

Today's News - Monday, April 20, 2015

- A day to play Piano as a cadre of critics weigh in on the new Whitney Museum of American Art (all well worth reading, and there's sure to be more):
- Goldberger: it "has a clunky exterior - like an awkward hybrid: part glass box, part big metal beast," but "the interior is fun to be in. This is a building filled with joyous moments."
- Kimmelman: "There's a generosity to the architecture, a sense of art connecting with the city and vice versa"; it "isn't a masterpiece. But it is a deft, serious achievement."
- Davidson: it is "filled with light - and contradictions - a complicated contraption, ungainly on all sides" that "aspires to be lovingly urban"; inside, it's "a wonderful place for people who get easily bored by art."
- Kennicott: "It is a ridiculously good place for a museum - it looks a bit of a jumble, but it certainly looks like New York. The experience feels like a love affair with the city."
- Saltz: "I'd say it looks like a hospital or a pharmaceutical company," but "the genericism suggests that what matters to the Whitney isn't vanity, grandeur, showboating, celebrity, or destination architecture" (or bowing to current museum "fun-house attractions" offering not much more than a "Shut up, take a selfie, keep moving").
- Schjeldahl: "form doesn't so much follow function as happily succumb to it."
- Hosey, speaking of criticism, takes issue with Betsky's swipe at Kimmelman, and reaches out to the criticati crowd to find out "what they think the defining traits of good criticism are."
- EyeFuls of the 8 shortlisted designs in Sorkin's The Next Helsinki (a.k.a. anti-Guggenheim Helsinki) competition (there's sure to be lots of criticism of these, too).
- Nadel, the GSA's Shepherd, and Luebke weigh in on the Oklahoma City bombing 20 years later: it was a "wake-up call" for government security, but "has the government now gone too far in the other direction? The debate over security versus openness and aesthetics is "the issue of the decade."
- Wainwright is intrigued by some surprising finds in the Glasgow School of Art restoration, but "will the replica leave it looking like a cheap kitchen? The eyes of the world are watching."
- Dunlop takes issue with Dittmar's case for restoring the Mac: "Replication is never the right thing to do. The present danger is pastiche at best or Mockintosh at worst."
- PagePark's Park re: criticism of rebuilding the Mac: "I understand your anger. But..."
- Berg offers a very thoughtful take re: the future of Rudolph's Orange County Government Center that "has come to represent the contentiousness of an entire genre of architecture," putting the spotlight on whether we should "demolish or cherish Brutalist architecture."
- Moore parses London Mayor Boris's legacy: "he's "produced a surprising mix of spectacular and workaday projects - along with some famous follies" ("eyesores" and "thoughtful wonkery" included).
- Murphy muses on some "outlandish plans for London that almost got built" (some real doozies!).
- Gunther ponders the gargantuan New York Wheel actually breaking ground on Staten Island, "after surviving the 10 plagues of delay - from hurricanes to the storms of local politics."
- Nouvel loses his court case claiming his Philharmonie de Paris had been "martyred": the "court says he failed to provide the right documents."
- A cautionary tale: California expands liability for architects to third-party condo buyers: "it is imperative that architects clearly define their scope of liability up front through carefully crafted contracts that anticipate such liability."
- Q&A with Salingaros re: sustainable development and his definition of "Biourbanism."
- EyeFuls of the 4th Global Holcim Awards for Sustainable Construction: a public park in Medellin, a community library Sri Lank, and Manhattan's The Dryline share a healthy purse.

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[\\$422 Million Later, the New Whitney Is Filled With Surprises: ...has a clunky exterior, but when visitors step inside, much is forgiven: ...conventionally beautiful it is not. I don't know that it is so unconventionally beautiful, either...seems like an awkward hybrid: part glass box, part big metal beast...But do I like this Whitney? I like it a lot...the interior is fun to be in...This is a building filled with joyous moments. By Paul Goldberger -- Marcel Breuer; Renzo Piano- Vanity Fair](#)

