Iovine (and many others) is horrified by the thought that Hadrian's Villa has been selected by Italy's sanitation minister as the site of a new garbage dump: "That stinks! Now, sign the petition.
- Hatherley tools around the UK's second-largest housing estate and finds "some architectural gems and a few lessons on garden cities that merit "reassessing and - hopefully - building them anew" (great pix).
- Brussat calls for Brown University to stop its "institutional creep on College Hill. Change, often billed falsely as progress, can have a quietly insidious influence on the character of cities."
- An eyeful of AS+GG's twin Dancing Dragons in Seoul that take biomimicry to a new level, mixing beauty with function.
- An eyeful of Tokyo's Skytree, now the world's tallest tower: "The opening was joyful, though not completely problem-free."
- Rose spends some serious face time with H&deM (his description of their studio is almost as good as being there).
- A brief but fascinating look at how "architecture and language share some surprising similarities" (leave it Léon K. to riff on this).
- Winners of 100 Mile House Ideas Competition hail from Vancouver to New York to Scotland.
- The 2012 ULI Urban Open Space Award shortlist sports parks in Birmingham, Calgary, New York, and Portland.
- Weekend Diversions:
- Hume hails Doors Open Toronto that "reminds us that today's buildings are tomorrow's heritage" + "Everybody's talking about architecture. And you know when the public gets involved like that it's going to lead to good things."
- LaBarre cheers Heatherwick, "the mad scientist of British design," who's about to take center stage at the V&A.
- Cabianca is intrigued by "Graphic Design - Now in Production" set to open on Governors Island, NYC: "like architecture - graphic design is still governed by certain limits" (free ferry included!).
- Get ready, Chicago: "Color Jam" is about to jam up an intersection on State Street with "volumes of color" spilling down façades and into traffic.
- Gould is heartened by Hosey's "Shape of Green: Aesthetics, Ecology, and Design" that "might even inspire hope in the most pessimistic readers."
- Lange lauds "Piecing Together Los Angeles: An Esther McCoy Reader" and urges us "all to buy it and read it, for it is a pleasure."
- One we couldn't resist: "The world's worst supersized tourist flops - a motley crew of tourist giants prove bigger doesn't always mean better" (it's a hoot!).

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The New Barnes Shouldn't Work—But Does: I take history and authenticity seriously...So how does it feel to have one's core beliefs turned upside down?...This is a beautiful building that does not compromise its contemporary convictions or upstage the treasure inside. And it isn't alchemy. It's architecture...I have been waiting a long time for a building like this. By Ada Louise Huxtable -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Laurie Olin; Fisher Marantz Stone- Wall Street Journal

Something old, something new: A tale of renewal for the Philadelphia's Barnes museum: Now housed in this glowing treasure chest, the collections burn with an artistic intensity almost beyond belief and description...a curiously authentic, almost perverse tribute to the experience of the old Barnes. By Joseph G. Brin -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Laurie Olin [images]- Metropolis Magazine

The War Against Sixties Architecture: It is easy to criticize this school of architecture, to label it with the "B" word. It is admittedly not always friendly to the touch...it can be an acquired taste. But taste is a matter of conditioning and education. There are glories to be found...in its heroic scale and its dynamic forms and spaces. By Mark Lamster -- John Johansen; Paul Rudolph; Marcel Breuer- Design Observer

Stop Dumping on Hadrian's Villa: ...selected as the site of a new garbage dump by a Berlusconi-appointed sanitation minister. That stinks! An international effort with a petition already signed by the likes of Richard Meir and Salvatore Settis...is fast making the rounds...Please sign. By Julie V. Iovine [images, links]- The Architect's Newspaper

On the white bus to Wythenshawe – council housing by design: A tour of the UK's second-largest estate, in Manchester, offers up some architectural gems and a few lessons on garden cities...It shouldn't need a bus and a guide...but it's a start, to begin a long effort of reassessing and – hopefully – building them anew. By Owen Hatherley -- Barry Parker; Nugent Francis Cachemaille-Day (1930s); Basil Spence; GG Pace (1965); Frederick Gibberd (1946) [images]- Guardian (UK)

Stop institutional creep on College Hill: Supporters argue that higher density promotes a "smart growth" agenda...a fine goal, but dubious in such posh digs. If the goal were more plausible, it would still fail the "at what cost?" test...Change, often billed falsely as progress, can have a quietly insidious influence on the character of cities. By David Brussat [images]- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Breathing Life into Korean Architecture: The concept of biomimicry...is sustainability on a whole different level...Dancing Dragons, twin skyscrapers...in Seoul, Korea, are prime examples of this design principle...mixes beauty with function... -- Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture [images]- DesignBuild Source (Australia)

