

Today's News - Monday, March 19, 2012

- ArcSpace offers eyefuls of a School of Music in Lisbon.
- Driehaus (yes, that Driehaus) says "it isn't too late to get the Eisenhower memorial right" and explains the "precedent for reversing such a flawed selection process."
- The must-read of the day: an in-depth and fascinating look at what life is really like for young foreign architects flocking to China for work: while it may seem like everything is a chance to "think big," the reality can be quite different: "For all the lip service given to creativity, too often the results are cookie-cutter."
- King looks into the Plan Bay Area's aim to grow without sprawl: housing advocates want denser growth while critics argue the opposite.
- The same debate is going on in Canada as well: while "housing density pundits" argue for compact neighborhoods "filled with renters huddled together in a hip and cool downtown," there seems to be "a cultural shift" with multi-generational single-home demand rising.
- Benfield minces no words about why he considers Apple's new campus design "is bad for urban America": it gets away with "violating even the most basic tenets of smart growth and walkability...Yes, it will be iconic, assuming you think a building shaped like a whitewall motorcycle tire is iconic, but..."
- Brew's "sustainability and affordability buttons" were pushed when he discovered how costly Solar Decathlon model homes cost, so plans are afoot to launch an RMI competition where the entries would be permanent, affordable homes built where they're actually needed.
- Pearman gives (mostly) thumbs-up to the new King's Cross station concourse, but what truly has him cheering is what's going on in the area around it: "for once all this has not been a free-for-all but by British standards a painstakingly planned process over many years with a good roster of architects."
- Snohetta is bringing its "architecture of engagement" to Oman's capital "as part of a comprehensive urban facelift of the city."
- Doig is a bit disturbed by the current trend for starchitect-designed "ultra-mod" parks that, "at times, scrub away any sense of nature or versatility."
- Grading five projects attempting to achieve their own "High Line Effect."
- It looks like plans to demolish Robin Hood Gardens is a done deal, leaving preservationists bitterly disappointed.
- In Sarasota, "no one wants to repeat the Riverview High debacle" as the fate of another Rudolph-designed high school awaits its fate.
- Dvir tries to divine the future of "an outstanding icon of Modernist design" in Tel Aviv.
- Brussat has high praise for Watkin, "the first to take an ax to modern architecture's leading principle - historicism."
- Team Canada announces 18 winners who will head to the Venice Biennale 2012.
- Call for entries: Landscape, Architecture & Wine International Student Design Competition.

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[Carrilho da Graça architects: School of Music, Polytechnic Institute/Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal](#)

It isn't too late to get the Eisenhower memorial right: ...architect [chosen] from a short list of predictable names, disregarding a tradition of designing national memorials through open design competitions...a bureaucratic procedure, rather than a public process...the Design Excellence Program is profoundly unsuited to memorial design...Fortunately, we have a precedent for reversing such a flawed selection process. By Richard H. Driehaus -- Frank Gehry - Washington Post

Building the American Dream in China: For young architects who would rather not wait on tables, there is still a place to go: ...international architects are free to think big, to experiment...All at a frantic pace...most foreign architects in China are designing...projects in which creativity is in constant tension with the bottom line...For all the lip service given to creativity, too often the results are cookie-cutter... -- Daniel Gillen/Ma Yansong/MAD Architects; Herzog & de Meuron; Rem Koolhaas/OMA; Gensler; Cannon Design; Manuel Sanchez-Vera; Adam Mayer; Wang Shu; Zaha Hadid; Urban Hybrid Architecture; Daan Roggeveen [slide show] - New York Times

Plan Bay Area envisions growth without sprawl: ...latest attempt to encourage local governments to accept higher-density growth as part of an effort to create communities where jobs, housing, shopping and recreational space all are within convenient reach...critics...argued the opposite, that future workers and their families will want...single-family subdivisions...Housing advocates, by contrast, want...even denser growth... By John King - San Francisco Chronicle

Op-Ed: Multi-generational housing demand rising: ...many advisers to the housing industry...would have us believe that the new demographic preference for housing lays in compact neighbourhoods filled with renters huddled together in a hip and cool downtown lifestyle...What we are seeing now is a cultural shift...How to meet the needs of aging parents and how to address the underemployment of adult children are issues being overlooked by housing density pundits. - Regina Leader-Post (Canada)

Why Apple's New Campus Is Bad for Urban America: ...betting that the company is cool enough to get away with violating even the most basic tenets of smart growth and walkability in the sprawling, car-dependent design of its new headquarters...Yes, it will be iconic, assuming you think a building shaped like a whitewall motorcycle tire is iconic, but... By Kaid Benfield -- Foster + Partners [images, links] - The Atlantic Cities

