

Today's News - Monday, April 6, 2015

- A rather grumpy news day to start the week: Chipperfield (channeling Nouvel!?) wants his name removed from his Museum of Culture in Milan: the bad flooring makes it "a museum of horrors" - it's "a pathetic end to 15 years of work" (client says he was "impossible to please").
- Bentley weighs in on the Obama Library vs. Chicago Parks debate: "Mayor Emanuel may have delivered on his promise to 'move heaven and earth' in pursuit of the library too literally."
- A Denver architect bemoans the "banality" of buildings being built in the city's urban core: it's time "to pause and consider whether there might be more appealing, innovative approaches - before it's too late" (he offers examples).
- Davies ponders the changes in Brisbane over the last 30 years: it "has changed enormously - but it's less clear if it's become a more interesting and distinctive place."
- Wainwright minces no words about what he thinks of the U.K.'s new housing design guide that favors "tiny, unlivable, backward-looking homes" with no mention of interior space standards: the focus is "solely on what a house should look like from the street, concerned that it should be pleasing to the nostalgic eye."
- Attorney Michael Sussman takes Orange County to court over demolition plan for Rudolph's government center in Goshen, NY, claiming legislators are "now are poised to unnecessarily expend tens of millions of dollars to destroy the integrity and primary architectural features of an iconic building."
- Townsend delves deep into London's Garden Bridge brouhaha, with critics claiming it would be "a misuse of funds": it "was projected as a wondrous green oasis floating above the Thames," but many are not convinced: "This gift horse has got some fairly dodgy teeth."
- Gunther offers a very interesting take on the two different approaches to expansion by the Cooper Hewitt and the Frick Collection by considering the "historical context of the house museum typology when examining this contrast in alternative design solutions and the ways reuse can succeed."
- Brussat at his brutal best re: two upcoming tomes about Corbu that "focus on his totalitarian bent - against the backdrop of a Corbu protectorate in full drool."
- On much brighter notes: Moore gives Haworth Tompkins a standing ovation for its makeover of Lasdun's National Theatre, now "looking better than ever. Their task has been to let it breathe again."
- Lange cheers Mecanoo/Sasaki's Bolling Municipal Building in Roxbury, MA, "a long architectural saga with an unexpected happy ending. Touring it felt both bracing and inspiring, proof that letting architects solve urban problems with strategy and taste creates richer, more open cityscapes."
- Stephens looks into Sacramento's downtown redevelopment, starting with the renovation of "one of the last of the great pre-Depression urban rail depots that almost did not survive the 20th century."
- Brake finds Joy's Princeton train station to be a joy: "There is something satisfying about a great architect taking on the utterly mundane - small, everyday buildings can attain a higher public purpose."
- Capps really likes the ULI's plan to save Houston's Astrodome, which is "good news for fans of the Eighth Wonder of the World. Here's the bad news: Bold, creative, and determined leadership comes at a cost."
- Big changes for AIA/ALA and the Center for Architecture as Rick Bell unexpectedly resigns, and former NYC commish of design and construction David Burney steps in as interim executive director (sad/happy news for us).
- Q&A with Nigerian Institute of Architects President Brimmo re: "how the institute plans to revolutionize the architecture profession in Nigeria" (raising awareness about "quacks" is one item on his agenda).
- Eye-fuls of the 2015 AIA/ALA Library Building Awards winners (great presentation!).
- Harvard GSD names three finalists for the 2015 Wheelwright Prize, a \$100,000 traveling fellowship.
- Call for entries: 2016 Rolex Awards for Enterprise is "seeking visionaries to advance human knowledge and well-being + Society of Architectural Historians \$50,000 H. Allen Brooks Travelling Fellowship."

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[David Chipperfield hits the roof about his Milan Museum of Culture's floor: ..."floor war"...has led \[him\]...to demand that his name be removed from the project...the laying of stone of poor quality" had transformed the building into "a museum of horrors," and that it amounted to "a pathetic end to 15 years of work"...Milan's councillor for culture...saying the British architect had been unreasonable and impossible to please... - Independent \(UK\)](#)

[Editorial> Parks for Presidents? As decision looms, Obama Library plans threaten public space in Chicago: Mayor Emanuel may have delivered on his promise to "move heaven and earth" in pursuit of the library too literally...It's too late for the Obama Foundation to avoid politicizing the president's library. But the project's legacy for public space is still unwritten. By Chris Bentley- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Denver is a great city, so why the bad buildings? ...banality has begun to quietly replace the well-designed historic buildings that once populated our urban core. Meaningless, uninspiring structures...seem to be the zeitgeist of the day...This is the time...to pause and consider whether there might be more appealing, innovative approaches to building a timeless, dynamic residential urban core before it's too late. By Jeffrey Sheppard/Roth Sheppard Architects -- BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group; David Baker Architects; Jinhee Park/John Hong/SsD - Denver Post](#)

[From Brisbland to Brisvegas: but is it a more interesting place? ...Brisbane has changed enormously over the last 20-30 years...but it's less clear if it's become a more interesting and distinctive place...used to be a city that was short on quality civic facilities and virtually devoid of any sense of positive urban design...now place a much higher value on the quality of the public realm, at least in the inner city. By Alan Davies - Crikey \(Australia\)](#)

[The Tories' new design guide backs tiny, unliveable, backward-looking homes: ...favours quaint buildings with a cottagey feel...makes no mention of space standards that could make the homes of the future generous or liveable...Such considerations are entirely absent...focus solely on what a house should look like from the street, concerned that it should be pleasing to the nostalgic eye. By Oliver Wainwright -- Quinlan Terry; Roger Scruton; Terry Farrell- Guardian \(UK\)](#)

