

## Today's News - Thursday, July 24, 2014

EDITOR'S NOTE: Just a reminder that we're on our summer schedule now, and not posting on Fridays and Mondays. We'll be back Tuesday, July 29.

- Silverberg reports on the eviction of residents from Caracas's Torre David, which "does nothing to address the chronic poverty and housing shortages that led to its establishment in the first place."
- Urban-Think Tank (which won a 2012 Venice Biennale Golden Lion with Justin McGuirk and Iwan Baan for their Torre David exhibit) responds to the evictions: "Our concerns do not arise from a desire to see it remain as it is, but because the details that have emerged do not necessarily suggest a positive outcome for those affected."
- Lepeska offers an in-depth look at how Istanbul's "gentrification by force" is leaving locals feeling "overwhelmed and shunted aside" by "disappearing green spaces, overpriced apartments, forced evictions, endless commutes."
- Adanali of Reclaim Istanbul offers a report from the front about the "real estate gold rush" that is transforming his "city of contradictions": "The major problem is the intense level of commercialization and threat of forced eviction" (he's already been evicted once - and may be again).
- King reports on a "gasp-inducing plan for San Francisco's skyline," courtesy of Foster + Partners and Heller Manus, with a "startling public space."
- Kamin x 2: Stern has a towering plan for Chicago: "While he admires the work of Mies van der Rohe, he turned for inspiration to 1920s Chicago skyscrapers - 'Not that Mies is bad, but Mies is not me.'"
- He cheers plans for the Chicago Biennial: "The interplay between the biennial's highflying architectural experiments and the grit associated with Chicago's real-life urban laboratory could make for a bracing ideas fest."
- Hall Kaplan channels Moses and Olmsted, who "are relevant to the emanating melodrama of the revitalization of the Los Angeles River."
- Brussat begs "halt this attack" on Providence's Kennedy Plaza bus station that "beats the pants off most civic squares around the world for beauty. Now it appears we can say good-bye to all that - and hello to the ugly urban duckling."
- Anderton has a thoughtful conversation with O'Herlihy re: his very blue "Blue Dot" bus stops in Santa Monica, and the logic behind his design in answer to "a barrage of complaints from locals" (he's also designing billboards!).
- DRMM wins the job to design a floating village in east London's Royal Docks.
- The rather sad saga of NYC's Museum for African Art - though a revised plan "offers something that the original did not: the possibility that it will actually be built."
- Winners all: Williams, Tsien, and Jones are among a stellar list receiving the National Medal of Arts and National Humanities Medal + The \$50,000 Canada Council 2014 Prix de Rome goes to Halifax-based Omar Gandhi.
- Weekend diversions:
  - Zara cheers Gehry's "dancing architectural models" in a giant garage in Arles, France: "Solaris Chronicles" follows few norms of an architecture exhibition" and "foreshadows the high-concept subversiveness that the directors of LUMA Arles have in mind."
  - Hess hails "No Further West: The Story of Los Angeles Union Station" at the L.A. Central Library.
  - Heathcote finds "Bridge" at the Museum of London Docklands to be "a delightful little exhibition that manages to avoid nearly all the big questions but does, at least, illustrate how central bridges are to the city's image of itself."
  - Moore gives two thumbs-up to "Radical Cities": McGuirk's "fascinating study - he's at his best with places he knows best, like Torre David. But these weaknesses are occupational hazards of what is an important task, to give a glimpse into the present and future of the world's cities."
  - Lange lauds Rohan's "The Architecture of Paul Rudolph": it is "well-argued, well-illustrated, well-edited," and "a timely publication, as Rudolph, embattled in life, has become a central character in present-day discussions of how, why, and when to preserve Brutalist buildings."

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The world's tallest slum - a "pirate utopia" - is being cleared by the Venezuelan government: ...the eviction of 3,000 residents...does nothing to address the chronic poverty and housing shortages that led to Torre David's establishment in the first place...it's hardly the only informal settlement in Caracas's downtown. By Michael Silverberg -- Justin McGuirk [images]- CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

Urban Think Tank Responds to the Forced Eviction of Torre David Residents: We are holding our breaths, like many of the residents, as they wait to see the precise results of the government's scheme. Our concerns do not arise from a desire to see it remain as it is, but because the details that have emerged do not necessarily suggest a positive outcome for those affected. - ArchDaily

Divided cities: Istanbul's gentrification by force leaves locals feeling overwhelmed and angry: Luxury hotels are rising all over Turkey's largest city as ageing districts are rebuilt - but critics say it is chasing profit for the privileged while ignoring the majority...overwhelmed and shunted aside by the ongoing makeover...disappearing green spaces, overpriced apartments, forced evictions, endless commutes... By David Lepeska -- Gezi Park; Design Atelier Kadikoy (TAK); Sila Akalp; Omer Kapinak- Guardian (UK)

An urbanist's guide to Istanbul: We live in a giant construction site: Yasar Adanali of Reclaim Istanbul says a real estate gold rush is transforming one of the world's oldest cities...a city of contradictions...The major problem is the intense level of commercialisation and threat of forced eviction...I can see the encroachment of the tourism related spaces upon my existing neighbourhood. - Guardian (UK)

A gasp-inducing plan for S.F. skyline, from the ground up: A new pair of towers proposed for downtown San Francisco would include the city's second-tallest building - and perhaps its most startling public space, an open-air plaza set beneath the main tower's elevated first floor. By John King -- Foster + Partners; Heller Manus [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

