

Today's News - Tuesday, August 20, 2013

- Lerner looks into a young Melbourne-based firm "doing work that is subtle, refined, location-appropriate, and very beautiful," mixing Australian-Modern with a touch of playfulness.
- The Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force releases 69 policy recommendations - it "makes for some seriously wonky reading."
- There's a slight problem with Moscow's chief architect giving Foster an ultimatum to show up in 30 days or lose the Pushkin Museum expansion job: the architect resigned from the project in June.
- It's a grumpy-ish news day: Moore says London's Cheesegrater and Walkie-Talkie "aren't bad buildings in themselves - but together they're an ill-conceived mess. What most people will see is a bulgy thing and a pointy thing sticking into the sky."
- Russell x 2: the "asleep-at-the-wheel development team" of Dallas's Museum Tower "owes the Nasher a solution."
- He's none too pleased the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge that "was supposed to be the crowning glory of the bridge-builder's art," but has turned out to be "an engineering mutt" and a "poster child for those who think major infrastructure projects are wasteful" ("giant toothpicks" included).
- Saffron is saddened by the stalemate surrounding an affordable-housing plan slated to replace a Philly eyesore that "sounds like a recipe for creating blight all over again."
- Karolides offers a win-win solution to a "terrible irony: affordable housing saddled with unaffordable energy bills."
- Brown reports on a study that found solar panels on typical suburban houses "are capable of producing ten times more solar power than is possible from skyscrapers or other commercial buildings."
- Architects weigh in with their concerns, projects, and visions for what the suburbs could potentially look and feel like.
- Kamin cheers the "appealing, exposed-steel gutsiness" of the first of four planned boathouses on the Chicago River - "a welcome departure from Chicago's ill-advised tilt toward cookie-cutter 'prototype' public buildings."
- Bernstein cheers WORKac's L'Assemblée Radieuse that "bears direct connections to the Gabon landscape" and answers the question: "How do you represent emerging progressive Africa to the world without relying on nostalgia or clichés?"
- A multi-modal revamp of Connecticut's Stamford Train Station (almost as busy as Grand Central) that will "promote walkability and reconnect downtown with its waterfront."
- Lackmeyer lights up at AHMM's proposal to setup shops and offices in converted shipping containers in downtown Oklahoma City: "We looked for something temporary that can be placed there while waiting for better opportunities ahead."
- Very good news for the once-threatened Gold Dome in OK City: the "iconic structure will soon resume its place as a literal bright spot" along the former Route 66 as the corporate HQ for an environmental engineering firm.
- It's a much more iffy future for a 1929 icon in Berlin: despite its heritage status, "the preservation of a sooty parking garage covered with graffiti is a tough sell."
- Rellensmann has a lively conversation with Scott Brown, who "has lately been thrust into the spotlight as a symbol of women's struggle to become accepted into the canon of architecture."

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Architects EAT Melbourne: How things are panning out on Melbourne's burgeoning skyline is questionable. But in the shadow of those weird towers, firms like Architects EAT are doing work that is subtle, refined, location-appropriate, and very beautiful. By Jonathan Lerner [images]- ArchNewsNow

Feds Release Guidelines to Prepare for the Next Hurricane Sandy: The Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force...released 69 policy recommendations that aim to streamline funding, give residents faster access to federal assistance, and develop regional approaches to disaster prep and response...makes for some seriously wonky reading. By Matt Bevilacqua [link to report]- Next City (formerly Next American City)

Norman Foster resigns from Pushkin Museum expansion: After Moscow's chief architect issues a public ultimatum, the British designer reveals he left the project more than two months ago..."most likely, a competition will be held to choose another team, possibly of Western architects" ... -- Sergei Kuznetsov; Foster + Partners; Mosproject-5- The Art Newspaper (UK)

The Cheesegrater and the Walkie-Talkie: The City of London's looming latest additions aren't bad buildings in themselves -- but together they're an ill-conceived mess...What most people will see...is a bulgy thing and a pointy thing sticking into the sky...Could it be better? Would it be possible to have variety and architectural invention...yet have a whole that is more than the sum of its parts? ...Yes it could. By Rowan Moore -- Rogers Stirk Harbour and Partners; Rafael Viñoly [images]- Observer (UK)

Dallas Tower Dithers as Glass Roasts Museum Masterpieces: The Museum Tower...borrowed cachet from the neighboring Nasher Sculpture Center to brand itself...Then it proceeded to fry the museum's art...Lacking a clearly persuasive compromise, the Museum Tower owes the Nasher a solution... By James S. Russell -- Renzo Piano; Arup; Johnson Fain [images]- Bloomberg News

