

Today's News - Friday, June 20, 2014

- Another interesting take on Rem's Biennale: "a recurring criticism has been that if architecture is a language, all that is given here is the vocab, not the grammar. But there is also something refreshing about this."
- Leveite, Brooks, and Devine explain what they think could help the London's planning process deliver great tall buildings: "It is mystifying that the expertise of our very best architects is viewed with suspicion."
- Meanwhile, CTBUH names Best Tall Buildings for 2014 regional winners (none in London).
- In Moscow, big plans for Revolution Square to become "the missing link between the city's central pedestrian and recreational areas - and a full-fledged urban public space."
- Four finalists' designs to make over Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium pool that include "rings, crystals, moss, and scales" are received with "enthusiasm and analyzed where and why contemporary architecture is swimming."
- Garrison Architects' prefab post-disaster housing for NYC, assembled in less than 15 hours, is a "multi-story, multi-family interim housing solution that will work in urban areas across the country" (no FEMA trailers required) - and currently on view in Brooklyn.
- Ferro reports on Rockwell's plans to bring prefab to the luxury market: "The more customizable a house is, the less it looks like it came straight off a conveyor belt" (definitely no FEMA trailers here!).
- Welton cheers Freelon's "strikingly symbolic" National Center for Civil and Human Rights opening in Atlanta on Monday, despite budgetary shrinking pains.
- Riddle gives two thumbs-up to VJAA's "splendid" Minneapolis Institute of Art African Art Galleries: "a seductive space that is at once open but muted, animated but mysterious - the exquisite subtlety of its redesign reifies the objects within."
- A look at some the "ingenious" interactive technologies by Local Projects and DS+R that will give visitors "agency over their own experience" when the Cooper Hewitt re-opens in December (we can't wait!).
- More on the brouhaha swirling around Libeskind's Holocaust memorial in Amsterdam: aside from the argument that the park site is "just too small," there are too many trees that will need to be cut down.
- Glancey uses Brasilia, to some a "concrete El Dorado," as the starting point to examine the success rate of cities that are built from scratch: "ideal cities have been just that: ideals, or ideas that have been impossible to live up to."
- Farago forages into Bo Bardi, "Brazil's best-kept secret": her "radical approach to the design of people-friendly buildings is a major contribution to modern architecture - she should receive greater recognition."
- A new Australian architecture salary survey reveals low wage increases and a gender pay gap (BIM managers are doing just fine).
- RIAS Awards 2014 include 13 winners representing the very best of current Scottish architecture.
- Weekend diversions:
- 20th Century Society's Croft on "Tricorn - Love It or Hate It?" at the Portsmouth City Museum: "had Owen Luder's 1966 megastructure managed to survive just a little bit longer, it would by now be listed" (great pix).
- Glancey finds Britann-Catlin's "Bleak Houses" to be "one of the most intriguing, original and gently provocative books on the meaning of architecture for some while."
- Mogilevich cheers Brown's "Next Generation Infrastructure" for being "an inspiring argument for infrastructure that behaves like nature," and for her "attention to the social aspects of infrastructure planning and design."
- Pevzner parses "The Petropolis of Tomorrow" - "a lush combination of photography, rich narrative, design provocations and critical theory and history" that explores the "architectural possibilities of the floating mechanical tanks that will serve Brazil's emerging offshore oil boom."
- Suckle's engaging recollection of her time in Sydney with Seidler gives her an interesting perspective on Belogolovsky's "Harry Seidler LIFEWORK": "One tends to forget how powerful a good monograph can tell an amazing story about an incredible person who played a significant role in the development of Modern Architecture that transcends its time and place."

