

Today's News - Friday, December 13, 2013

- A grumpy start to the day (but it gets brighter - Happy Friday the 13th!): Russell explains NYU's decades-long "architectural war on Greenwich Village" and why it's "hard to trust NYU's intentions because of its poor stewardship of the neighborhood."
- Even as work begins on Sydney's contentious Darling Harbour convention center, "the development has a new foe."
- We expect some sparks will fly as folks get a gander of the (humongous!) Foster/Heatherwick-designed Bund Finance Centre in Shanghai (flare-ups in the comments section already).
- Saffron would love to see Philly's LOVE Park renovated, but the current public-private partnership proposal (lots of restaurants and kiosks) is "a textbook example of how not to leverage a public asset."
- Bozikovic offers one of the most thoughtful analyses of the Gehry/Mirvish tall-towers plan for Toronto: "The proposal is best understood as a bold opening bid, which leaves a lot of room for a negotiation toward a more modest and generous building."
- Moving on to brighter news, Iovine is quite taken by H&deM's Pérez Museum in Miami: it "might have been conceived by Robinson Crusoe channeling Mies van der Rohe" that "doesn't promote a look so much as a sense of place" ("built for people" - what a concept!).
- Gordon's impression of this year's Miami Art Basel is our absolute fave: it was "part Utopia, part Dystopia, but swelling with dozens of riotous new projects, all screaming for attention. Every brand-name architect in the world came to town" (along with "members of the diminishing architectural press").
- Brake gives (mostly) thumbs-up to the Kimbell's Piano Pavilion: "While it building doesn't match the beauty of Kahn's temple of culture, it is one of RPBW's best museum expansions" that "deftly balances accessibility with rarity."
- A bitter-sweet win for Eskew+Dumez+Ripple, receiving the AIA 2014 Architecture Firm Award only days after the death of founding partner Allen Eskew.
- A different kind of bitter-sweet win for women architects as Julia Morgan (who died in 1957) becomes the first woman ever to be awarded the AIA Gold Medal (let's hope the next woman doesn't have to be dead for 56 years).
- Speaking of women architects, a fascinating (and disturbing?) survey of "the top five countries in the world to be a female architect - and the countries you'd want to avoid" (some real surprises/disappointments - to us, anyway).
- The "era for female architects is now. The discussion is far from over"; the documentary "'Making Space/5 Women Changing the Face of Architecture' will only fuel it."
- It looks like plans to build an unbuilt FLW near Bristol, U.K., might not happen: the planning committee "unanimously rejected the scheme": "Outside of the USA and Japan there is not one Wright-designed house. He can't be that influential if the rest of the world doesn't want them" (and who wants a low-slung, almost invisible house in a greenbelt anyway).
- A 1937 FLW desk and chair from S.C. Johnson HQ is the plum of a Sotheby's 20th-century design auction next week - or maybe not: S.C. Johnson is suing, claiming they "are stolen goods" (spend some time drooling over the online catalog!).
- Weekend diversions:
- Seidler "is again the flavor of the month" as the subject of two new books and an exhibition.
- In Dublin, an Irish engineer who "brought collaborative spirit and human scale to the projects he pioneered" gets his due in "Traces of Peter Rice."
- Wolfe parses "Utopia Ltd." at London's GRAD gallery: "There's an unmistakable irony that a show devoted to the Soviet avant-garde would adopt a term from the world of British business and finance for its title."
- Jaffe has a lively Q&A with Montgomery re: "Happy City: Transforming Our Lives Through Urban Design," an "ambitious" attempt "to document whether urban policy and design can really influence well-being" and, well, "urban happiness."
- Moore offers his list of best books of the year: "In an age of austerity and dwindling resources, there's no shortage of big, beautiful books about buildings."
- Pedersen's Q&A with Gorlin re: "Kabbalah in Art and Architecture" is enlightening (and the book is "a visual feast").