Hybrid residential tower planned in Streeterville: Sandwiched between the 67-story building and an existing high-rise to the west would be a new public park...While Stern admires the work of...Mies van der Rohe, he turned for inspiration to 1920s Chicago skyscrapers..."Not that Mies is bad, but Mies is not me." By Mary Ellen Podmolik and Blair Kamin -- Robert A.M. Stern; Michael Van Valkenburgh [image]- Chicago Tribune

Design biennial promises to bring world of ideas to Chicago: Show could move Chicago toward center of intellectual gravity: ...a potential game changer for a city already known as a design capital...The interplay between the biennial's highflying architectural experiments and the grit associated with Chicago's real-life urban laboratory could make for a bracing ideas fest... By Blair Kamin -- Sarah Herda/Graham Foundation; Joseph Grima- Chicago Tribune

Moses and the Future of the LA River: Robert Moses and Frederick Law Olmsted are relevant to the emanating melodrama of the revitalization of the Los Angeles River...renderings of the proposed restoration...raises the question, as the echo of the self-congratulatory press conferences...fades, of whether a Moses or Olmsted personality is needed - and what can he or she do? By Sam Hall Kaplan -- Mia Lehrer; Carol Armstrong; Elaine René-Weissman/ERW Design- The Planning Report

Halt this attack on the people's plaza: For a city transit hub, Kennedy Plaza's bus station...beat the pants off most civic squares around the world for beauty...Now it appears we can say good-bye to all that - and hello to the ugly urban duckling...could become Providence's version of Boston's bleak and windswept piazza adjoining its Brutalist-style City Hall...what ever happened to the design for a civic square by Union Studio Architects. By David Brussat [images]- Providence

[DnA/Frances Anderton: Lorcan O'Herlihy Rethinks Big Blue Bus Stops: Santa Monica is getting a much bluer streetscape... "Blue Dot" stops... But in proof of the adage that no good deed goes unpunished, there has already been a barrage of complaints from locals... He explains the logic behind his design choices, tells us why well-designed infrastructure matters... \[images\]- KCRW \(Los Angeles\)](#)

[DRMM wins Royal Docks competition for floating village: ...proposes Dutch-inspired custom-build community... practice beat the likes of Studio Egret West, Baca Architects and Ian Ritchie Architects to land the job in east London... \[images\]- BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

[When a Museum's Big Dreams Prove Too Ambitious: After years of outsize promises and delays, officials are scaling back plans for the Museum for African Art in New York... revision, however, offers something that the original did not: the possibility that it will actually be built... rechristened the Africa Center... -- Gordon Kipping/G TECTS \[images\]- New York Times](#)

[National Medal of Arts and National Humanities Medal: Architects Tod Williams, Billie Tsien, and Johnpaul Jones/Jones & Jones receive medals from President Barack Obama on July 28 - World-Architects.com](#)

[Professional Prix de Rome awarded to Omar Gandhi: Omar Gandhi Architect of Halifax has won the Canada Council 2014 Prix de Rome prize. The \\$50,000 prize recognizes outstanding achievement in Canadian architecture... His areas of study will be in 3D modelling, innovative manufacturing techniques, biomimicry, rainwater recovery and sustainable strategies using both traditional and contemporary architecture practices. - Canadian Architect](#)

[Frank Gehry: The Musical: Dancing architectural models channel "West Side Story" as a group of artists pay homage to the architect in an unusual exhibition... a multi-part primer on Gehry's work... "Solaris Chronicles" follows few norms of an architecture exhibition... foreshadows the high-concept subversiveness that the directors of LUMA Arles have in mind... By Janelle Zara -- Selldorf Architects \[slideshow\]- Architectural Record](#)

[Public Legacy: Alan Hess gets the scoop on Los Angeles' greatest public space: With drawings never before seen in public, the story of Union Station's creation is now on display at the Los Angeles Central Library. "No Further West: The Story of Los Angeles Union Station" -- John and Donald Parkinson; Edward Warren Hoak \[images\]- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Bridges: at the heart of a city: The role of bridges as enduringly potent city symbols is explored... in "Bridge" at the Museum of London Docklands: This is a delightful little exhibition that manages to avoid nearly all the big questions but does, at least, illustrate how central bridges are to the city's image of itself... By Edwin Heathcote - Financial Times \(UK\)](#)

["Radical Cities: Across Latin America in Search of a New Architecture": Justin McGuirk's fascinating study shows that Latin American cities have much to teach the world's architects: ...he often can only reach tentative and impressionistic conclusions, and he's at his best with places he knows best, like Torre David. But these weaknesses are occupational hazards of what is an important task, to give a glimpse into the present and future of the world's cities. By Rowan Moore - Observer \(UK\)](#)

[A Less Brutal Reading: A new Paul Rudolph monograph offers a fresh take on the architect's concrete projects: Timothy M. Rohan's "The Architecture of Paul Rudolph" ...well-argued, well-illustrated, well-edited... a timely publication, as Rudolph, embattled in life, has become a central character in present-day discussions of how, why, and when to preserve Brutalist buildings. By Alexandra Lange \[images\]- Architect Magazine](#)

[ANN Feature: The Great Compilation: 14th International Exhibition of Architecture di la Biennale di Venezia: Rem Koolhaas has irrevocably changed the Venice Biennale's focus away from starchitects to architecture itself. Indeed, I left impressed and invigorated, but curious as to what might follow. By Johannes M.P. Knoop \[images\]- ArchNewsNow.com](#)



[8 Architectural Highlights in Amsterdam: ...the city has heaps more to offer its visitors architecturally than merely charm and atmosphere. -- Gerrit Rietveld; Kisho Kurokawa; Steven Holl Architects; Benthem Crouwel Architekten; MVRDV; René van Zuuk Architekten; UNStudio; 3XN; Grimshaw Architects](#)

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