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Roll up, roll up: it's Rem Time! Rem-membering and Dismembering Architecture at the Venice Biennale: This is a museum show and a museum of a show, and at times one can't see the (architectural) wood for the trees. Indeed a recurring criticism has been that if architecture is a language, all that is given here is the vocab, not the grammar...But there is also something refreshing about this. By Rob Wilson, with Sophie Lovell and Florian Heilmeyer -- Rem Koolhaas [images]- Uncube magazine (Germany)

How can the planning process deliver great tall buildings? Amanda Levete/AL_A, Alison Brooks and Clare Devine of Design Council CABE share their thoughts on the AJ/Oliverer Skyline campaign: "It is mystifying that the expertise of our very best architects is viewed with suspicion." - The Architects' Journal (UK)

CTBUH Names Best Tall Buildings for 2014: The four regional winners are: The Edith Green-Wendell Wyatt Federal Building, Portland, Oregon (Americas); One Central Park, Sydney, Australia (Asia & Australia); De Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands (Europe); and Cayan Tower, Dubai, UAE (Middle East & Africa). -- SERA Architects/Cutler Anderson Architects; Ateliers Jean Nouvel/PTW Architects; Office for Metropolitan Architecture/OMA; Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM)/Khatib & Alami [link to images, info] - Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH)

Revolution Square – a new pedestrian link in Moscow: WOWHAUS Bureau propose to create instead a unified and expressive city square pedestrian space, which will form the missing link between Moscow's central pedestrian and recreational areas...will allow this area to be used as part of a full-fledged urban public space. [images]- Architectural Council of Moscow / Archcouncil of Moscow

Reconstruction of Luzhniki Stadium pool: rings, crystals, moss and scales: ...the second stage of a national competition for the reconstruction of the pool...Archcouncil reviewed these projects with enthusiasm and analyzed where and why contemporary architecture is swimming. -- UNK Project; ARENA Design Institute of Unique Structure + LANIK; A-B Studio; Arch Group, DNK architectural group; Asadov Architectural Studio [images]- Architectural Council of Moscow / Archcouncil of Moscow

Garrison Architects Debuts Post-Disaster Housing for New York City: ...a "multi-story, multi-family interim housing solution that will work in urban areas across the country"...prefabricated structures...intended to be dispatched quickly after an emergency and assembled on-site...currently on display in Brooklyn... [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

David Rockwell Is Taking Prefab To The Luxury Market: Rockwell Group is teaming up with C3 Design to build modular homes for luxury buyers: Prefab architecture is typically associated with affordable housing...with some architectural finesse, they can create stylish digs with minimal environmental impact...The more customizable a house is, the less it looks like it came straight off a conveyor belt. By Shauncy Ferro [images]- Fast Company

In Atlanta, Freelon's New National Center for Civil and Human Rights: Phil Freelon, whose Freelon Group recently merged with Perkins+Will, will be heading to Atlanta on June 23 for opening ceremonies centered around the design of his newest civic space...strikingly symbolic...went from 93,000 square feet to 61,000 to 42,000...awaits future additions to bring it up to its original, expansive vision. By J. Michael Welton -- HOK- Huffington Post

Step Inside the Minneapolis Institute of Art's New and Improved African Art Galleries: ...a splendid environment for the

museum's African collection...a seductive space that is at once open but muted, animated but mysterious...The true genius...is not its technology, but rather the exquisite subtlety of its redesign that reifies the objects within. By Mason Riddle - McKim Meade & White (1915); Kenzo Tange (1974); Michael Graves (2006); VJAA [images]- Metropolis Magazine

An Ingenious Museum Design That Turns Visitors Into Creators: A range of new interactive technologies by Local Projects that will let visitors engage with the Cooper Hewitt in a totally novel way...designed in collaboration with Diller Scofidio + Renfro...Giving visitors agency over their own experience is Jake Barton's specialty. - Wired

Amsterdam revolts against Daniel Libeskind Holocaust memorial: ...residents fearing the loss of a popular park have rejected a multi-million-euro "Path of Light"...forcing officials to rethink the plan..."We're not opposed to the idea of building a monument...Wertheim Park's just too small"...also concerned about the number of trees that will need to be cut down. [image]- ArtDaily.org

