

Today's News - Tuesday, January 13, 2015

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tomorrow is this week's "floating" no-newsletter day. We'll be back Thursday, January 15.

- ArcSpace brings us a review of "Friedensreich Hundertwasser - 1928-2000" and a round-up of January architectural exhibitions around the world.
- Hosey enters the Betsky/Bingler/Pedersen debate.
- Jolliffe ponders whether architects and planners should be defending us from terrorists: "it is a situation that could shape us - if we don't shape it first."
- Gallagher takes a gander at how "bunker-like government buildings off-limits to the public in the midst of redeveloping districts hurt, rather than help, revitalization efforts. It's a puzzle that the architectural profession needs to solve."
- Wainwright is not very encouraged by Mons, Belgium's foray as the European Capital of Culture, where only one new building is ready, and "people are more excited about getting their first IKEA. Like children drawing up a Christmas wish-list," the program "encourages mayors to dream big and lust after buildings they don't need and can't afford."
- Birnbaum takes issue with potential hand-over of Chicago public park land for the Obama Presidential Library: UofC may see it as "an opportunity to restore an Olmsted park," but "the destruction of 22 acres of historic parkland is not the definition of restoration."
- Russell wonders whether Paris will regret pushing the opening of Nouvel's "shiny iceberg" of a concert hall to today: it "flirts with disaster." + Eyefuls of the Philharmonie de Paris.
- Shilling isn't thrilled with what's considered public access atop the Walkie Talkie: though "a visit sounds about as calming as a trip to Heathrow Airport...that shouldn't stop us claiming it for our own" (even if you can't play ball or bring your own lunch).
- Scruggs delves into a report that argues "asphalt, hardscaped streets should be counted as public space," and "found a correlation between expansive street grids and prosperity."
- Lewyn sees a parallel between "Atlas Shrugged" and the automobile lobby that "creatively used government to discourage walking and public transit."
- On a brighter note, the Knight Cities Challenge Finalists include "126 big-dreaming, city-changing ideas."
- Sokol checks in with a number of design-oriented nonprofits and foundations to find out what their best contributions to the built environment were last year.
- Three new NEA reports on the arts offer some "surprising findings" re: who participates and why, as well as the arts as an economic engine.
- Kolbert spends some serious time with Piano in Rome to find out why he handed over his Senatorial office and government salary "to six much younger architects and asked them to come up with ways to improve the often run-down neighborhoods" that ring Italy's major cities: "civic duty."
- Perrotet wanders Moscow's Gorky Park with Koolhaas and Zhukova and gets the skinny on their plans for the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art.
- Bevan is heartened by London architects "rising to the challenge" of designing affordable housing - too bad "innovation seems to be the last thing the Government is after."
- Los Angeles's newest affordable housing project for low-income and formerly homeless senior residents is designed "to increase neighbor interaction through a community garden and a social front porch that connects the property to the street front."
- GSD urban planning professor Forsyth offers "insight into common traits of the best educational programs in planning."
- We are so saddened by the news that Swanke Hayden Connell has filed for bankruptcy - because "it is unable to collect more than \$2 million from an assignment in Russia."
- Call for entries: Applications for Graham Foundation's 2015 Grants to Organizations to develop explorations about architecture and its role in the arts, culture, and society.

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-- "Friedensreich Hundertwasser - 1928-2000" by Wieland Schmied: an inspirational portrait of one of the most prolific artists of the 20th century...his sustainable principles are highly compelling and should warrant consideration by architects today.
-- What's On? Architectural Exhibitions, January 2015 edition: Russian avant-garde, Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin; Studio Mumbai, Bordeaux; Highrise City Frankfurt, DAM; "Architecture in Uniform," MAXXI, Rome; National Building Museum, Washington, DC; "After Hurricane Sandy - Rebuild by Design," Aedes am Pfefferberg, Berlin

The Failures of Architecture Criticism: Architects, historians, and critics alike tend to hold up monuments to wealth and power as the sole canon of great buildings, and they ignore inspired vernacular traditions...Ironically, while Betsky mocks Bingler and Pedersen for their "hoary trope of 'anti-elitist' architecture criticism," the architect-as-artist is the hoariest of tropes. Yet, it continues to rule the profession. By Lance Hosey- [Huffington Post](#)

Fear and loathing in our cities: Should architects and planners be defending us from terrorists: As cities and their iconic buildings become the focus for these ideological attacks the role of the built environment professional has expanded...Are we preventing terrorism with this urbanism of suspicion - or enabling it? I don't have an answer...But it is a situation that could shape us - if we don't shape it first. By Eleanor Jolliffe- [BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

Being safe doesn't mean it has to be ugly: ...bunker-like government buildings off-limits to the public do little or nothing to create the lively walkable places...violate the basic tenet of what planners today call place-making...Huge off-limits government projects...in the midst of a redeveloping district hurts, rather than helps, the revitalization effort...It's a puzzle that the architectural profession needs to solve. By John Gallagher -- [SmithGroupJJR; KieranTimberlake- Detroit Free Press](#)

Mons, Belgium: it's the European Capital of Culture - but locals just want to go to Ikea: Only one of the new buildings is ready, its centerpiece artwork had to be dismantled...and people are more excited about getting their first Ikea...Like children drawing up a Christmas wish-list, it encourages mayors to dream big and lust after buildings they don't need and can't afford... By Oliver Wainwright -- [Arne Quinze; Santiago Calatrava; Daniel Libeskind \[images\]- Guardian \(UK\)](#)