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NYU Blights Village With Dumpsters, Fencing, Concrete: For decades, New York University has waged architectural war on Greenwich Village...With such a history of misdeeds, any new plan will be met with apprehension...the aspiration is sensitive, but it's hard to trust NYU's intentions because of its poor stewardship of the neighborhood. By James S. Russell -- Philip Johnson (1972); Grimshaw; Toshiko Mori; Michael Van Valkenburgh; I.M. Pei (1966) [images]- Bloomberg News

Darling Harbour convention centre controversy continues as revitalisation work begins: Sydney's Convention and Exhibition Centre has an official date with the wrecking ball...At the same time, the development has a new foe, in the form of Accor armed with input from...Architectus. -- Hassell; Populous; Philip Cox/Cox Architecture; John Andrews [images]- Architecture & Design (Australia)

Designs revealed for Foster and Heatherwick's Shanghai jewel: Bund Finance Centre features two 180m towers on a prestigious waterfront site...420,000sq m project...comprises eight buildings including two 180m towers and contains offices, a hotel, an arts and cultural centre and shops arranged around a public plaza. -- Foster + Partners; Heatherwick Studio [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

It's LOVE Park, not \$\$\$\$ Park: ...proposal to wring every last penny out of LOVE Park may be a textbook example of how not to leverage a public asset...calls for installing seven free-standing restaurants, an unspecified number of retail kiosks, and a stage...public-private model...As long as the emphasis is on the public part of the partnership, it's a good way for cities to get high-quality parks...Of course [it] should be renovated...But parks are meant to serve the people, not pay the city's bills. By Inga Saffron -- James Rappoport/Daroff Design [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Frank Gehry and David Mirvish's tall order in Toronto: If the project is refined, it would set a new bar for the architecture of tall buildings in Toronto. But it's not a building yet. What is it, really? 1. It's a bit of a bluff...The proposal is best understood as a bold opening bid, which leaves a lot of room for a negotiation toward a more modest and generous building...4. It's a Gehry. By Alex Bozikovic - Globe and Mail (Canada)

The Pérez Art Museum Miami: Built for People: ...might have been conceived by Robinson Crusoe channeling Mies van der Rohe...The architects' conceit to draw on a local context that doesn't quite exist makes PAMM stand out in both attractive and awkward ways...doesn't promote a look so much as a sense of place...fluidly connects landscape to space, outdoors to indoors, people to art. By Julie V. Iovine -- Herzog & de Meuron; Patrick Blanc [images]- Wall Street Journal

Plenoptic Fountainhead: Alastair Gordon serves up his impressions of Miami / Art Basel 2013: ...part Utopia, part Dystopia, but swelling with dozens of riotous new projects, all screaming for attention. Every brand-name architect in the world came to town... [images, links]- The Architect's Newspaper

Crit> Kimbell Art Museum Renzo Piano pavilion: ...creates a subtle counterweight to Louis Kahn's masterwork in Fort Worth: While it building doesn't match the beauty of Kahn's temple of culture, it is one of RPBW's best museum expansions. It deftly balances accessibility with rarity, a fitting expression for this treasure chest of a museum that is always free to the public. Alan G. Brake -- Kendall/Heaton Associates [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Eskew+Dumez+Ripple Wins the AIA 2014 Architecture Firm Award: Days after the death of founding partner Allen Eskew, the firm wins the Institute's highest honor for its work in the City That Care Forgot...firm has played a major role in shaping the New Orleans waterfront, both before and after Hurricane Katrina. [images]- Architect Magazine

2014 AIA Gold Medal Awarded to Julia Morgan, FAIA (1872 – 1957): The first woman ever to be awarded the AIA Gold Medal...A pivotal figure in the history of American architecture and American women, Morgan accomplished a litany of firsts she used to establish a new precedent for greatness. [images] - [AIArchitect / American Institute of Architects](#)

The top five countries in the world to be a female architect: …and the countries you'd want to avoid — especially if children are involved...get a bigger picture on the imbalance between the sexes. - [BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

'Making Space' For Women Architects: The era for female architects is now...This is only the beginning,...The discussion is far from over. And "Making Space/5 Women Changing the Face of Architecture" will only fuel it. -- Arielle Assouline-Lichten; Caroline James; Janice Stanton; Alice Shure; Annabelle Selldorf/Selldorf Architects; Farshid Moussavi Architecture; Marianne McKenna/KPMB Architects; Kathryn Gustafson/Gustafson Guthrie Nichol; Odile Decq [images] - [East Hampton Press / Southampton Press \(New York\)](#)

