

Today's News - Wednesday, October 23, 2013

- Stormy politics in a post-Sandy world: an engineer takes issue with those claiming "better engineering could have saved America billions. It is not engineering that must change to keep up with the changing global climate, but how decisions are made based on cost- and risk-benefit analyses."
- Russell x 2: He takes a look at how architects are planning "for the next Big One" beyond "drive-by damage assessments and holding empty 'ideas' competitions. Balancing the need for speed and deliberative planning isn't easy."
- On a brighter note, he's taken by Holl's "jazzy" sports center for Columbia University that "flamboyantly bumps and grinds around a busy corner"; the "architectural chameleon is a poetic barometer of its dissonant circumstances."
- A fascinating, in-depth look at water scarcity as a design opportunity: "What shape would neighborhoods, architecture, and the urban experience take if design fully recognized and exploited the challenges?"
- Cucinella calls for Ghanaian architects to "be more creative" to "find its own way of designing buildings without necessarily importing foreign models" to ensure sustainability.
- Sacramento hops on the bike corral and parklet bandwagon: "it is not often that the council makes a decision that is 'so clearly for the public health benefit.'"
- St. Louis proposes a fund to "mothball" vacant but valuable buildings for future development: "The tough question is which ones to save."
- Knapp digs deep into prefab - its history of "utopian misfires," and "why architects have not managed to capitalize effectively upon the platform" (great read!).
- A Cornell professor considers OMA's College of Architecture "a disaster" (leaks included - link to video with full, serious explanation).
- A "rarely seen video" with a "behind-the-scenes look" at how Foster's Apple "spaceship" HQ design came to be: "It's classic Apple showmanship: inspirational music and choice quotes from Steve Jobs that pull at the heartstrings."
- Heathcote x 2: he talks to Gehry - now he's part of Battersea power station project with Foster et. al.
- He ponders why it is that "Hollywood bad guys always seem to get the best houses" (in this case by Lautner and Neutra - a really fun read!).
- Hawthorne gets the skinny on MoMA's next global initiative to take on the megacity (impressive!).
- A millionaire launches the five-year CyArk 500 project using 3D laser scans to make a digital blueprint of 500 structures and ruins across the globe - and is looking for nominations of sites to scan.
- UTS's Burke offers a great history of Utzon's Sydney Opera House (compromises, complexities, and changes abound).
- Christo is not at all put off by opposition to his "Over the River" project in Colorado: the years of "tribulations are as much reward as the flowering of his grandiose projects."
- Eyefuls of 11 unbuilt Australian "architectural gems unearthed" for 2014 Venice Architecture Biennale.
- Ending the day on a high note: AIA's Architecture Billings Index keeps going up: "Doing more with less (or fewer) has become the motto du jour."

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Op-Ed: The Stormy Politics of Building: We need to remove emotion from decision making on infrastructure: In Sandy's wake...Better engineering could have saved America billions, we're told...it is not engineering that must change to keep up with the changing global climate, but how decisions are made based on cost- and risk-benefit analyses. By Henry Petroski- [New York Times](#)

Hurricane Sandy: One Year Later: While victims struggle to rebuild, architects plan for the next Big One...other than drive-by damage assessments and holding empty "ideas" competitions...Balancing the need for speed and deliberative planning isn't easy. By James S. Russell -- Special Initiative for Rebuilding and Resilience (SIRR); Susannah Drake/dlandstudio; Architecture Research Office (ARO); Sage and Coombe Architects; Signe Nielsen/Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects; Garrison Architects; Local Office Landscape Architecture; WXY Studio; Deborah Gans [images]- [Architectural Record](#)

Columbia Jocks Get Jazzy Stairs in Holl's Sports Center: Steven Holl's Campbell Sports Center at New York's Columbia University flamboyantly bumps and grinds around the busy corner...More than just a place to pump iron, this \$30 million architectural chameleon is a poetic barometer of its dissonant circumstances. By James S. Russell -- [James Corner Field Operations](#) [images]- [Bloomberg News](#)

A More Absorbent Landscape: Water scarcity as design opportunity: What shape would neighborhoods, architecture, and the urban experience take if design fully recognized and exploited the challenges...Los Angeles could lead the way in creating localized models...will require design intelligence rooted in science and design vision as a catalyst for the public imagination. By Hadley and Peter Arnold/Arid Lands Institute, Woodbury University [images]- [Boom: A Journal of California](#)

Ghana must be more creative in building industry, says Mario Cucinella/MCArchitects: "Ghana needs to find its own way of designing buildings without necessarily importing foreign modules, but rather design buildings to depict Ghanaian culture"...urged architects and building engineers in the country to be involved in the idea of reducing emission to ensure sustainability... -- [Ghana Institute of Architects](#) - [GhanaWeb](#)

Sacramento City Council votes to launch bike corrals, plan parklets: ...it is not often that the council makes a decision that is "so clearly for the public health benefit"...So far, "the midtown community is pretty fired up about it"... -- [WALKS](#)Sacramento; Rainforth Grau Architects; MTW Group; DLR Group-Sacramento Bee (California)

