

Today's News - Wednesday, March 21, 2012

- Memorial mania: Kennicott and The Dirt report on yesterday's Congressional hearing which heard calls for a redesign and/or an open competition for the Eisenhower Memorial, references to missile silos and death camps, and the GSA defending its Design Excellence program (there was "lots of public review and comment" (never mind the \$16 million that's already been spent) + AN offers a good overview - including NCAS's "war on Gehry" and its 153-page report "attacking the design as a 'travesty' and a 'Happy McMonument.'"
- Hawthorne takes on "rethinking memorials in aftermath of Japan tsunami": "found memorials" all over the Tohoku region take the risk of losing "some of their strange and surprising visual power. But given how overpriced and underwhelming so many traditional memorials have turned out to be in recent years, that may be a risk worth taking."
- Miyamoto proposes a "Fukushima No. 1 Nuclear Power Plant Shrine" with giant shrine-style thatched roofs over each of the crippled reactor buildings - "not all the feedback has been positive."
- Karni parses "the folly" of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum: "costs might have faded from memory were it not for the fact that, more than 10 years after the attacks and hundreds of millions later, there's still no 9/11 Museum."
- To lighten things up a bit: there's now a 60-foot-tall stainless-steel monument to the Burj Khalifa (just what Dubai needed).
- Kamin on the "promise and perils" that await Corner and his team with his Navy Pier win: "It will be fascinating - or excruciating - to see how this drama plays out."
- A very interesting analysis of Apple and Google "mothership" HQs: "Google would be wise to listen to" criticism of Apple plans and "bring its designs firmly back to earth."
- Shuttleworth predicts Piano's Shard "will be torn down and replaced with an even taller tower within a few years" (sounds more than a bit unlikely).
- A new school in Brisbane not only "beautifully combines domestic and institutional architecture" on a residential street, "but also makes a valuable contribution to contemporary architecture."
- An architect's perspective on the future of library design: "Despite a lot of hand-wringing, the evolving library is holding its own and won't be disappearing any decade soon."
- A (long) look at the future of museum design: exhibition halls are being "taken over by 'social space'" with museums "shedding their old skin," going from "being about something" to "being for somebody."
- King tells us where to look for six wineries that range from understatement to over-the-top.
- A strategic plan for changing the world: "Timeline: Before those of us who are alive now are all dead. The Alternative: Keep doing what we've been doing, and keep getting what we've been getting."
- Call for entries: World Monuments Fund/Knoll Modernism Prize nominations.

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Susan Eisenhower denounces designs for presidential monument: "We now believe that a redesign is the only way to make this memorial acceptable to the American people"...When she said that her grandfather "was well known not to have much care for modern art," she introduced two irrelevant criteria for judging Frank Gehry's work...He said he...was open to changes. By Philip Kennicott - Washington Post

Eisenhower Memorial Controversy Grows: Debate on the design concepts and the process used...erupted [yesterday], culminating in a tense hearing on Capitol Hill. Lots of views were represented...The GSA defended its Design Excellence program...there was "lots of public review and comment"...some \$16 million has already been spent over two years. Starting over again will mean throwing out all that design work. -- Frank Gehry; AECOM; Richard Dreihaus - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Looming Large: Taking stock of the growing controversy over Eisenhower's memorial: ...National Civic Art Society (NCAS) had already declared war on Frank Gehry and his proposal with a counter competition...published a 153-page report attacking the design as a "travesty" and a "Happy McMonument," and the architect himself as an egoist and relativist...The controversy exposes the drawbacks of a fast-track, closed competition...rules out finding young designers who might be the next Maya Lin... - The Architect's Newspaper

Rethinking memorials in aftermath of Japan tsunami: Giant debris like the 'big can'...may prompt a re-imagining of the complicated process of memorial design...other candidates for found memorials...exist all over the Tohoku region...a risk that once set officially apart from their contexts the objects may lose some of their strange and surprising visual power. But given how overpriced and underwhelming so many traditional memorials have turned out to be in recent years, that may be a risk worth taking. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Yoshihiro Horii; Shoko Fukuya; Frank Gehry; Michael Arad; Peter Walker; Lei Yixin; ROMA Design Group - Los Angeles Times

