

Today's News - Wednesday, May 7, 2014

EDITOR'S NOTE: Apologies for late posting - we were without Internet until noon (yikes!).

- Michael Lehrer pens one of the best job descriptions of an architect we've ever come across: "Elevating the everyday, finding the creative or sacred spark in the quotidian is the work."
- Marshall Brown calls for a broadening of perspectives when it comes to considering an architect for an Obama Presidential Library (with all due respect to Adjaye): instead of considering race, "how appropriate would it be to consider some youthful, lesser-known, yet extremely talented designers who could deliver a great project" ("Full disclosure: I'm black.")
- Ransford calls for a post-mortem on Vancouver's 2010 Olympic Village project: "There are many lessons yet to be learned from the debacle."
- Goodyear chronicles her experience as a human experiment in the Van Alen Institute's "quest to measure the brain's response to urban design."
- Fishman finds out from the architect why Wal-Mart gave him "more creative license" to "move away from the blandness of Big Box in favor of place-based design" in Washington, DC (with, "wonder of wonders - windows").
- Ferro finds fabulousness in Boston's new District Hall, a "beautiful new building meant to spark innovation" that "offers a gorgeous civic space centered around collaboration."
- After "a firestorm of criticism," it seems Shields is back on the job for the Milwaukee Art Museum addition (with new renderings, too!).
- It's taken five years to near completion of the two-year renovation of the Picasso Museum in Paris, now slated to open in September - though the architect says it is ready for the previously announced June opening (politics included).
- Wrecking ball now at the ready to flatten Foster + Partners' never-opened Harmon Hotel in Las Vegas.
- The 21 cities on the 2014 Mayors Challenge shortlist include "lesser known cities pushing big ideas."
- Christopher Mount surmounts curatorial challenges by launching eponymous galleries in L.A. and NYC.
- Gehry is the sixth architect to take home Spain's Prince of Asturias Award for the Arts.
- An impressive shortlist in the Montreal Space for Life architecture competition.
- Voting gets underway for Toronto's Pug Awards with "a whopping 44 competing buildings" seeking "like," "love," and "hate" votes.

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Design As A Moral Enterprise: Perhaps it is a suspension of disbelief...but, for the architect every site begins with the notion that it is the most desirable place in the world...if only allowed to be fully realized...That profoundly sanguine, joyous outlook is part of the architect's job description...Elevating the everyday, finding the creative or sacred spark in the quotidian is the work. By Michael B. Lehrer/Lehrer Architects [images]- Huffington Post

Possibilities over Prescriptions: Pundits speculating about the design commission for the Barack Obama Presidential Library need to broaden their perspectives: ...this could be the moment for some intelligent and informed debate among the design community...Rather than narrowing the president's choices based on race...How appropriate would it be...to consider some youthful, lesser-known, yet extremely talented designers...who could deliver a great project. By Marshall Brown -- Polshek Partnership (now Ennead Architects); Hargreaves Associates; David Adjaye; I.M. Pei; HOK; Robert A.M. Stern Architects - Metropolis Magazine

Post mortem needed on 2010 Olympic Village project: There are many lessons yet to be learned from the debacle. Most of them...have everything to do with the overly ambitious goals that city bureaucrats and sustainable development advocates drove for the project from its inception, making it perhaps the worst real estate project in Vancouver's history...The biggest question...relates to the city's role in trying to radically shape a whole new form of urban development... By Bob Ransford- Vancouver Sun

The Quest to Measure the Brain's Response to Urban Design: ...part of the Van Alen Institute's multiyear project. "brain-computer interfaces," or BCIs, will potentially allow designers to see the effect of their work on the people that use it in a radically new way. "It's the holy grail for architects, who are trying to be empathetic and really understand what people's experience is...It's a camera for mental activity." By Sarah Goodyear -- Mark Collins/Toru Hasegawa/Columbia University Cloud Lab; NeuroSky- The Atlantic Cities

What It's Like To Be A Walmart Architect: In Washington, D.C., the retail behemoth gave architects more creative license. The result is a move away from the blandness of Big Box in favor of place-based design...a thoughtfully designed store with a spacious vestibule, parking hidden underground, and - wonder of wonders - windows...design difference...came down to two key things: meetings and inspiration from a historic car barn. By Charles Fishman -- Gabe Massa/MMA Architects - Fast Company

A Beautiful New Building Meant To Spark Innovation: U.S. cities are establishing "innovation districts" to foster entrepreneurship. They should take note of Boston's new District Hall...offers a gorgeous civic space centered around collaboration. By Shaunacy Ferro -- Hacin + Associates [images]- Fast Company

Milwaukee Art Museum Revamps Addition Design, Lead Architect Returns: After a firestorm of criticism, MAM has released updated designs for its new addition... -- Jim Shields/HGA Architects [images]- WUWM / NPR Milwaukee Public Radio

Paris Picasso museum set to reopen [in September] - three years later than planned: Five years after it closed for a two-year renovation...Claude Picasso...asked the government to do its best to ensure that the establishment reopens in June, as announced...the architect in charge of the renovation [said] the museum could still be reopened at the end of June as scheduled. -- Jean-Francois Bodin/Bodin & Associés Architectes (AFP)- Guardian (UK)

Court Approves Demolition of Foster + Partners' Harmon Hotel in Las Vegas: ...being razed without ever opening...unfinished 27-floor, oval-shaped tower...once figured prominently in the \$8.5 billion CityCenter hotel-casino-entertainment complex...- Architectural Record

Small cities with big ideas compete in Mayors Challenge: They range in size from 130,000 to more than eight million. The 21 cities selected as finalists for the 2014 Mayors Challenge, sponsored by Bloomberg Philanthropies, are a cross-section of Europe. Alongside iconic names such as London and Madrid are smaller, lesser known cities pushing big ideas. [linkto details]- Citiscope

Christopher W. Mount to Open LA and NY Galleries: ... architectural historian and former Architecture and Design Curator at the Museum of Modern Art...to open eponymous galleries in both Los Angeles and New York devoted to architecture and design-themed material...inaugural West Coast exhibition, "A Modern Master: Photographs by Balthazar Korab," opens on May 23 [in] the Pelli Clarke Pelli-designed Pacific Design Center... By Anna Kats - Artinfo

Guggenheim Bilbao architect wins top Spanish prize: Frank Gehry...awarded the country's prestigious Prince of Asturias

[Award For the Arts...the sixth architect to claim the \[€50,000/\\$70,000\] prize...](#) - The Local (Spain)

[Finalists in the Montreal Space for Life architecture competition announced: Eight teams were chosen to take part in the next stage... -- Atelier Ville Architecture Paysage + MARC MIMRAM; in situ atelier d'architecture; Équipe Kuehn Malvezzi; Lacaton & Vassal, architectes; Atelier Ville Architecture Paysage + MARC MIMRAM; AZPML Ltée + KANVA; ARCOP architecture/BNIML/OEUF/ARCOP; Coll-Leclerc architectos/Cloud 9/N.F.O.E. Architectes; Saucier Perrotte, architectes \[links\]](#)- Canadian Architect

[Tell the Pugs all about that building you hate — or love: ...voting gets underway for the eighth annual Pug Awards. This year, voters can pick among a whopping 44 competing buildings...Whether the public's ability to comment on the city's rapidly changing architectural landscape is having a real impact or not is difficult to measure distinctly... \[images\]](#)- National Post (Canada)



[Interview: Patrik Schumacher: Zaha Hadid Architects' director talks about the global rise of parametric design, the advent of robotics in architecture, and the influence of 'The Matrix' on creating intelligent buildings. By Kevin Holden Platt \[images\]](#)

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