

Today's News - Thursday, June 25, 2015

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tomorrow is this week's "floating" no-newsletter day - we'll be back Monday, June 29 (and apologies for late posting...those pesky tech gods - again).

- Boys Smith explains why "the very last arbiters of what we should be building are architectural prizes or design reviews. Professionals are, empirically, the very worst judges available of what people want or like" (and architectural prize criteria are "not reassuring").
- Olcayto puts it all in a nutshell: "We can't please everyone, all the time."
- Baillieu minces no words when it comes to the "out-of-touch dinosaurs" who are not helping "to convince the public that Robin Hood Gardens is worth saving - if you want to win a heritage battle, ditch the pensioner protest: social media is where you need to be."
- A rather confusing report re: Hadid's Tokyo Olympic Stadium: Japan "to push ahead with the controversial and costly main showpiece," though it "will take into account the views of experts" (like Maki's offer of an alternative design): "We have never said the Zaha plan is our final decision" (huh?).
- King finds a strong "whiff of cynical opportunism" in critics opposing Gang's San Francisco tower: "projects like this show that good design and good policy can go hand in hand."
- Wainwright reveals (exclusively) "how developers exploit flawed planning system to minimize affordable housing" - a fascinating (and totally depressing) read.
- News just broke that the Supreme Court has (unexpectedly) ruled to uphold the Fair Housing Act, but Schmidt's in-depth look at what would have happened if the court had voted differently is well worth reading.
- Jaffe digs Corner and his plans for Cleveland's Public Square: "Few people have done more in recent years to breathe life into America's dead or dying public spaces."
- Pagliaccol praises "the newly vibrant Queens Quay West" in Toronto, which "used to be an eyesore, a mean concrete jungle and a symbol of how the city had turned its back on its waterfront."
- The Getty Foundation hands out 14 more Keeping It Modern Grants to help conserve some amazing 20th-century architecture around the world.
- Weekend diversions:
 - Kennicott can't say enough about "Latin America in Construction": it's "everything one wants in a MoMA show: historically thorough, visually sumptuous, educational, enlightening and provocative" (though "a bittersweet reminder of what the museum used to do, was meant to do and should still be doing").
 - Ciampaglia gives (mostly) thumbs-up to "The New Rijksmuseum: Years of Metamorphosis," which tracks, in "almost excruciating detail," every "moment of celebration-turned-exasperation-turned-resignation-turned-relief" in the 10-year-long renovation project.
 - BBC's "Imagine: Frank Gehry" ponders whether he is "an architectural superstar," or, as Farrelly calls him, "the Kim Kardashian of architecture."
 - Nonko offers a great overview of MoMA PS1's Young Architects Program that has become "an unexpected haven for ambitious, bizarre designs," and highlights "two of the most ambitious projects" since the focus has shifted to promote sustainable architecture.
 - Korody's Q&A with Jaque re: his just-opened COSMO at MoMA PS1: his hope is that it "instigates progressive ways of relating to plumbing."
 - Eye-fuls of the "recycled, upcycled, and bicycled" (and oh so colorful!) Organic Growth Pavilion that just opened on Governors Island.
 - Moore cheers "Landscapes of Communism," Hatherley's "epic and insightful revelatory voyage." + In Hatherley's own words: five communist buildings that "tell a story more complex than hope/dictatorship/stagnation."
 - Jacobs finds "pure pleasure" in flipping through the pages of "30 Years of Emerging Voices" - it "rebukes the whole notion of starchitecture. What a fabulous ride."
 - Welton's "Drawing from Practice: Architects and the Meaning of Freehand" proves "that at its root, architecture is still an artistic discipline," and "holds the line for the architect's most basic drive - to physically make a mark - in its oldest, most essential form."