St. Louis proposes fund to 'mothball' vacant buildings: ...local officials and preservationists say a dedicated stream of cash specifically to mothball buildings for future development is quite rare...The tough question - in a city with so many empty buildings - is which ones to save...would give the city upfront money to keep valuable buildings intact. - [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#)

The end of prefabrication: Chris Knapp reflects upon the series of utopian misfires in prefabrication's evolution and asks why architects have not managed to capitalise effectively upon the platform. -- [Le Corbusier](#); [Walter Gropius](#); [Marcel Breuer](#); [Buckminster Fuller](#); [Jean Prouvé](#); [KieranTimberlake](#); [Anderson Anderson Architecture](#); [Charlie Lazor](#); [SYSTEM](#)architects; [Wes Jones](#); [Greg Lynn](#) [images]- [Australian Design Review](#)

A Disaster? Rem Koolhaas' new Cornell's College of Architecture, Art and Planning leaks, not code compliant: ...a "disaster" says Cornell Professor Jonathan Ochshorn. -- [Office for Metropolitan Architecture/OMA](#)- [Archinect](#)

The video that helped Apple land its 'spaceship' HQ: In this rarely seen video, the people bringing new Cupertino headquarters to life give a behind-the-scenes look at its inception...the now-notorious ring shape wasn't the original idea...It's classic Apple showmanship: inspirational music and choice quotes from Steve Jobs that pull at the heartstrings. -- [Norman Foster/Foster + Partners](#) [video]- [C/Net](#)

Frank Gehry to design part of Battersea power station project: ...is to work alongside Norman Foster to design a new eight-acre phase...a strip of retail and residential accommodation on the south side of the site...Both architects will be working within a master plan by Rafael Viñoly... By Edwin Heathcote -- Foster + Partners; Wilkinson Eyre- [Financial Times \(UK\)](#)

Houses of film noir villains: through the Hollywood keyhole: Why is it that in Hollywood the bad guys always seem to get the best houses? ...for many years the presence of modernity in a house could be taken as an indication of evil, immorality or megalomania....The two houses are both in Los Angeles... By Edwin Heathcote -- John Lautner/Sheats Goldstein Residence; Richard Neutra/Lovell Health House [images]- [Financial Times \(UK\)](#)

MoMA's architecture department takes on the megacity: After taking on rising sea levels and the foreclosure crisis, the Museum of Modern Art...announced an exhibition and series of design workshops collectively called "Uneven Growth: Tactical Urbanisms for Expanding Megacities"...the project will analyze the growth of six huge cities around the world. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Pedro Gadanho; Situ Studio; Cohabitation Strategies (CohStra); Rua Arquitetos; MAS Urban Design ETH; URBZ; Pop Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT); NLE Architects; Inteligencias Colectivas; MAP Office; Network Architecture Lab, Columbia University; Superpool; Atelier d'Architecture Autogérée- [Los Angeles Times](#)

Science takes architectural history to another dimension: Millionaire Ben Kacyra is using 3D laser scans to make a digital blueprint of 500 structures and ruins across the globe: Over the next five years the CyArk 500 project...is appealing for nominations of sites to scan... [images]- [Independent \(UK\)](#)

A Danish architect, an Australian icon: the history of the Sydney Opera House: Anthony Burke, Professor of Architecture at UTS, looks back at the construction of the iconic building and the story of the man who designed it...compromise in the middle of construction added complexity to the project...The change forever plagued opera performances... -- Jørn Utzon; Richard Johnson/Johnson Pilton Walker/JPW [images, links]- [ABC News \(Australia\)](#)

Christo says opposition to "Over the River" project is part of the art: The lawsuits, 21 years of study and the contentious opposition to his plan to drape 6 miles of the Arkansas River in translucent fabric are "invigorating"...Those tribulations are as much reward as the flowering of his grandiose projects...- [Denver Post](#)

11 Australian architectural gems unearthed for 2014 Venice Architecture Biennale, Augmented Australia 1914-2014: ...Unrealised Aussie projects, including a jewel cave and a treetop activist shelter, will come to life...to accompany 10 historical unrealised designs. -- felix\_Giles\_Anderson+Goad; Susan Dugdale and Associates; fjmt/Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp; MvS Architects; Malloway Studio; Andrew Maynard Architects; m3architecture; iredale pederson hook architects; LAVA; ARM Architecture; tessellate a+d; Lyons [images]- [Architecture & Design \(Australia\)](#)

Architecture Billings Keep Growing: The AIA's Architecture Billings Index (ABI) shows continued recovery and increased productivity...project inquiries cooled off ever-so-slightly...score is still quite high...Doing more with less (or fewer) has become the motto du jour...- [Architect Magazine](#)

You Get Learning Units for This? A Weekend at the Monterey Design Conference: Dinners were better, breakfast was not, but the weather was stunning, and the AIACC did a great job recruiting regional, national, and international architects. By Kenneth Caldwell- [ArchNewsNow](#)



-- Richard Meier & Partners: Teachers Village, Newark, New Jersey  
-- Toyo Ito & Associates: Friendly and socially responsible buildings that challenge the spatial conventions of modernist architecture.  
-- Ripoll Tizón Estudio de Arquitectura: Social Housing in Sa Pobla, Mallorca, Spain

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