

Today's News - Thursday, October 17, 2013

- Kimmelman offers a most thoughtful "to-do list" for the next mayor of New York City: "keep architecture and planning front and center or risk taking the city backward. Courage, guile and not a little art will be required" (sage advice for any mayor!).
- Kanki Knight posts a letter from Australia: while Sydney "has gone to war with itself over Barangaroo," and Melbourne is completing a major overhaul, "some surprising developments are happening in Australian cities that have long lay dormant."
- While Barangaroo may be a burning issue, architects are assigned the final stages of the city's \$2 billion mixed-use Chippendale project (joining a stellar roster).
- Urban sociologist Klinenberg "explains the complexities and importance of neighborhood networks and community spaces and the opportunities they present to designers and urbanists."
- Finch ponders how architects should respond if asked to work for dictators: "were architects to be super-scrupulous about regimes and governments...it is questionable whether we would have any significant architecture left in the world."
- Wainwright, meanwhile, brings us eyefuls of Beijing's icons reimagined by propaganda artists from North Korea: it is "a rose-tinted" vision "of what Chinese modernity might be like in a land they will never know."
- More on the new People's Daily HQ in Beijing drawing risqué comparisons: "The architect sounds a tad defensive" (and no comment from the newspaper itself).
- Brussat cheers a UNESCO official's unofficial statement about what a "bad idea" it would be to build towers "at all the gateways to Paris."
- Welton compares master planning advice given to two universities more than a century apart: Stanford White's "fell on deaf ears" at U. Va., but Snøhetta's prevailed at N.C. State University.
- Chaban reports that SHoP's "serrated knife" of a supertall tower gets the go-ahead from NYC Landmarks Commission, "but it won't be alone, as a parade of supertalls now march down W. 57th Street."
- Kamin counsels all educators to see the University of Chicago's new early childhood learning center: it's "a grown-up building" where "modernism is not a rigid aesthetic formula, but an enabling, even liberating, tool...that frees the human spirit" (great slide show!).
- Pearson cheers a young Finnish firm making its own mark with addition to an Aalto library that points it - and the small town - "in the direction of the future. What hasn't changed is the library's function as an important civic player."
- Hume hails Toronto's "exquisite" new Bridgepoint Active Healthcare complex that "makes aesthetics an integral part of its vision for wellness" with "a radical departure from the sort of hospital architecture with which we have lived - and died - for decades."
- BIG gets its first shot at a big project in San Francisco that could see the "rebirth of Market Street."
- The fabulous tale of Los Angeles's "forgotten architectural Mecca" that is "ready for its close-up, again" (fab pix, too!).
- Bose outlines what's in store at this weekend's Battle of Ideas Festival 2013 at London's Barbican Centre: Pop ups & Urban Agriculture "mark two defining social and urban trends of the present era, and their concerns can frequently overlap."
- A good reason to be in Oakbrook Terrace, IL, next week: the ALA 15th Annual Architecture Conference.
- Call for entries (deadlines loom!): 2014 AIA Diversity Recognition Program + AIA Emerging Professionals Summit Essays (AIA membership not required for either).

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Building a Better City: For the Next Mayor, a To-Do List: [Bloomberg] built a gleaming Oz of new parks and plazas, skyscrapers and bike lanes. This didn't stop plenty of terrible buildings from going up. But a focus on streets and architecture redrew whole swaths of the city...The next mayor can keep architecture and planning front and center or risk taking the city backward. Courage, guile and not a little art will be required... By Michael Kimmelman - New York Times

Letter from Australia: Sydney...has gone to war with itself over...Barangaroo...Melbourne is finally seeing the completion of a major overhaul...some surprising developments are happening in Australian cities that have long lay dormant...Adelaide, Perth and Hobart in particular... By Gordon Kanki Knight -- Wilkinson Eyre; Frank Gehry; Sean Godsell; Lyons Architecture; Kisho Kurokawa; John Morphett; Elenberg Fraser; John Wardle; Peter Corrigan; Herzog & De Meuron; Hassell; Woods Bagot; Woodhead; Mirai Morita/Atelier Bow Wow; etc. [slide show] - Wallpaper*

Smart Design Studio and fjmt appointed architects for final residential stages at Central Park: ...\$2 billion mixed-use project in Chippendale, Sydney. -- Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp; Foster + Partners; Johnson Pilton Walker; Ateliers Jean Nouvel; Jeppe Aagaard Andersen; Turf Design; PTW Architects; Patrick Blanc; Yann Kersale; Koichi Takada Architects; Nettletontribe; Tzannes Associates; Tonkin Zulaikha Greer [images] - Architecture & Design (Australia)

Toward a Stronger Social Infrastructure: A Conversation with Eric Klinenberg: [Urban sociologist] explains the complexities and importance of neighborhood networks and community spaces and the opportunities they present to designers and urbanists...outlines the evolution of his work, why disasters reveal underlying conditions, and what he means by social infrastructure... -- Institute for Public Knowledge (IPK) - Urban Omnibus

How should architects respond if asked to work by dictators? The values of a regime are less important than what a building will be used for: ...were architects to be super-scrupulous about regimes and governments...it is questionable whether we would have any significant architecture left in the world...Nevertheless, it is important that architects think about the working conditions of those who bring their design to fruition. By Paul Finch - The Architects' Journal (UK)

Propaganda artists from North Korea paint a rose-tinted China: The Beautiful Future sees icons of Beijing's skyline reimagined: ...the very same that used to produce such propaganda images for the Kim regime, but now find themselves designing food packaging in Pyongyang...an intriguing insight into their vision of what Chinese modernity might be like in a land they will never know. By Oliver Wainwright -- OMA; Herzog & de Meuron [images] - Guardian (UK)

