

Today's News - Friday, January 10, 2014

- Wilson talks to Calori & Vanden-Eynden re: the positive payoffs of integrated environmental graphic design: if you've ever felt lost in a building, the lack of effective EGD is the likely culprit (ANN exclusive).
- Hawthorne weighs in on MoMA plans: he was never a big AFAM fan, but he does find great "irony" - and wonders what it would have meant if DS+R had resigned from the project: it "would have made a powerful statement that architects can be more than the handmaidens of an ethos that says growth is always good."
- Pedersen had "a hard time believing that MoMA's announcement was anything more than political theater," and that opening the Sculpture Garden to the public is "a nice gesture, but it's hard for me not to interpret that as a bone being thrown to us."
- Bozиковic strikes a brighter note, cheering the Vancouver Art Gallery getting it right with its shortlist of superstars and a very talented "sleeper" (ironically, including DS+R and TWBTA): "VAG's choice now is between metaphors and materials" (alas, no images - yet).
- Speaking of superstars, eye-fuls of BIG, OMA, and Büro Ole Scheeren's vying designs for a media campus on what was once a no-man's land in Berlin.
- Chaban cheers NYC developers converting garages into high-end condos: "They'll be painting a garage to put up paradise."
- Piano ponders his life as an Italian senator: "the very sound of it makes him guffaw incredulously. 'I still prefer architect...architecture is by definition a political job'" - and what he's doing with his senatorial salary proves it.
- Salomon and Kroeter have an enlightening Q&A with Scott Brown re: the significance of "Learning from Las Vegas" today (and more): "Urban design should not be confused with the design of large scale architecture."
- Clemence queries Foster re: his encounter with Niemeyer: "Our talk affirmed shared values rather than revelations" (great pix!).
- Weese's wonderful Washington Metro wins the 2014 AIA Twenty-five Year Award for giving "monumental civic space to the humble task of public transit" (yay!).
- Call for entries: Azure magazine's AZ Awards 2014 international competition.
- Weekend diversions:
 - In Hong Kong, "Building M+: The Museum and Architecture Collection" juxtaposes lost Hong Kong landmarks with designs by Western architects in Asia - and showcases H&deM's M+ future home.
 - Almost anything goes in Santa Barbara, CA, where "Almost Anything Goes" presents cutting-edge architects doing art: "none of it resembles anything one might expect to find in a conventional architect's studio" ("weirdoes" being pulled "back from the edge of insanity" with whimsy included).
 - Moore gives (mostly) thumbs-up to Montgomery's "Happy City": once you "get past the title" and "some gushing prose," you'll find it "a valuable book."
 - Schumacher finds Montgomery "combines solid research and thinking with down-to-earth, relatable and spirited arguments" and "elegant" writing. "If nothing else, the optimism and excitement make this book worth taking in."
 - Way dissects Chakrabarti's "A Country of Cities": it is "well-written, though slightly redundant, prose and clear illustrations. Redundancy here is not a bad thing."
 - Jordison cheers "Concretopia": Grindrod has "plenty of good things to say about postwar British architects and planners," but in addition to the "good intentions, this is a catalogue of folly, cost-cutting and, above all, hubris."
 - "Closer to God: Religious Architecture and Sacred Spaces" is filled with "striking" photographs that prove "the most evocative buildings are often the most unassuming" (striking indeed!).

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ANN Feature: Lost in Space: Calori & Vanden-Eynden on the Positive Payoffs of Integrated EGD: Ever been lost in a building, feeling your stress level rise by the minute? If so, the lack of effective environmental graphic design is very likely the culprit. By Claire Wilson [images]- ArchNewsNow

MoMA reaffirms controversial plan to raze Folk Art Museum: While I admire the building, I don't think [it] is the masterpiece some of my colleagues believe it to be...The great irony...MoMA has decided to...build more of the same...Imagine what it would have meant if DS+R had announced...they were resigning from the project...would have made a powerful statement that architects can be more than the handmaidens of an ethos that says growth is always good... By Christopher Hawthorne -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Tod Williams Billie Tsien - Los Angeles Times

Done Deal: MoMA To Raze Folk Art Museum: Was there ever really any doubt? ...I have a hard time believing that [the] announcement was anything more than political theater...will open its fabled Sculpture Garden to the public. A nice gesture, but it's hard for me not to interpret that as a bone being thrown to us... By Martin C. Pedersen -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Diller Scofidio + Renfro - Metropolis Magazine

Vancouver Art Gallery gets it right with architect shortlist: ...includes three bona fide global stars plus Canada's best large architecture firm, and a sleeper, the very talented...VAG's choice now...is between metaphors and materials. By Alex Bozиковic -- Herzog & de Meuron; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; SANAA; KPMB Architects; Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects - Globe and Mail (Canada)

BIG/Bjarke Ingels Group, OMA, Büro-OS/Büro Ole Scheeren To Compete for New Axel Springer Media Campus in Berlin: ...beating out Kuehn Malvezzi and SANAA...will be located on the historic site of the former Berlin Wall, what was once a no-man's land. All three proposals address this contentious history as well as the demands of a 21st century workplace. [images]- ArchDaily

