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Today's News - Wednesday, July 11, 2012

- Russell gives a mixed review to London Olympics "conflicted architecture" (ArcelorMittal Orbit - "image of industrial apocalypse"), but it does seem to be "tightly focused on leaving an extraordinary legacy for a part of east London that's seen little investment" (great slide show!).
- Byrnes ponders whether the very expensive, large, and "fancy" Olympics Media Center was worth it: "Its post-Olympics future has been a cause for concern - with its size and public cost seemingly too high to secure a healthy long term future."
- Novelist and "psychogeographer" says Olympics architects "should retrain as dentists, where they would find a more suitable outlet for their sculptural skills" (reference to veneers, "lickspittle," and snake oil included).
- Olcayto bemoans plans that "could ruin UK's finest gridiron townscape will lazy urban design," but at least "residents have thankfully chosen the least bad option."
- Clark takes a long look at the "evolution of our increasingly privatized cities": are non-profit community development corporations doing a better job running things?
- Anderson examines the "data revolution" in the built environment that "could transform marketplace dynamics, but what does this data mean and how much is it worth?"
- From Down Under, Australia's AIA unveils images of its six installations for the Venice Biennale intended to "challenge traditional perceptions of what it is to be an architect."
- A new online forum "aims to address a wide range of issues that affect women architects" both in Australia and internationally.
- McAllen, Texas, boasts the largest library in the country - carved out of a cavernous space of a former Wal-Mart store.
- Chaban on the starchitect-studded shortlist to make over 425 Park Ave. (nary a Gehry - or any American architect - in sight).
- Bernstein cheers Rogers Marvel hitting its stride (so do we!).
- King gives kudos to San Francisco's latest and "among the most ambitious" parklets (but swarms of comments are bitterly biting, which surprises us).
- Berger basks in a "playground renaissance" in Seattle parks, "but are we going too far with privatized zip lines?"
- Maurice Cox named director of Tulane City Center and new associate dean for community engagement at the university's School of Architecture (lucky Tulane!).
- We couldn't resist: photographer Ruger rambles through another deserted Soviet base near Berlin (stunning slide show).
- Call for entries: 2012 Cleveland Design Competition: re-imagine the abandoned lower streetcar level of Cleveland's Detroit-Superior Bridge as a dynamic public space.

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[Olympics \\$14 Billion Site Mixes Scary Tower, Big Dolphin: Though it's a strangely mixed bag, this games, more than any other since Barcelona, seems tightly focused on leaving an extraordinary legacy for a part of east London that's seen little investment...If the commitment pays off, few will remember the provisional quality of the games themselves. By James S. Russell -- Zaha Hadid; Peter Cook; Buro Happold; Populous; Anish Kapoor; Cecil Balmond; Hargreaves Associates; James Corner Field Operations; Hopkins Architects; Wilkinson Eyre - Bloomberg News](#)

[Was London's Fancy Olympics Media Center Worth It? The expensive, state of the art facility bears little resemblance to media accommodations for the 1948 "Austerity Games"...Its post-Olympics future has also been a cause for concern...with its size and public cost seemingly too high to secure a healthy long term future. By Mark Byrnes - The Atlantic Cities](#)

[Olympics architects should retrain as dentists, says Will Self: Novelist attacks 'lickspittle' architects...self-described psychogeographer said the Olympic hype was "veneering over people's looming sense of the inequalities in society with snake oil" - BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

[Architects could ruin UK's finest gridiron townscape will lazy urban design: It's hard to overplay Helensburgh's significance within British architectural and urban design culture...It deserves more than childish ideas...residents have thankfully chosen the least bad option. By Rory Olcayto -- Austin Smith: Lord \[images, links\]- The Architects' Journal \(UK\)](#)

[Welcome to Your New Government: Can Non-Profits Run Cities? With an eye to the evolution of our increasingly privatized cities, Anna Clark explores the rise of CDCs \[community development corporations\] and the questions they face as they grow to be larger presences in the cities they serve. - Next American City](#)

