

Today's News - Wednesday, July 30, 2014

- ArcSpace brings us eye-fuls of bridges we ought to cross before we die.
- Pedersen offers an interesting take on Lucas's "aesthetic change of heart" in his choice of design team for his Chicago museum: "He just wants to get the damn thing approved. Who knew it would be this hard to give away a museum?"
- Christiansen questions whether new cultural districts used to regenerate cities can really make a difference: even though they "can become victims of their own success" and become "merely glossy entertainment theme-parks - they are profoundly significant social phenomena" (a great read!).
- Seward reports from the New Cities Summit in Dallas, which has high hopes its developing arts district will create more "vibrancy" downtown: "not everyone thinks the strategy is foolproof, or even desirable," with warnings of the hazards of building "cultural ghettos."
- Atlanta's new National Center for Civil and Human Rights has high hopes "uplift and inspire" - and maybe even "transform its touristy environs."
- On a much smaller scale - but with global impact (there's even a map app), Aldrich cheers Little Free Libraries boxes showing up in neighborhoods around the world: "algorithms will never have the charm and mystique of a simple wooden box filled with a neighbor's literary treasures. It won't be able to lend you a cup of sugar either."
- NYC's \$20 billion Hudson Yards is being "designed with millennials in mind - all bodes well for a completely new, young, and vibrant community. But there's also a certain planned sterility about it all that reflects a city that's becoming a harder place to live."
- Badger tackles why large cities that restrict new housing actually harm the economy nationally: "affordable housing advocates who want to block new high-end developments are simply making the city more expensive."
- From Down Under, Davies x 2: He debunks claims that city center apartment towers will be the "slums of the future."
- He takes the Victorian Government Architect to task for proposing mandatory design guidelines for apartments: "Seriously, does even storage in new apartments need to be regulated?" (and it will hurt development of much-needed housing supply).
- Ransford, the Vancouverite, visits Down Under, and raises the same issues and dilemmas, also facing his own home town: "developers argue they are responding to market demand with micro-apartments. Planners argue the housing that is being built isn't being designed" for those who need it.
- Capps reports that "Houstonians are clearly having a hard time letting go" of the Astrodome: there's a new plan afoot that would keep the "ribs" ("a sort of skeletal Stonehenge"), demolish the rest, and build a teeny tiny replica in the middle.
- Speaking of sporting sites, a long look at the changing tides in baseball stadium design: now, it's "all about how the new building would fit into the fans' imaginations, and how the city around it would grow."
- Places goes on hiatus, but leaves us with lots of great reading material about buildings, cities, and landscapes (including a bunch that the New Yorker has brought out from behind its payroll!).
- More luminaries from the global culture scene (including architects) sign on to the call to ban giant cruise ships from Venice.
- Cranbrook taps Scoates to be Kroloff's successor.
- An impressive list of winners of the 2014 Australian Institute of Architects International Architecture Awards.
- Call for entries: Workplace of the Future 2.0 Design Competition + 13th Tile of Spain Awards of Architecture and Interior Design + 2014 Generation Kingspan/GenK Student Design Competition.

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7 Bridges You Ought to Cross: Making structures to overcome obstacles is inherent in human nature...modern bridge design and construction entails serious ingenuity...cross-disciplinary enterprise that requires the close collaboration of artists, architects, designers and engineers. -- Santiago Calatrava; Foster & Partners; Dominique Perrault; Zaha Hadid Architects; Cox Rayner; René van Zuuk Architekten [images]

What's Behind George Lucas's MAD Choice? The Star Wars creator had an aesthetic change of heart...He just wants to get the damn thing approved. In architecture-adverse San Francisco - especially in the Presidio - that meant classical architecture. In Chicago, birthplace of the skyscraper, home of Burnham and Sullivan and Mies, it means something else: Architecture with a capital A...Who knew it would be this hard to give away a museum? By Martin C. Pedersen -- Ma Yansong/MAD Architects; Jeanne Gang/Studio Gang - Metropolis Magazine

Are cultural districts transforming the world? Governments across the globe have used culture to regenerate cities; but might the consequences be more dangerous than they dreamed? ...can become victims of their own success...authentic creative energy and activity gets elbowed out...can be merely glossy entertainment theme-parks, but they can also function as...a place where questions can be democratically asked...They are profoundly significant social phenomena... By Rupert Christiansen - Telegraph (UK)

Editorial> New Cities and Old: Aaron Seward on the New Cities Summit and Dallas' urge to urbanize. to create more "vibrancy" downtown...One way it is doing that is through its arts district...not everyone thinks the strategy is foolproof, or even desirable...Jamie Bennett of ArtPlace America, made his position unequivocally clear: "Stop planning cultural districts!"..."cultural ghettos"... -- New Cities Foundation - The Architect's Newspaper