New York City developers are converting garages into spacious new condos: Transformations do away with grime and gears and take advantage of large spaces and prime locations...They'll be painting a garage to put up paradise. By Matt Chaban -- Cetra/Ruddy; Flank Architects [images]- NY Daily News

From the Shard to the senate: The creator of the Pompidou and the Shard is used to being 'attacked by builders'. But will he be able to hold his own in the bearpit of Italian politics? Lizzy Davies meets senator Renzo Piano...the very sound of it makes him guffaw incredulously...'I still prefer architect...architecture is by definition a political job.' - Guardian (UK)

Still Learning from Denise Scott Brown: 45 Years of learning from Las Vegas: ...talking with her about what went into making Learning from Las Vegas, her thoughts about the book's significance today, new writing, and what she's working on next...'Urban design should not be confused with the design of large scale architecture...' By Stephanie Salomon and Steve Kroeter - Designers & Books

Q&A: Norman Foster on Niemeyer, Nature, and Cities: The Lord of Thames Bank talks about Oscar Niemeyer and the architect's influence on the new Norton Museum of Art...'Our talk affirmed shared values rather than revelations...and Oscar's reminder that 'architecture is important, but life is more important than architecture.' By Paul Clemence -- Foster + Partners [images]- Metropolis Magazine

2014 AIA Twenty-five Year Award: Washington, D.C., Metro Transit System: Harry Weese's Washington Metro gives monumental civic space to the humble task of public transit, gravitas fit for the nation's capital. [images]- AIArchitect / American Institute of Architects

Call for entries: AZ Awards 2014 international competition recognizing excellence in design in Architecture, Landscape

Architecture, Interiors, Products, Concepts, and Student Work; deadline: February 21 - Azure magazine (Canada)

Lost landmarks of Hong Kong resurrected in "Building M+: The Museum and Architecture Collection": ...juxtaposing models "resurrecting" lost Hong Kong buildings with designs by Western architects in Asia...will also showcase the design of M+'s future home...to open at the West Kowloon Cultural District in 2017. -- Aric Chen; Frank Lloyd Wright; Rocco Yim Sen-kee; MAP Office; Aernout Mik; Ai Weiwei; Herzog & de Meuron - South China Morning Post

Innovative Art by Architects: "Almost Anything Goes: Architecture and Inclusivity" Casts a Wide Net: ...the impulse to think like an architect without necessarily designing a building...none of it resembles anything one might expect to find in a conventional architect's studio; at the Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara. -- Design, Bitches; dOJSu Studio Architecture; Ball-Nogues Studio; Digital Physical/Variate Labs; Atelier Manferdini; Amorphis LA - Santa Barbara Independent (California)

"Happy City: Transforming our lives through urban design": Charles Montgomery remakes forcefully the urgent thesis that modern suburban life is bad for us: First you have to get past the title...Then you have to get past some gushing prose...After that, you begin to find a valuable book. By Rowan Moore - Observer (UK)

"Happy City: Transforming Our Lives Through Urban Design": Charles Montgomery has some bad news. The American dream is kind of a bust...he combines solid research and thinking with down-to-earth, relatable and spirited arguments about happiness...the framing of the arguments is quite good and the writing elegant. If nothing else, the optimism and excitement make this book worth taking in. By Mary Louise Schumacher - Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Imagine There's No Countries: James Way dissects Vishaan Chakrabarti's "A Country of Cities: A Manifesto for Urban America": ...well-written, though slightly redundant, prose and clear illustrations. Redundancy here is not a bad thing because many of his basic claims seem to have gone unheeded for decades to disastrous and steadily worsening outcomes. Part info graphic, part manifesto, and part plea... - The Architect's Newspaper

"Concretopia: A Journey Around the Rebuilding of Postwar Britain" by John Grindrod: Crap towns? ...plenty of good things to say about the postwar architects and planners, but he doesn't shy away from showing the trouble some of them caused. As well as good intentions, this is a catalogue of folly, cost-cutting and, above all, hubris...Even the architects Grindrod admires seemed to ignore people. By Sam Jordison - Guardian (UK)

How do you design a building when your client is God? Spectacular "Closer to God: Religious Architecture and Sacred Spaces" by Lukas Feireiss and Robert Klanten...Cast your eye across these striking photographs, and the most evocative buildings are often the most unassuming. -- Ryyuich Ashizawa; Ofis Arhitekti; Takashi Yamaguchi & Associates; Bureau d'Architecture Danilo Mondada; Lassila Hirvilammi Architects; Vesa Oiva; Katsuhiko Miyamoto & Associates; Undurraga Devés Arquitectos; Baladron & Grass; GJL Architekten Grube Jakel and Löffler; Reitermann Sassenroth Architekten; Jun Aoki & Associates; Wandel Hoefer Lorch; Sanaksenaho Architects; Fashion Architecture Taste/FAT [slide show] - CNN International



OMA: The Speed of Shenzhen: Rem Koolhaas' new Shenzhen Stock Exchange in China...people look down onto a sterile ideal city. By Ulf Meyer [images]

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