Plan to N-shrine reactors for millennia: What do nuclear power plants and Shinto shrines have in common? Katsuhiro Miyamoto has suggested erecting giant shrine-style thatched roofs over each of the crippled reactor buildings..."The Fukushima No. 1 Nuclear Power Plant Shrine: Pacifying Malevolent Gods"...But not all the feedback has been positive. [images] - Japan Times

Less than zero: It will cost more than the Empire State Building, is bigger than a Smithsonian . . . yet no one knows when it will open. Inside the folly of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum...costs might have faded from memory were it not for the fact that, more than 10 years after the attacks and hundreds of millions later, there's still no 9/11 Museum. - New York Post

A monument to Burj Khalifa: The world's tallest building, now has a monument symbolising the international collaboration that marked its rise to the top...18 metres high and in stainless steel, in Downtown Dubai, near The Dubai Mall. [image] - Khaleej Times (UAE)

Promise--and perils--await as James Corner, co-designer of New York's High Line, prepares to take on Navy Pier: The peril is that an extremely tight budget and pier officials' historic tendency to favor pragmatics over aesthetics could undercut a thoughtful conceptual plan...It will be fascinating--or excruciating--to see how this drama plays out...The level-headed landscape architect professes not to be worried. By Blair Kamin -- James Corner Field Operations [images] - Chicago Tribune

The Motherships Are Landing: What Google's New Headquarters Reveal About Apple 2: Both took the old-fashioned approach of hand-picking the architect who they felt could best execute each company's vision -- giving us our first clue to what that vision is...brazenness...has led some to predict that Apple 2 is "a sign of imperial hubris"...Google would be wise to listen to these criticisms...and bring its designs firmly back to earth. -- Bohlin Cywinski Jackson; Foster + Partners; Clive Wilkinson Architects; Ingenhoven Architects [images, links] - ArchDaily

Ken Shuttleworth says Shard won't survive: Speaking at Ecobuild Make boss gives views on Renzo Piano's tower...predicts it will be torn down and replaced with an even taller tower within a few years...310m landmark, which is still being built, will quickly seem out of date... - BD/Building Design (UK)

Domesticity anchors class act: School buildings in residential streets do not always result in the right combination of domestic and institutional architecture. But the new Fitzroy Community School Creative Space not only beautifully combines the two requirements, but also makes a valuable contribution to contemporary architecture. -- Baracco + Wright Architects; Richard Stampton Architects [image] - Brisbane Times (Australia)

[The Once and Future Library: An architect's perspective on designing for changing constituencies: The best libraries today —old, new, or in design—are a cross between a modern community center, an old-fashioned YMCA, and a town center...Despite a lot of hand-wringing, the evolving library is holding its own and won't be disappearing any decade soon. By Charles G. Mueller/Centerbrook Architects - American Libraries Magazine - American Library Association/ALA](#)

[Future tense, VII: What's a museum? ...if today's museums are successful cultural caterers...their fare manages to taste more and more the same. A handful of the same celebrity architects now design new wings and even whole museum cities...With yesterday's art traded away for today's trends, exhibition halls taken over by "social space...museums are shedding their old skin...have gone from "being about something" to "being for somebody." By James Panero - The New Criterion](#)

[6 Napa Valley wineries architectural statements: There's austerity as well as opulence, understatement along with over-the-top. You simply need to know where to look...no two even remotely alike. By John King -- Friedensreich Hundertwasser; Oscar Leidenfrost; Olle Lundberg; Howard Backen \[images\]- San Francisco Chronicle](#)

[A Unified Theory of Social Change: If we want to change the world, we need a strategic plan. So here it is...Timeline: Before those of us who are alive now are all dead...The Alternative: Keep doing what we've been doing, and keep getting what we've been getting. By Dan Pallotta/Advertising for Humanity - Harvard Business Review](#)

[Call for entries: World Monuments Fund/Knoll Modernism Prize nominations for a design professional or firm in recognition of innovative design solutions that preserved or saved a modern landmark at risk; cash honorarium; deadline: July 31 - World Monuments Fund/WMF](#)

[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](#)



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

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