New People's Daily Building in Beijing Draws Risqué Comparisons: Is it a chamber pot? Is it a penguin? Is it a ... phallus? Netizens are incredulous. The architect sounds a tad defensive. And the newspaper itself...no one would say anything. -- Zhou Qi [image] - New York Times

Hurray for the hopeful savior of Paris: A U.N. official from Venice has made a statement that startled Paris. Francesco Bandarin, of UNESCO, told journalists that it "is a bad idea to put towers at all the gateways to Paris." This was not an official announcement...but it might as well be. By David Brussat [images] - Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Taking a Stand: Two decisive gestures in master planning, more than a century apart...two different outcomes...: In 1896, Stanford White counseled the University of Virginia against blocking off the university's Lawn...His words fell on deaf ears...Fast-forward to 2008: ...Snøhetta suggest to North Carolina State University [to] revise their 25-year-old master plan...This time...the architects prevailed. By J. Michael Welton -- Clark Nexsen (formerly Pearce, Brinkley, Cease & Lee) [images] - Inform Architecture + Design (Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects)

Narrow tower, higher than Empire State Building, wins city approval: SHoP Architects-designed building on W. 57th St. is called 'daring' by Landmarks Commission...will rise like a serrated knife next to Steinway Hall...appears to defy gravity...But it won't be alone, as a parade of supertalls now march down W. 57th St. By Matt Chaban [images]- NY Daily News

Lab addition teaches lessons in smart school design: ...Earl Shapiro Hall, the new early childhood learning center of the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools...is a grown-up building...All educators should see this building...Here, modernism is not a rigid aesthetic formula, but an enabling, even liberating, tool, one that promises to enhance Lab's capacity to fulfill its mission of education that frees the human spirit. By Blair Kamin -- Valerio Dewalt Train; FGM Architects [slide show]- Los Angeles Times

Out from the Master's shadow: Just as Alvar Aalto pioneered a softer, less severe form of Modernism, a young Finnish firm innovates with social spaces that point a library addition—and a small town [Seinäjoki, Finland]—in the direction of the future...What hasn't changed is the library's function as an important civic player. By Clifford A. Pearson -- JKMM Architects [slide show]- Architectural Record

More Than Skin Deep: Toronto's new Bridgepoint Active Healthcare facility makes aesthetics an integral part of its vision for wellness. The exquisite \$380-million complex...represents a radical departure from the sort of hospital architecture with which we have lived—and died—for decades...the 1865 Don Jail, now magnificently remade as Bridgepoint's administrative center. By Christopher Hume -- Stantec; KPMB; Diamond Schmitt Architects; HDR [images]- Metropolis Magazine

BIG Selected to Design Mixed-Use Complex in San Francisco: ...a mixed-use arts, housing and hotel complex...will be BIG's first in the Bay Area..."energetic approach, exceptional design talent, and social consciousness will bring international attention to San Francisco's emerging arts community and the rebirth of Market Street..." -- Bjarke Ingels Group [images]- ArchDaily

On the Verge | Trousdale, Los Angeles's Forgotten Architectural Mecca, Makes a Comeback: ...fell out of fashion in the '70s — its trove of midcentury architecture tarted up or torn down — only to be rediscovered by a new wave of glamorous Angelenos devoted to preserving its unique style. It's ready for its close-up, again. By Peter Haldeman -- Harold W. Levitt; Allen Siple; Wallace Neff; James Dolena; Paul William; Richard Dorman; Ed Fickett; A. Quincy Jones; Lloyd Wright; Robert Earl; William Sutherland Beckett; George MacLean; Marmol Radziner; Buff, Straub & Hensman [images]- New York Times T Magazine

Battle of Ideas Festival 2013: Pop ups & Urban Agriculture: These two debates are interesting parallels that, like it or not, mark two defining social and urban trends of the present era, and their concerns can frequently overlap; at the Barbican Centre between October 19-20. By Shumi Bose- DesignCurial / Blueprint Magazine (UK)

ALA 15th Annual Architecture Conference and Product Show; Keynote Presenter Kai-Uwe Bergmann, Partner, BIG/Bjarke Ingels Group; October 22, Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois - Association of Licensed Architects (ALA)

Call for entries: 2014 AIA Diversity Recognition Program: open to all, including non-AIA members; deadline: December 11- American Institute of Architects (AIA)

Call for entries: AIA Emerging Professionals Summit Essays: Selected Essays Will Address Changes That Need to be Enacted to Advance the Profession (open U.S. residents; architecture student, AIAS member, intern, non-licensed professional, Assoc. AIA, or architect licensed less than 10 years; receive complimentary registration, airfare, lodging, and meals during the Summit in Albuquerque, January 24-26, 2014; deadline: November 4- American Institute of Architects (AIA)

Op-Ed: Which "Past" Should Architects Embrace and Why? Posing Alternatives to Architectural Nostalgia: Witold Rybczynski's "How Architecture Works: A Humanist's Toolkit" might be his most urbanely written and sensibly organized - but his traditional definition of architecture's past might be passé. By Norman Weinstein - ArchNewsNow



-- Kazuyo Sejima & Associates: House in a Plum Grove (2003), Tokyo, Japan
-- The Camera: CphCph is a tribute to Copenhagen. To the buildings, the underground, the nights, the secret places, the empty spaces.
-- Travel Guide: Stockholm
-- Morphosis: Architecture surprisingly free of traditional presuppositions and classical lingo -- Thom Mayne

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