Brasilia: Building a city from scratch: Oscar Niemeyer designed a metropolis where none had stood...this new city looks like a giant architect's model...it appears to lack shops, markets, street life and a sense of humanising, quotidian life...If you happen to be a fan of late 1950s and early 1960s modernist architecture, you will find your concrete El Dorado here...ideal cities have been just that: ideals, or ideas that have been impossible to live up to. By Jonathan Glancey -- Lucio Costa; Roberto Burle Marx [images]- BBC

Lina Bo Bardi: Brazil's best-kept secret: Lina Bo Bardi's radical approach to the design of people-friendly buildings is a major contribution to modern architecture...she should receive greater recognition...she established an architectural vocabulary that favoured collaboration, participation and social mixing, and she lived it as much as she preached it. By Jason Farago [images]- BBC

Association of Consulting Architects Australia (ACA) architecture salary survey reveals low wage increases and a gender pay gap in industry: While registered architects at the lower end of the scale suffer, BIM managers continue to be the highest earning across all salary bands. - Architecture & Design (Australia)

RIAS Awards 2014 Winners: The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland has announced 13 winners, representing the very best of current Scottish architecture. -- Elder & Cannon Architects; Morgan McDonnell Architecture; Robin Baker Architects; BDP; Dualchas Architects; RMJM; Gareth Hoskins Architects; Denizen Works; GLM; LDN Architects; Reiach & Hall Architects; Foster + Partners; etc. [images]- e-architect (UK)

What might have been: "Tricorn - Love It or Hate It?" at the Portsmouth City Museum harks back to a lost era: ...had Owen Luder's 1966 megastructure managed to survive just a little bit longer, it would by now be listed...The strangest thing about the exhibition is that it doesn't give a strong sense of what the building was actually like...There are clues to the building's materiality but no overall sense of its presence. By Catherine Croft/20th Century Society [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Losers Rule: Architecture's Best Failures: Timothy Brittain-Catlin's "Bleak Houses," examining the architects who failed the tests of their contemporary critics and historians...is one of the most intriguing, original and gently provocative books on the meaning of architecture for some while. By Jonathan Glancey - Architectural Review (UK)

"Next Generation Infrastructure: Principles for Post-Industrial Public Works" by Hillary Brown: ...we've grown used to bad news...Old systems are failing, new challenges arising, and solutions are elusive or perplexing...new book is an inspiring argument for infrastructure that behaves like nature...Particularly notable in an era of tight budgets and low expectations is Brown's attention to the social aspects of infrastructure planning and design. By Mariana Mogilevich- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

"The Petropolis of Tomorrow" edited by Neeraj Bhatia and Mary Casper: Can networks and logistics of extraction engender city making? With a lush combination of photography, rich narrative, design provocations and critical theory and history, "Petropolis" explores the logics, logistics, and architectural possibilities of the floating mechanical islands that will serve Brazil's emerging offshore oil boom. By Nicholas Pevzner - Scenario Journal

Australian Idol: "Harry Seidler LIFEWORK": Vladimir Belogolovsky's story is a little different than the man I thought I knew. The insights and the way things are framed add a level of richness to Harry's work that I hadn't appreciated...One tends to forget how powerful a good monograph...can tell an amazing story about an incredible person who played a significant role in the development of Modern Architecture that transcends its time and place. By Abby Suckle [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

7 Architecture Books to Fill Up Your Suitcase: Bike Town Tokyo by Yoshiharu Tsukamoto & René Kural; The Images of Architects by Valerio Olgiati; Atmosphere by Peter Zumthor; A Topology of Everyday Constellations by Georges Teyssot; Vitruvius: Writing the Body of Architecture by Indra Kagis McEwen; Content by OMA/Rem Koolhaas; Behind the Green Door by Rotor

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