[The Data-Driven Built Environment: Driven by innovation in energy efficiency and the effectiveness of building technologies, this data revolution could transform marketplace dynamics, but what does this data mean and how much is it worth? ...some surprises about which office buildings are the best energy performers. By Nancy Anderson - The Sallan Foundation](#)

[First images unveiled for Australian exhibition at Venice 2012: "Formations: New Practices in Australian Architecture" will showcase six innovative architectural groups through a range of installations that challenge traditional perceptions of what it is to be an architect... -- Anthony Burke; Gerard Reinmuth; TOKO Concept Design; Richard Goodwin; 2112 AI; 100 YR City; Archival; Healthabitat; supermanoeuvre; The Architects Radio Show \[images\]- Australian Institute of Architects/AIA \(formerly RAlA\)](#)

[Are Female Architects Underrepresented? Parlour: Women, Equity, Architecture, an online forum...features research, informed opinions and support for women in architecture...aims to address a wide range of issues that affect women architects both nationally and internationally... - DesignBuild Source \(Australia\)](#)

[Award-Winning Library Started Life as a Walmart: Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle converted an abandoned store \[in McAllen, Texas\] into one of the largest single-story public libraries in the nation. By Kriston Capps \[slide show\]- Architect Magazine](#)

[Everybody But Frank Gehry: Four Top Starchitects Finalists for 425 Park Avenue Redesign: It is one of the stranger developments in the city, but it could also prove to be one of the most spectacular...All of them are Pritzker Prize winners with a mixed history in the city. By Matt Chaban -- Norman Foster/Foster & Partners; Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners; Rem Koolhaas/OMA; Zaha Hadid - New York Observer](#)

[Rogers and Marvel Hitting Their Stride: The New York architects recently won the bid to design a condo-hotel building on the Brooklyn waterfront: ...a 550,000-square-foot building that steps back from the Michael Van Valkenburgh-designed Brooklyn Bridge Park. By Fred A. Bernstein -- Rogers Marvel Architects - Architectural Record](#)

[SF parklets a homegrown effort: They're summoned into existence not from the top down, but the bottom up...\[Post St.\] space is among the most ambitious...31 parklets have been installed or are under construction. Another 15 are going through the permit process...and 18 are having their designs reviewed. By John King -- Ogyrdziak/Prillinger](#)

[Architects](#) - San Francisco Chronicle

[A playground renaissance arrives at Seattle parks: ...playgrounds offer much more than before, but are we going too far with privatized zip lines? Despite our love of parks, they are also sources of sore controversy...If we can make kids' playgrounds better, we surely can figure out ways to add some spice for bigger kids. But good ideas work if they're in the right places.](#) By Knute Berger- [Crosscut](#) (Seattle)

[Maurice Cox named director of Tulane City Center: ...as well as the new associate dean for community engagement at the Tulane University School of Architecture in New Orleans...A co-founder of the national SEED \(Social, Economic, Environmental, Design\) Network, he served as design director of the National Endowment for the Arts from 2007-2010.](#) - Tulane University

[Germany's Vogelsang Ruins: A Visual Journey through a Deserted Soviet Base: When the Soviet troops withdrew, they left behind a vast military base in the forest near Berlin. Almost two decades later, photographic images show a haunting beauty, and reveal that nature is slowly taking over.](#) By Jörg Rürger [slide show]- [Der Spiegel](#) (Germany)

[Call for entries: 2012 Cleveland Design Competition: Transforming The Bridge: re-imagine the abandoned lower streetcar level of Cleveland's Detroit-Superior Bridge as a dynamic public space, performance venue and pedestrian experience; cash prizes; Registration deadline: September 10; Submission deadline: October 5-](#) [Cleveland Design Competition](#)

[Campus Collective: Leers Weinzapfel Associates Rethinks Higher Education Design: Addressing the interconnectivity of campus environs and student experience.](#) By John Gendall- [ArchNewsNow](#)



- [Toyo Ito & Associates: Ken Iwata Mother and Child Museum, Imabari City, Japan](#)
- [Exhibition: "Show Me Your Model" - Danish Architecture Centre/DAC, Copenhagen, Denmark](#)
- [Steven Holl Architects: Daeyang Gallery and House, Seoul, Korea](#)

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