National Center for Civil and Human Rights Opens Its Doors to Atlanta: ...a design conducive to the Center's mission: to provide a visitor experience that uplifts and inspires while lending gravity to serious and often violent stories....If that becomes the case, the Center will truly transform its touristy environs. -- Freelon Group (now Perkins+Will); HOK; Rockwell Group [slide show] - Architectural Record

The Low-Tech Appeal of Little Free Libraries: The "take a book, return a book" boxes are catching on...In 2009, Tod Bol built the first LFL...When he saw the people of his community gathering around it like a neighborhood water cooler...he knew he wanted to take his simple idea farther...algorithms will never have the charm and mystique of a simple wooden box filled with a neighbor's literary treasures. It won't be able to lend you a cup of sugar either. By Margaret Aldrich [images] - The Atlantic

New York's New \$20 Billion Neighborhood Of Skyscrapers Is Designed With Millennials In Mind: Hudson Yards...designed specifically to court the younger demographic that companies want in their workforces...all bodes well for a completely new, young, and vibrant community. But there's also a certain planned sterility about it all that reflects a city that's becoming a harder place to live... [images] - Fast Company

How big cities that restrict new housing harm the economy: ...affordable housing advocates who want to block new high-end developments are simply making the city more expensive...from Enrico Moretti's point of view, the rest of us should care about how San Francisco and big cities like it restrict new housing because the economic repercussions of such local decisions stretch nationwide. By Emily Badger - Washington Post

[Are city centre apartment towers the "slums of the future"? ...does the claim hold up on closer examination? So what is it about all those apartment towers going up in the centre of Melbourne that evidently predetermines they'll become vertical slums? Some say it's because the apartments are too small and too dark...it doesn't appear to have led buyers and renters to abandon city centre apartment towers. In fact the demand has never been higher... By Alan Davies - Crikey \(Australia\)](#)

[Seriously, does even storage in new apartments need to be regulated? The Victorian Government Architect is proposing a mandatory design standard for apartments. But it's not all milk and honey; it'll lower housing supply, raise costs and reduce housing choice...The draft standard puts me in mind of the old adage that if all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail. To the Government Architect, everything looks like an "amenity" problem that can be solved by "design." By Alan Davies - Crikey \(Australia\)](#)

[Even Down Under, housing issues feel the same: Condos get smaller and smaller while government cautious of foreign investment in market: ...warnings that these draft design guidelines...will bring a screaming halt to the residential construction industry...developers argue they are responding to market demand with micro-apartments...Planners argue the housing that is being built isn't being designed for the people who are needing housing... By Bob Ransford - Vancouver Sun](#)

[Now Houston Is Considering Replacing the Astrodome With a Smaller Astrodome: A new plan to replace the Astrodome with an Astrodome Hall of Fame calls into question whether anyone actually wants to demolish the Astrodome: The Eighth Wonder of the World could get a little more wondrous...Houstonians are clearly having a hard time letting go of the stadium. By Kriston Capps -- Gensler \[images\] - CityLab \(formerly The Atlantic Cities\)](#)

[If you build it: Baseball stadium architecture has come a long way since SkyDome opened in the late 1980s: Since 1993, there have been only seven times when the stadium that played host to the MLB All-Star Game was not a brand-new barn. And designs have changed a lot in that time...what goes into designing a new stadium? ...all about how the new building would fit into the fans' imaginations, and how the city around it would grow... -- Populous - National Post \(Canada\)](#)

[The Best New Yorker Articles on Buildings, Cities, and Landscapes \(and a Few from Places Journal\): ...we've rounded up some New Yorker articles you can read while their payroll is down. That should tide you over until September, when Places will return... - Places Journal](#)

[Leading museum directors and celebrities call on Italian government to ban giant cruise ships from Venice: More than 50 leading figures from the worlds of art, film, fashion and architecture have signed a petition...launched by the Association of the International Private Committees for the Safeguarding of Venice, a network of conservation organisations backed by Unesco. - The Art Newspaper \(UK\)](#)

[Cranbrook Academy of Art picks Christopher Scoates to replace Reed Kroloff: ...has more than 25 years of experience in universities and art schools. As a curator he has organized exhibitions bringing together music, lighting, and various media... - The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Winners of 2014 Australian Institute of Architects/AIA International Architecture Awards announced -- Denton Corker Marshall; WOHA; Kerry Hill Architects; BVN Donovan Hill; Marra and Yeh Architects \[images\] - Architecture & Design \(Australia\)](#)

[Call for entries: Workplace of the Future 2.0 Design Competition: imagine what our work lives will be in the next 10 to 15 years; cash prizes; deadline: October 6 - Metropolis Magazine / Business Interiors by Staples](#)

[Call for entries: 13th Tile of Spain Awards of Architecture and Interior Design \(international\); deadline: October 28 - ASCER/Spanish Ceramic Tile Manufacturers Association](#)

[Call for entries: 2014 Generation Kingspan/GenK Student Design Competition: design a multi-use complex for a site in Calgary, Alberta, Canada; cash prizes; deadline: November 4 - Kingspan](#)

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