After \$6.4 Billion, San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge Remains a Mess: ...was supposed to be the crowning glory of the bridge-builder's art...Yet...after \$6.4 billion and 15 years, the country's most daringly iconic highway bridge stands as a poster child for those who think major infrastructure projects are wasteful. By James S. Russell -- T.Y. Lin International; Moffatt & Nichol; Donald McDonald [images]- Bloomberg News

Philadelphia Housing Authority homeowners in stalemate over plans for empty eyesore: ...trots out all the architectural cliches of the '80s and '90s...the real issue isn't the way the houses look. It is the clash of visions for the neighborhood's future...Queen Lane tower needs to come down...PHA...modified its design to avoid building...on the footprint of the cemetery...sounds like a recipe for creating blight all over again. By Inga Saffron -- Kitchen & Associates- Philadelphia Inquirer

Affordable Housing with Unaffordable Energy Bills: ...we spend...10 times more on utility bills for affordable housing than we do on total government investments in energy efficiency...The result is a terrible irony: affordable housing saddled with unaffordable energy bills that burden low-income families and the public housing agencies that assist them. Driving greater energy efficiency into our affordable housing stock is an opportunity for a win-win... By Alexis Karolides- Rocky Mountain Institute

Sprawl Is Good? How Suburban Developments Can Use Solar to Transform Our Energy Future: ...average suburban home can produce enough power for that household, extra to charge an electric vehicle, and still generate enough watts to export a surplus to the grid...[study] found that detached suburban houses typical of a motor car age city are capable of producing ten times more solar power than is possible from skyscrapers or other commercial buildings. By Paul Brown- AlterNet.org

The Suburban Canvas: An Emerging Architectural Model of Artistic Possibilities: ...architects and designers are beginning to explore what the suburbs could potentially look and feel like...here are some of their concerns, projects, and visions. -- June Williamson; Paul Lukez/Transform X; Shane Coen/Coen + Partners; Bing Thom; Ted Porter/Meri Tepper/Ryall Porter Sheridan Architects [images, links]- NEA Arts Magazine

First of Emanuel's promised 4 boathouses proves shipshape: ...beckons along Chicago River in Chinatown ...has an appealing, exposed-steel gutsiness... a welcome departure from Chicago's ill-advised tilt toward cookie-cutter "prototype"

public buildings...rises above the utilitarian and reaches for the civic. Let's hope we see more of them. And soon. By Blair Kamin -- Ernie Wong; Chris Lee/Johnson & Lee; Jeanne Gang/Studio Gang [image]- Chicago Tribune

New York Firm Comes Full Circle with African Conference Center: L'Assemblée Radieuse...bears direct connections to the Gabon landscape, reflecting a strong environmental focus..."our answer to the question: How do you represent emerging progressive Africa to the world without relying on nostalgia or clichés?" By Fred A. Bernstein -- Work Architecture Company/WORKac; Epstein; Front Inc. [slide show]- Architectural Record

Walking the Rails: STUDIO V Architecture reveals a multi-modal revamp of the Stamford Train Station: ...would create a multi-modal neighborhood surrounding the Transportation Center, which is the region's second-busiest train station after Grand Central Terminal...to promote walkability and reconnect downtown with its waterfront. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Shipping containers offer Oklahoma City building alternative: Shops, offices and stores could set up in downtown in converted shipping containers..."we looked for something temporary that can be placed there while waiting for better opportunities ahead." By Steve Lackmeyer -- Wade Scaramucci/Alford, Hall, Monaghan, Morris (AHMM) [images, video]- The Oklahoman

For a Route 66 Icon, the Future Looks Golden: Environmental engineering firm TEEMCO will restore and renovate the Gold Dome building in Oklahoma City to be its corporate headquarters...iconic structure will soon resume its place as a literal bright spot along the former route. -- Bailey, Bozalis, Dickinson, and Roloff (1958) [images]- Architect Magazine

Uncertainty Over a Palace of Parking: In a country with 1.3 million recognized memorials, historically protected buildings and sites, the preservation of a sooty parking garage covered with graffiti is a tough sell...recent fates of other threatened landmark buildings in Berlin do not bode well for the Kant Garage. -- Hermann Zweigenthal [Hermann Herrey] (1929) [image]- New York Times

Denise Scott Brown on the desert, Ed Ruscha, and the Pritzker Prize she never received: ...she has lately been thrust into the spotlight as a symbol of women's struggle to become accepted into the canon of architecture...an architect who saw an element of the built environment so clearly and communicated it easily to the outside, but there's more to the story. By Luise Rellensmann- Uncube magazine (Germany)

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