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[The worst building in the world awards: A massive gulf persists between the buildings that win architecture awards and those that the public prefers, suggests research by Create Streets: ...the very last arbiters of what we should be building...are architectural prizes or design reviews. Professionals are, empirically, the very worst judges available of what people want or like...A glance at the criteria of architectural prizes is not reassuring. By Nicholas Boys Smith- The Architects' Journal \(UK\)](#)

[We can't please everyone, all the time: Clients can be hard to please. So can awards panels. And the public. Nobody said architecture was easy. By Rory Olcayto -- Thomas Heatherwick; BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group; AHMM; Norman Foster; Urban Splash; Steven Holl; Zaha Hadid- The Architects' Journal \(UK\)](#)

[Architects have a long way to go to convince the public that Robin Hood Gardens is worth saving: Out-of-touch dinosaurs are not helping the cause: ...for a new generation...there's genuine puzzlement that buildings like RHG are being so carelessly lost...Nowadays, developers, politicians \(and indeed architects\) fear Twitter more than a room full of angry protestors...if you want to win a heritage battle, ditch the pensioner protest: social media is where you need to be. By Amanda Baillieu-BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

[Japan to keep stadium design despite cost, criticism: ...to push ahead with...controversial and costly main showpiece venue for the 2020 summer Olympics...Sports ministry will take into account the views of experts, including Fumihiko Maki, who says he can design a stadium that would be cheaper and faster to build and should remain profitable after the Olympics. "We have never said the Zaha plan is our final decision." -- Zaha Hadid- Free Malaysia Today](#)

[S.F. Rincon Park tower faces formidable opposition: ...opponents unfurling a long list of reasons why the idea of 391 condominiums - 140 of them priced at below-market levels - should go back to square one. But if we want a well-planned city with distinctive new buildings for all its citizens, projects like this show that good design and good policy can go hand in hand...the whiff of cynical opportunism is strong. By John King -- Jeanne Gang/Stduio Gang- San Francisco Chronicle](#)

[Revealed: how developers exploit flawed planning system to minimise affordable housing: The release of a 'viability assessment' for one of London's most high-profile developments - seen exclusively by the Guardian - sheds new light on how developers are taking advantage of planning laws to ramp up their returns. By Oliver Wainwright- Guardian \(UK\)](#)

[There Goes The Neighborhood: The Supreme Court's Threat to Fair Housing: ...a ruling that could render a pivotal enforcement tool in cases of housing discrimination - and thus equal access to housing guaranteed by the Fair Housing Act - invalid...What's at stake is the ability to challenge the pervasive discrimination that courses quietly through American housing policy, as overt racism...has been replaced by more subtly racist patterns deeply embedded in American systems of land use and finance. By Emily Schmidt- Urban Omnibus](#)

[Reclaiming the Public Square: Cleveland is the latest city to call on James Corner, the landscape architect behind New York's High Line, to revive an urban park: Few people have done more in recent years to breathe life into America's dead or dying public spaces..."The public realm in the city is the most urgent space for democracy to play out"... By Eric Jaffe -- James Corner Field Operations; LAND Studio \[images\]- CityLab \(formerly The Atlantic Cities\)](#)

[Toronto's Beautiful New Waterfront Boulevard: ...the newly vibrant Queens Quay West - a revitalization project 10 years in the making...used to be an eyesore, a mean concrete jungle and a symbol of how the city had turned its back on its waterfront...the public has craved this intervention for a long time... By Elizabeth Pagliaccol -- Adriaan Geuze/West 8; DTAH \[images\]- Azure magazine \(Canada\)](#)

The Getty Foundation Announces Second Series of Keeping It Modern Grants to Conserve 20th Century Architecture: 14 Grants Totaling Over \$1.75 Million Awarded for Important Modern Buildings around the Globe -- João Batista Vilanova Artigas/Carlos Cascaldi; Erich Mendelsohn; Charles Rennie Mackintosh; Pierre Jeanneret; Marcel Breuer; Jorge Ferreira; Walter Gropius; Gerrit Rietveld; Michel de Klerk; James Strutt; George Nakashima; Frank Lloyd Wright; Giancarlo De Carlo; Paul Rudolph [images]- Getty Foundation

MoMA and the architects of a Latin American design revolution: A brilliant exhibit...Exhibitions of architecture at MoMA are still consistently good, and a bittersweet reminder of what the museum used to do, was meant to do and should still be doing..."Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955-1980," is everything one wants in a MoMA show: historically thorough, visually sumptuous, educational, enlightening and provocative. By Philip Kennicott- Washington Post