[A New Whitney: No longer a fortress in an uneasy city...opens itself up to a changed New York, a glittery emblem signaling a definitive shift in the city's social geography...There's a generosity to the architecture, a sense of art connecting with the city and vice versa...The new museum isn't a masterpiece. But it is a deft, serious achievement...clearly evolved from the inside out, a servant to pragmatism and a few zoning anomalies. By Michael Kimmelman -- Renzo Piano \[images\]- New York Times](#)

[Renzo Piano's New Whitney Is Filled With Light - and Contradictions: The architect mistakes virtue for personality...a complicated contraption, ungainly on all sides...There's nothing seamless about this awkward kit of protruding parts and tilting surfaces...a machine for the aesthetic-industrial complex...aspires to be lovingly urban...a wonderful place for people who get easily bored by art. By Justin Davidson \[images\]- New York Magazine](#)

[At the Whitney, a new structure forges a different relationship with the city: It reminds one of a fishing weir: The flow of humanity off the High Line is neatly sucked into the cultural orbit of the Whitney...It is a ridiculously good place for a museum...it looks a bit of a jumble, but it certainly looks like New York...The experience feels like a love affair with the city...Oh yes, and what is all that stuff behind you? It's called art...beautifully presented...if you can forget the city long enough to really see it. By Philip Kennicott -- Marcel Breuer; Michael Graves; Rem Koolhaas; Renzo Piano- Washington Post](#)

[The New New Museum: The Whitney May Have Just Won New York's Museum Arms Race: ...might just solve the impossible problem of contemporary art...The audacity of the building shows that, yes, the Whitney will survive the new era...I don't care what it looks like. It's "likable enough"...I'd say it looks like a hospital or a pharmaceutical company...the genericism suggests that what matters to the Whitney isn't vanity, grandeur, showboating, celebrity, or destination architecture - it's what goes on under its auspices. By Jerry Saltz- New York Magazine](#)

[New York Odyssey: The Whitney reestablishes itself downtown: ...a lurching aggregate of shapes in striated steel cladding and glass...It's so confusing that, pretty soon, I gave up looking at it...cost \\$422 million, and there's plenty of evidence of how it was spent...form doesn't so much follow function as happily succumb to it...makes me surprisingly hopeful for the near future of art in New York. By Peter Schjeldahl -- Renzo Piano- New Yorker](#)

[The 7 Lamps of Architecture Criticism: What is the "serious criticism" of architecture? This is a vital topic, since architecture critics often shape public opinion as much as architects themselves do, if not more so. I asked a range of respected writers what they think the defining traits of good criticism are. By Lance Hosey/RTKL -- Aaron Betsky; Michael Kimmelman; Blair Kamin; Susan Szenasy; Cathy Lang Ho; Alexandra Lange; Cathleen McGuigan; John King; Michael Sorkin; Robert Ivy; Karrie Jacobs; Paul Goldberger- Huffington Post](#)

[Visions for The Next Helsinki: of 217 proposals from more than 40 countries...a shortlist of eight entries that together reflect the variety and depth of the submissions. -- Michael Sorkin; Pedro Carrasco Zanini Sánchez/Lucía Gutierrez Vazquez; Thomas Kong/Susan Seah; Marco Giovannone; draftworks architects; Mathilde Lull/François Perrier; Miija Hartikainen; Tomáš Boroš/Juraj Koban; Constantinos Marcou/Costas Nicolaiou/Stavros Marcou \[images\]- The Next Helsinki](#)

[Oklahoma City Bombing A 'Wake-Up Call' For Government Security: 20 years ago, a truck bomb exploded next to the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building..."we've gotten more specific about the minimum security requirements"...But has the government](#)

now gone too far in the other direction? ...the debate over security versus openness and aesthetics "the issue of the decade." -  
- Barbara Nadel; Les Shepherd/General Services Administration/GSA; Thomas Luebke- National Public Radio (NPR)

Things we found in the fire: Glasgow School of Art's restoration brings surprises: From weird relics to oak columns made of cheap pine, the rebuilding of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's library has unearthed some secrets. But will the replica leave it looking like a cheap kitchen? The eyes of the world are watching...However the famous library is rebuilt, will it ever be more than a shrine to the ghost of Mackintosh? By Oliver Wainwright -- Page|Park Architects; Alan Dunlop; Julian Harrap- Guardian (UK)