Scenes From the World's Tallest Tower: Tokyo's Skytree made its official debut...part of Skytree Town, a commercial complex that includes an aquarium, a planetarium, office space, and shopping center. The opening was joyful, though not completely problem-free. [images]- The Atlantic Cities

Herzog & de Meuron: and now for our next trick ... : Their wild, experimental buildings have made them in demand the world over...talk about their latest work for Britain: a collaboration with Ai Weiwei...Serpentine pavilion is more of a head massage than a full treatment. By Steve Rose- Guardian (UK)

How less is more – in more than one idiom: Architecture and language share some surprising similarities: Imagine a language in which no word is repeated...it wouldn't do much for actual communication...as a model for an idiom in architecture...tends to result in "object buildings"...rather than buildings that work together in harmonious wholes. -- Léon Krier- Christian Science Monitor

Winners of 100 Mile House Ideas Competition for the design a house using materials and technology sourced within 100 miles of the city of Vancouver, Canada -- Tony Osborn (Vancouver); Neil Burford/Alex Pearson/Joseph Thurnott Architects (Dundee, Scotland); Won Jin Park (NYC); Renee Ferguson/Michelle Krochmal (Oyster Bay, NY) [images, info]- Architectural Foundation of British Columbia

Championing Quality of Life: Five Finalists Selected For 2012 ULI Urban Open Space Award: Parks in Birmingham, Calgary.

New York and Portland Make the Cut -- James Corner Field Operations/Diller Scofidio + Renfro/Piet Oudolf; Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects; Tom Leader Studio/Macknally Land Design/KVA/GA Architecture/HKW Associates/Khafra and Walter Schoel; Stantec Consulting; Atelier Dreiseitl/GreenWorks - Urban Land Institute (ULI)

Doors Open 2012: The changing face of Toronto: ...hundreds of buildings throw out the welcome mat and reveal themselves to the world...to impart a sense of just how much Toronto has changed and grown over the last two centuries...reminds us that today's buildings are tomorrow's heritage. By Christopher Hume- Toronto Star

Doors opened and a phenomenon was born: Doors Open Toronto: Members of the architectural community have been supportive because of their interest in promoting the importance of good design..."everybody's talking about heritage buildings, about architecture. And you know when the public gets involved like that it's going to lead to good things." -- Diamond Schmitt- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Exhibit Honors Thomas Heatherwick, The Mad Scientist Of British Design: ...master of materials and the "Pinhead pavilion," is set to get its very own retrospective at the V&A in London..."Heatherwick Studio: Designing the Extraordinary" opens May 31. By Suzanne LaBarre [images]- Fast Company

Graphic Design is Dead, Long Live Graphic Design: "Graphic Design—Now in Production" presents a cohesive understanding of graphic design as a discipline trying to examine its own sense of self...It is no longer simply a profession, a service, a tool or a means to create desire...like architecture — [it] is still governed by certain limits. By David Cabianca -- Olga Viso/Walker Art Center; Bill Moggridge/Cooper-Hewitt; Daniel van der Velden [Governors Island, NYC, May 26 – Sept. 3 (free ferry & admission) images]- Design Observer

"Color Jam": A new installation on State Street by Jessica Stockholder: Chicago, get ready - pretty soon...you will suddenly feel like you walked into the middle of an animated film...at the intersection hosting the project, the four buildings will be jammed with a "volume of color," as geometric shapes spill down facades onto the pavement, consuming the traffic lanes and sidewalk. [images]- Huffington Post

If we love it, will it last? This is a question at the heart of Lance Hosey's new book, "Shape of Green: Aesthetics, Ecology, and Design"...For those of us who are weary of (but keep reading, because we must) the books about climate change, ecosystem catastrophes...The Shape of Green is a positive thesis. It might even inspire hope in the most pessimistic readers. By Kira Gould- Metropolis Magazine

The Mother of Us All: "Piecing Together Los Angeles: An Esther McCoy Reader" edited and with an essay by Susan Morgan: I urge you all to buy it and read it, for it is a pleasure...[she] had very interesting things to say about two topics of my preoccupations: Ray Eames and architectural satire. By Alexandra Lange- Design Observer

The world's worst supersized tourist flops: The Tokyo Skytree is a towering achievement, but this motley crew of tourist giants prove bigger doesn't always mean better: Ryugyong hotel, North Korea; Mecca Clock Tower, Saudi Arabia; San Alfonso del Mar swimming pool, Chile; Dubai coastline; Valle de la Prehistoria, Cuba [images, links]- Guardian (UK)

-- soma: "One Ocean" Thematic Pavilion EXPO 2012, Yeosu, South Korea
– Mecanoo architecten: Kaap Skil Maritime and Beachcombers Museum, Texel, The Netherlands

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