Will Part of Chicago's Historic Washington Park Be Confiscated for the Obama Presidential Library? University of Chicago has two proposals on the table, and both would require...at least 20 acres of parkland designed by...Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. and Calvert Vaux...university viewed the library as an opportunity to restore an Olmsted park...The destruction of 22 acres of historic parkland...is not the definition of restoration... By Charles A. Birnbaum/[The Cultural Landscape Foundation \(TCLF\)- Huffington Post](#)

Paris Phil May Regret Rushed Opening; Jean Nouvel's Philharmonie de Paris concert hall has been rushed to a January 14 opening...rises like a shiny iceberg of mottled metal and rippling polished stainless steel in the Parc de la

Villette...But the rushed opening flirts with disaster. There's already considerable criticism... By James S. Russell -- Harold Marshall/Marshall Day; Yasuhisa Toyota/Nagata Acoustics - Architectural Record

Philharmonie de Paris: in pictures: ...the latest architectural jewel to be unveiled in the French capital. -- Jean Nouvel; Harold Marshall; Yasuhisa Toyota [images]- Telegraph (UK)

If you love green urban spaces, shout it from the rooftops: The Sky Garden might be tricky to get into, but that shouldn't stop us claiming it for our own: ...developers are increasingly obliged to include some kind of community benefit...Which brings us to Britain's newest "public park"...on the roof of 20 Fenchurch St... "Walkie Talkie"...But the thing about such public spaces is that we can hardly complain about losing them if we don't make the effort to use them. By Jane Shilling -- Rafael Viñoly- Telegraph (UK)

How Much Public Space Does a City Need? When we think about public space, we picture parks and greenways, but overlook the largest single public space asset in any city's rolls: streets...researchers at UN-Habitat's Global Urban Observatories Unit...argue that asphalt, hardscaped streets should be counted as public space...found a correlation between expansive street grids and prosperity. By Greg Scruggs -- Joan Clos- Next City (formerly Next American City)

Atlas Sprawled: One obstacle to laissez-faire capitalism is capitalists' ability to use government to favor one competitor over another; the history of American street design provides an example...the automobile lobby creatively used government to discourage walking and public transit. By Michael Lewyn- PLANetizen

Knight Cities Challenge Finalists: ...126 big-dreaming, city-changing ideas...that would benefit Knight Foundation's 26 target communities...looking for a slice of funding from the \$5 million total prize. - Next City (formerly Next American City)

2014's Best in Benefaction: Design-oriented nonprofits and foundations choose their best contributions to the built environment last year. By David Sokol -- Knight Foundation; Design Trust for Public Space; ArtPlace America; Graham Foundation; Storefront for Art and Architecture; Van Alen Institute; World Monuments Fund; National Trust for Historic Preservation [images]- Architectural Record

Surprising Findings in Three New NEA Reports on the Arts: Exploration into who participates and why, as well as the arts as an economic engine [link to reports]- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

Civic Duty: As soon as Renzo Piano became a senator, he handed over the office, along with his government salary, to six much younger architects and asked them to come up with ways to improve...the often run-down neighborhoods that ring Rome and Italy's other major cities..."the desire for change is there. There is always, even in the most difficult periphery, something good, and that is what you have to find, to bring up." By Elizabeth Kolbert- New Yorker

Rem Koolhaas and Dasha Zhukova Build a Moscow Museum: ...launching an ambitious campaign to connect Moscow to the international art world: ...\$2 billion renovation...transformed Gorky Park overnight into an Oz-like retreat...most exciting attraction in this cosmopolitan Arcadia: the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art...housed in a temporary site...a stunning prefabricated pavilion designed by Shigeru Ban... By Tony Perrottet [images]- Wall Street Journal

Designs for (affordable) living in London: With its booming population, London desperately needs new types of low cost housing — and the city's architects are rising to the challenge: But innovation seems to be the last thing the Government is after. By Robert Bevan -- Patel Taylor; Peter Barber; Sergison Bates; Levitt Bernstein; Henley Halebrown Rorrison; Studio Weave; Mæe Architects; 5th Studio; Sarah Wigglesworth; Dallas Pierce Quintero; Haworth Tompkins- Evening Standard (UK)

Affordable Housing In High Demand: The Killefer Flammang Architects-designed Janet L. Witkin Center...in West Hollywood...will serve local low-income and formerly homeless senior residents...design is also intended to increase neighbor interaction through a year-round community garden and a social front porch that connects the property to the street front. - GlobeSt.com

What Makes a Great Planning Program? ...insight into common traits of the best educational programs in planning: Most are variations on engaging core ethical concerns in planning, learning from diversity, playing well with others, and keeping a focus on important issues and the long term. By Ann Forsyth/Harvard Graduate School of Design- PLANetizen

Swanke Hayden Connell Files for Bankruptcy: ...firm, known for its work on the Fifth Avenue Trump Tower in Manhattan and restoring the Statue of Liberty in the 1980s, claims it is unable to collect more than \$2 million from an assignment in Russia. - Architect Magazine

Call for entries: Applications for 2015 Grants to Organizations: ...to foster the development and exchange of diverse and challenging ideas about architecture and its role in the arts, culture, and society; deadline: February 25- Graham Foundation

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