Replication is never the right thing to do: As experts gather in Glasgow to discuss the future of the Mac, Alan Dunlop takes issue with Hank Dittmar's case for restoration: The present danger is pastiche at best or Mockintosh at worst...Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art has strength and integrity and could sustain a radical plan for a new library. This proposed replication is demeaning to his memory as master innovator... - BD/Building Design (UK)

I understand your anger, Mac rebuild architect tells opponents: "We have the plans so why wouldn't you reconstruct?" says Brian Park: ...he welcomed the debate with architects who feel a modern intervention in the burnt-out space would be more in keeping with the innovative spirit of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. But... -- Charles Rennie Mackintosh; Page|Park- BD/Building Design (UK)

Should We Demolish Or Cherish Brutalist Architecture? Opinion is sharply divided on the future of the Orange County Government Center, in Goshen, NY...has come to represent the contentiousness of an entire genre of architecture. By Nate Berg -- Paul Rudolph; Bertrand Goldberg; John M. Johansen; Gene Kaufman/Gwathmey Siegel Kaufman; John Shreve Arbuckle/DOCOMOMO [images]- The Daily Beast

What will Boris Johnson's legacy to London be? ...has produced a surprising mix of spectacular and workaday projects -- along with some famous follies...campaigning on the promise not to create a Dubai-on-Thames is now in charge of a city where 263 towers...are in the pipeline, many of them Dubai-esque...most of wretched quality and limited usefulness...London Housing Design Guide...is an important gift to the future. By Rowan Moore- Observer (UK)

King's Cross airport? The outlandish plans for London that almost got built: From a rival to the Eiffel Tower that would have dwarfed the Shard, to a circular airport perched over King's Cross station...some ill-fated projects that could have transformed the capital. By Douglas Murphy -- Charles Glover; Geoffrey Jellicoe, Ove Arup and Edward Mills; Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners; Cedric Price [images]- Guardian (UK)

New York Finally Takes the Wheel: ...after surviving the 10 plagues of delay - from hurricanes to the storms of local politics - ground [was] broken for the New York Wheel at the St. George tip of northern Staten Island...a world record-setting 630 feet... By Paul Gunther -- Starneth; Perkins Eastman/EEK Architects; M. Paul Friedberg and Partners [images]- Architizer

Jean Nouvel loses court case claiming his latest Paris concert hall design had been 'sabotaged': ...loses legal battle to force changes to £280 million Philharmonie de Paris concert hall over claims it had been "martyred" after court says he failed to provide the right documents.- Telegraph (UK)

California Expands Liability for Architects - Duty of Care Owed to Third-Party Condo Buyers: ...underscores the importance for architects to understand and define their role on a construction project...it is imperative that architects clearly define their scope of liability up front through carefully crafted contracts that anticipate such liability. -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)- National Law Review

Q&A: Nikos Salingaros On A Sustainable Developmental Model: How can we expect a coal- and oil-free energy sector for emerging economies if implementing renewable assets are unaffordable? "Perhaps you are looking at the wrong perspective"...Please explain Biourbanism..."uses human physiological and psychological responses to design the built environment."- archiDATUM / Architecture in Africa (Kenya)

4th Global Holcim Awards for Sustainable Construction have been decided -- the trophies and \$350,000 prize money go to projects in Colombia, Sri Lanka and the USA: ...a public park in Medellín...a community library...to reintegrate soldiers into post-war Sri Lankan society...The Dryline integrated flood protection system to address the vulnerability of New York City to coastal flooding. -- Mario Camargo/Luis Tombé/Colectivo720; Milinda Pathiraja/Ganga Ratnayake/Robust Architecture Workshop; BIG -- Bjarke Ingels Group/One Architecture [images]- Holcim Foundation



Interview: Enrique Norton/TEN Arquitectos: ...his recent projects and general approach to architecture..."It's a process and a lot of it is trial and error...It is not, as you say, a magical inspiration. It's not a doodle on a napkin. It's a lot of work...architecture is a group effort." By Morten Wilhelm Scholz [images]

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