Work of art, or an American oddity? Hugh Pratt...wanted to create a house based on one of Frank Lloyd Wright's unused designs...planning committee...unanimously rejected the scheme..."Outside of the USA and Japan there is not one Wright-designed house. He can't be that influential if the rest of the world doesn't want them. It would be so wrong to allow this house to be built in our beautiful green belt." - [The Bristol Post \(UK\)](#)

Frank Lloyd Wright Desk and Chair Will be Auctioned for the First Time in 30 Years at Sotheby's: ...desk and matching armchair...for the S.C. Johnson Company offices in 1937 fetch the highest estimates for \$400,000-\$600,000 and \$80,000-\$120,000...Work by Wright's contemporaries [and contemporary designers...could make for great stocking stuffers. By [Anna Kats \[image, link to catalog\]](#) - [Artinfo](#)

Sotheby's Sued by S.C. Johnson Over Frank Lloyd Wright Desk and Chair: One week before its important 20th century design sale...claims the desk and chair set for next week's sale are stolen goods. - [Artinfo](#)

Harry Seidler: Australia's king of concrete and curves: The man who brought modernism to Australia is still revered by architects...Seven years after his death [he] is again the flavour of the month...the subject of two new books and an exhibition... Helen O'Neill's biography, "A Singular Vision" [and] "Harry Seidler: Lifework" by Vladimir Belogolovsky...also curating a travelling exhibition "Harry Seidler: Architecture, Art and Collaborative Design"... By [Stephen Lacey \[images, links\]](#) - [Guardian \(UK\)](#)

Irish visionary who redesigned architecture: The Irish engineer Peter Rice (1935-1992) brought collaborative spirit and human scale to the projects he pioneered..."Traces of Peter Rice" at the Farnleigh Gallery, Phoenix Park, Dublin - [Irish Times](#)

Reconstructivism: London's GRAD: Gallery for Russian Arts and Design explores the revolutionary architectural and sculptural work of the Russian Constructivists: There's an unmistakable irony that a show devoted to the Soviet avant-garde would adopt a term from the world of British business and finance for its title. Yet this is precisely what the curators chose for its ongoing "Utopia Ltd." By [Ross Wolfe \[images\]](#) - [Metropolis Magazine](#)

How to Design a Happier City: Charles Montgomery's "Happy City: Transforming Our Lives Through Urban Design" is ambitious: to document whether urban policy and design can really influence well-being...a six-part "recipe" for urban happiness — challenging cities to promote joy, health, freedom, resilience, equity, and social connections. By [Eric Jaffe \[Q&A\]](#) - [The Atlantic Cities](#)

Architecture books of the year: In an age of austerity and dwindling resources, there's no shortage of big, beautiful books about buildings: "Alvaro Siza" by Philip Jodidio; "Carlo Scarpa" by Robert McCarter; "Lina Bo Bardi" by Zeuler Lima; "Makers of Modern Architecture" by Martin Filler; "Explore Everything: Place-Hacking the City"; "Torre David: Informal Vertical Communities"; etc. By [Rowan Moore](#) - [Observer \(UK\)](#)

Q&A: Alexander Gorlin: The New York architect discovers Kabbalah imagery in the architecture of modernists like Louis Kahn and Le Corbusier and in the art of Mark Rothko..."Kabbalah in Art and Architecture"...a serious but lively look at Jewish mysticism...a visual feast... By [Martin C. Pedersen \[images\]](#) - [Metropolis Magazine](#)

Nuts + Bolts #7: Leveraging Your Passion: Principals already know what they love to do. It is learning to let go of the other, more mundane tasks that they find difficult. By [Steve Whitehorn](#) - [ArchNewsNow](#)



-- Tadao Ando: Asia Museum of Modern Art, Taichung City, Taiwan. By [Ulf Meyer](#)
-- Eduardo Souto de Moura combines the abstract minimalism of Mies van der Rohe with a tactile sensitivity and the use of local materials and building techniques.
-- "Elmgreen & Dragset: Tomorrow" at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. By [Martin Søberg](#)

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