Imagine a New Kind of Housing Competition to Help Meet a Growing Need: While I have always been a fan of the Solar Decathlon, my sustainability and affordability buttons were being pushed. I had no idea that it cost that much...began imagining a new kind of housing competition, one resulting in permanent homes, at truly affordable price points, in cities around the country...anticipating a September 2012 formal launch of the RMI competition among schools... By James Scott Brew, AIA - Rocky Mountain Institute

Vaulting Ambition: the £547 million King's Cross station concourse: For once all this has not been a free-for-all but by British standards a painstakingly planned process over many years...with a good roster of architects...all a huge building site now but you have to track back...what was this place like before?...It's not perfect, but it succeeds. King's Cross breathes again. By Hugh Pearman -- Dixon Jones; Stanton Williams; John McAslan and Partners; Arup [images] - HughPearman.com (UK)

'Architecture of engagement' to lift Al Khuwair: ...one of over a dozen schemes...in various parts of Muscat as part of a comprehensive urban facelift of the city...flagship project, meanwhile — the Muttrah Fish Market Redevelopment — is making excellent headway. -- Snohetta - Oman Daily Observer

New and improved parks — now with no nature: Parks keep getting fancier -- amphitheatres, geodesic domes, starchitect designs. What's wrong with natural beauty? The modern ethos that cities should provide an "experience" at every turn has led to ultra-mod park designs that, at times, scrub away any sense of nature or versatility. By Will Doig -- Knute Berger; Ryan Gravel; Mark Hinschaw; West 8 [links] - Salon

In Search of the "High Line Effect": Grading 5 Attempts to Replicate the Magic of NYC's Postindustrial Park -- ARUP/Ross

[Barney Architects/Michael Van Valkenburgh; Gensler; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Xu Bing Studio; Ramsey Architecture and Design \[slide show\]- Artinfo](#)

[Council backs contentious Robin Hood Gardens plan: ...unanimously approved Horden Cherry Lee and Aedas' controversial £500 million project...will see the demolition of the 1970s Alison and Peter Smithson-designed housing estate as part of the second phase...news was met with 'bitter disappointment' by the Twentieth Century Society... \[images\]- The Architects' Journal \(UK\)](#)

[Sarasota High School plan worries architects: No one wants to repeat the Riverview High debacle...Sarasota Architectural Foundation is determined to get it right this time...history has been underscored by the sound of bulldozers and jackhammers. The SAF wants to put a stop to it. -- Paul Rudolph; Tim Seibert; Carl Abbott; John Howey; Joe King; Marty Hylton - Herald- Tribune \(Florida\)](#)

[A building under wraps: Once an outstanding icon of Modernist design, Beit Egged in Tel Aviv is now partly covered by a giant billboard - and could eventually be swallowed up in a plan for Israel's tallest skyscraper...The question is: Who should be responsible for the future of an outstanding example of 1960s Modernist architecture that became an icon? By Noam Dvir -- Shulamit Nadler/Michael Nadler/Shmuel Bixson \(1964\); Ari Goshen Architects - Ha'aretz \(Israel\)](#)

[Prof. David Watkin takes an ax to 'historicism'...modern architecture's leading principle which states that genuine architecture must embody the spirit of its age..."Morality & Architecture Revisited"...analytical technique is to pit Pevsner vs. Pevsner in a sort of circular firing squad of suicidal quotations. By David Brussat - Providence Journal \(Rhode Island\)](#)

[Architecture 'Team Canada' Announced for Venice Biennale 2012: 18 winners were selected out of 26 finalists -- Jae-Sung Chon + 5468796 Architecture \[link to images, info\]- Migrating Landscapes](#)

[Call for entries: Landscape, Architecture & Wine International Student Design Competition: create innovative ideas for the increasingly common strategy of opening wineries and their immediate surroundings to tourism; cash prizes; earlybird registration \(save money!\); April 13; submission deadline: July 2 - Arquideas \(Spain\)](#)

[Book Review: Laboratory Architecture for Observing Nature at Play: Books on Luis Barragan's house and BNIM's Omega Center for Sustainable Living reveal how transparently daring designs teach Nature's processes. By Norman Weinstein - ArchNewsNow](#)

[You Survived: Part 3: Operations, Management, Business Development, Practice: Turn off the auto-pilot and engage: Ideas and tips to foster a thriving practice in 2012. By Michael S. Bernard, AIA, and Nancy Kleppel, Assoc. AIA - ArchNewsNow](#)

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