"The New Rijksmuseum: Years of Metamorphosis": ...tracks the decade-long renovation...in almost excruciating detail...every false start, every moment of celebration-turned-exasperation-turned-resignation-turned-relief...perhaps the most exacting cinematic document of a museum renovation. And yet, at points it feels incomplete...attention pulled in so many directions...Maybe, though, that's the only way a project the scale of a museum renovation can be represented on film... By Dante A. Ciampaglia -- Pierre Cuyppers (1885); Oeke Hoogendijk; Cruz y Ortiz arquitectos; Jean-Michel Wilmotte- Architectural Record

"Imagine: Frank Gehry," BBC1 - TV review: An architectural superstar or "the Kim Kardashian of architecture"? The most telling part of this 75-minute documentary was the views of the builders themselves. -- Elizabeth Farrelly- Independent (UK)

How One NYC Museum Sparks Architects' Most Radical Work: MoMA PS1 courtyard has become an unexpected haven for ambitious, bizarre designs of the kind that many architects never get the chance to create...COSMO and Hy-Fi...two of the most ambitious projects the program has selected in recent years, as its focus has shifted to designs that promote sustainable architecture. By Emily Nonko -- Pedro Gadanho; Andrés Jaque/Office for Political Innovation; David Benjamin/The Living; WORK Architecture Company/WORKac; HWKN; CODA [images]- Curbed

As COSMO gets ready to 'Warm Up,' we sit down with Andrés Jaque of the Office for Political Innovation: MoMA PS1 Young Architect's Program is a highly-visible event...How would you like COSMO to be read from afar? ..."had a great impact online, but for us the challenge is to make sure that energy and that interactive capital is mobilized by a relevant discussion, that instigates progressive ways of relating to plumbing." By Nicholas Korody [images]- Archinect

Izaskun Chinchilla Architects' Organic Growth Pavilion Opens on Governors Island: ...recycled, upcycled, and bicycled...One of two winners of the "City of Dreams" pavilion competition... [images]- ArchDaily

"Landscapes of Communism": flights of fancy in an age of revolution: Owen Hatherley goes in search of socialism via an epic and insightful study of Eastern bloc architecture...a revelatory voyage into fantastical domains made more so by the fact that they were often enormous forms of propaganda...Sometimes the results achieved unexpected marvels, sometimes not. By Rowan Moore- Observer (UK)

Palaces for the people: five communist buildings: Beyond the stereotype...these structures inspired by the communist project are often surprising as well as extraordinary...tell a story more complex than hope/dictatorship/stagnation. By Owen Hatherley, "Landscapes of Communism" -- Konstantin Melnikov; Vladimir Meduna; Wojciech Pietrzyk; Tamara Chelikovska and Mykola Alyoshkin; Gunter Stahn [images]- Guardian (UK)

Revisiting 3 Decades of the Architectural League's Emerging Voices: ...the world is full of architects...most of them are not celebrities...Which is why I found "30 Years of Emerging Voices" so refreshing...rebukes the whole notion of starchitecture...I would suggest flipping through the book for pure pleasure. What a fabulous ride...if you approach the book...ithout an ax to grind, you'll discover a discipline that is remarkably non-elitist and bountiful. By Karie Jacobs -- Anne Rieselbach [images]- Architect Magazine

"Drawing from Practice: Architects and the Meaning of Freehand" explores the role of hand-drawing in an age of digital design: J. Michael Welton talked to 26 high-profile firms...The conversations prove that at its root, architecture is still an artistic discipline...the real takeaway is...designers should feel liberated to use any and all available tools to deliver a compelling solution...holds the line for the architect's most basic drive - to physically make a mark - in its oldest, most essential form. By Jon Leon- Indy Week (North Carolina)

A Conversation with HOK's Kenneth Drucker re: Architect-US Professional Career Training Program: The design principal of HOK's New York City office discusses the benefits of participating in the program for both U.S.-based firms and young international architects. - ArchNewsNow.com



"Snøhetta - World Architecture" at the Danish Architecture Centre in Copenhagen: ...gives a unique insight to the talented people, crazy projects and the alternative thinking that have gained this Norwegian architecture firm worldwide fame...inviting you to step into Snøhetta's office, workshops and universe. June 18 - September 27 [images]

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