[County sued over demolition plan: \\$74 million Orange County Government Center plan squanders money needed by crucial projects: ..."now are poised to unnecessarily expend tens of millions of dollars to destroy the integrity and primary architectural features of an iconic building." -- Paul Rudolph; Clark, Patterson Lee; Gene Kaufman- The Chronicle \(Orange County, NY\)](#)

[London garden bridge plan is a misuse of funds say critics: The £175m crossing...was projected as a wondrous green oasis floating above the Thames, but opponents and locals are not convinced..."This gift horse has got some fairly dodgy teeth as far, as I can see...It needs proper scrutiny." By Mark Townsend -- Thomas Heatherwick- Observer \(UK\)](#)

[To Corb or not to Corb: Since Le Corbusier is the most revered of...modernists, attacking him is at once the most rewarding and the most perilous of strategies in the fight against modern architecture...against the backdrop of a Corbu protectorate in full drool, two books...focus on his totalitarian bent...Challenging the Corbusier hegemon is just one tactic in a strategy that can and will lead to the victory of beauty over ugliness, conservation over waste and affection over disdain. By David Brussat- Architecture Here and There](#)

The "House Museum" in Context: On the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum and the Future of the Frick: It is worth considering the historical context of the overall house museum typology when examining this contrast in alternative design solutions and the ways reuse can succeed... By Paul Gunther -- Babb, Cook & Willard (1902); Gluckman Mayner/Beyer Blinder Belle/Diller Scofidio + Renfro/Hood Design/Thinc Design/Local Projects; Davis Brody Bond; John Barrington Bayley; Russell Page; Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects; etc. - Architizer

National Theatre makeover: big round of applause for Haworth Tompkins: After eight years, £80m and extensive research on 1970s concrete, Denys Lasdun's venerable modern monument is looking better than ever...Their task has been to let it breathe again while also meeting new demands. By Rowan Moore [images]- Observer (UK)

Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building: what makes the new Boston Public Schools headquarters a model for urban redevelopment...a long architectural saga with an unexpected happy ending...a beautiful piece of architecture...an accessible model for smaller cities that need to intervene in commercial neighborhoods with a historic fabric...Touring it felt both bracing and inspiring, proof that letting architects solve urban problems with strategy and taste creates richer, more open cityscapes. By Alexandra Lange -- Mecanoo; Sasaki Associates [images]- Architect Magazine

Sacramento Revival: Train station renovation kicks off downtown redevelopment: Built in 1926 as one of the last of the great pre-Depression urban rail depots, Sacramento Valley Station, though still functioning, fell into disrepair...it almost did not survive the 20th century. By Josh Stephens -- Bliss and Faville (1926); Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Architects/ZGF; Rios Clementi Hale Studios AECOM [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Princeton Train Station: Rick Joy's design for a commuter rail station is endowed with civic importance and a sense of grace: ...a building that is of its place...its forms evoke the collegiate gothic buildings that define the campus without stooping to mere replication... There is something satisfying about a great architect taking on the utterly mundane typology of the convenience store...small, everyday buildings can attain a higher public purpose. By Alan G. Brake -- Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

The Best Plan Yet to Save Houston's Astrodome: Let's turn the "world's biggest room" into an indoor park, with trees, flowering plants, and an aquaponics research lab...Urban Land Institute report...praises the design and history of the Astrodome and offers some suggestions...Good news for fans of the Eighth Wonder of the World: ...recommends that it be restored...Here's the bad news: Bold, creative, and determined leadership comes at a cost. By Kriston Capps - CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

AIANY Names David Burney Interim Executive Director: Following the resignation of Rick Bell...Burney is an architect, urbanist, and educator, and is credited with raising architecture standards for New York's public projects through his leadership of two city agencies...- Contract magazine

"Appropriate materials positively eliminate maintenance costs": Q&A with Waheed Niyi Brimmo, President, Nigerian Institute of Architects (NIA) about challenges and probable solutions and how the institute plans to revolutionise architecture profession in Nigeria..."Our greatest challenge is the non-recognition of the roles architecture must play from design conception to project execution."- The Guardian Nigeria

2015 AIA/ALA Library Building Awards for excellence in the architectural design and planning of libraries. -- OPN Architects; designLAB architects/Austin Architects; Polk Stanley Wilcox Architects; Muñoz and Company; Newman Architects/Tymoff + Moss Architects; The Miller Hull Partnership [images]- American Institute of Architects (AIA) / American Library Association (ALA)

Harvard GSD Announces Three Finalists for the 2015 Wheelwright Prize: ...selected from a field of nearly 200 applicants, vying for the \$100,000 traveling fellowship. -- Quynh Vantu/Studio Quynh Vantu; Malkit Shoshan/Foundation for Achieving Seamless Territory (FAST); Erik L'Heureux, AIA/Pencil Office- Architect Magazine

Call for entries: 2016 Rolex Awards for Enterprise: seeking visionaries...to advance human knowledge and well-being. 10 Laureates will be chosen for their groundbreaking work in Applied Technology, Cultural Heritage, the Environment, Exploration and Discovery, and Science and Health; deadline: May 31- Rolex Awards for Enterprise

Call for entries: \$50,000 H. Allen Brooks Travelling Fellowship: will allow a recent graduate or emerging scholar to study by travel for one year; deadline: October 1- Society of Architectural Historians (SAH)



-- Atelier Peter Zumthor: His buildings stand out against their surrounding contexts, whether urban environments or natural landscapes, as statements of formal clarity. By Martin Søberg

-- Interview: Jacques Herzog: Herzog & de Meuron is one of the largest and currently, perhaps the most successful Swiss architectural practice...Q&A about his current trials and tribulations, as well as his influences and goals. By Ulf Meyer

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