

Today's News - Tuesday, November 11, 2014

- ArcSpace brings us Holden Platt's take on Ma Yansong's "hopes to forge a balance between the cosmos, humanity and nature" + Eyefuls of 7 exceptional concert halls.
- Kamin x 2: the Lucas Museum of Narrative Arts "represents a fumbled essay in 'blob architecture' - this cartoonish mountain of a building would be glaringly out of place" on Chicago's lakefront (but it's not all the architect's fault).
- He cheers plans for a new Studio Gang-designed boathouse on Chicago's "less affluent South Side."
- Vatsikopoulos parses Sydney "waiting for the Gehry effect": will his UTS building "become a cultural icon - or will it instead foist another eyesore" on the city; "with any Gehry building that's pushed the limits comes controversy."
- King parses plans for bunches of new buildings on San Francisco's Market Street: "It's a sign of progress. Too bad too many of the proposals try too hard to be everything at once - creative understatement often is the best way to go."
- Hall Kaplan minces no words about why Los Angeles looks the way it does: all the wrong people "are free to tweak the design of proposed projects to the pleasure and profit of their developer clients. For whom do we design our cities?"
- Pogrebin reports on the growing protests to the Frick Collection's expansion plans that include the loss of Russell Page's garden.
- Christiansen ponders plan to revamp London's Royal Opera House: "It is, on the whole, a good and thoughtful proposal," but "I have some questions, reservations and disappointments."
- Klaus Jacob, who predicted the devastation wrought by Superstorm Sandy, explains "why city planners could be making things worse, not better" - "the hottest potato politically, is strategic resettlement."
- Hume cheers as a "long-neglected Toronto neighborhood livens up without succumbing to the sameness that sometimes comes with gentrification" (but for how long before "the corporate carpetbaggers arrive").
- Simpson "sings the praises of slow regeneration" in Berlin, where "both smartly modernist and sculptural and quirky" buildings are "slotting happily into this diverse cityscape."
- NYC welcomes the "dazzling" Fulton Center: "New Yorkers, accustomed to thinking of transit hubs like Penn Station and Times Square as places to suffer through, will find a kind of Crystal Palace."
- Barash brings us a lively Q&A with Tigerman re: the Chicago Architecture Biennial, whose theme "pays homage to his landmark 1977 conference" (the "Statesman of Architecture" is pleased).
- von Hoffmann takes a long look at a new study that looks at how "buildings designed for purposes of contemplation may have positive measurable effects on mental state," though the researchers "conceded that the team 'totally loaded the deck' by examining a horde of architects."
- CTBUH anoints Nouvel/PTW's One Central Park in Sydney the Best Tall Building Worldwide for 2014.
- Eyefuls of the three finalists vying to design the Beethoven concert hall in Bonn.
- Chodikoff is named RAIC's new executive director.
- The Guggenheim appoints Troy Conrad Therrien to a new curatorial position for Architecture and Digital Initiatives, where he'll be very involved with Guggenheim Helsinki Design Competition exhibition of six shortlisted submissions.
- Call for entries: RFQ for New National Gallery and Ludwig Museum in Budapest (jury for the first try found no entries "suitable for implementation"; you'll be up against a stellar invited shortlist of six) + Detroit Station for the Arts international competition for students and young architects.

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-- Ma Yansong: Designing an Imaginary Future: ...he seeks to combine cutting-edge technology with ancient Eastern precepts, and in so doing he hopes to forge a balance between the cosmos, humanity and nature. By Kevin Holden Platt -- MAD Architects
-- 7 Exceptional Concert Halls -- OMA; Henning Larsen Architects; Gehry Partners; Ateliers Jean Nouvel; Paul Andreu Architects; Santiago Calatrava; Snøhetta

George Lucas' museum proposal is needlessly massive: ...represents a fumbled essay in "blob architecture"...The real problem is that Lucas has saddled Ma with an overly ambitious program...This is more than mission creep. It's "mission ooze," as...John King tweeted...confronted by the prospect of a weird blob along the lakefront, it's time for Rahm to tell George: "Take Two." By Blair Kamin -- Ma Yansong/MAD Architects - Chicago Tribune

City unveils boathouse plan for Bridgeport: The architecture world applauded...a striking, Jeanne Gang-designed boathouse on Chicago's North Side...raised a troubling social equity question: When would the mayor make good on his promise to open a comparable facility on the less affluent South Side? Now we have the answer... By Blair Kamin -- Studio Gang Architects [image] - Chicago Tribune

Iconic building alert: waiting for the Frank Gehry effect in Sydney: ...will the new A\$180 million Dr Chau Chak Wing Building at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), become a cultural icon...Or will it instead foist another eyesore on Sydney...with any Gehry building that's pushed the limits comes controversy. By Helen Vatsikopoulos [images] - The Conversation (Australia)

Plans for rising Mid-Market threaten to create aesthetic tangle: It's a sign of progress...Too bad...Too many of the proposals try too hard to be everything at once - flashy but familiar, hip but neighborly, timeless and trendy...creative understatement often is the best way to go. By John King -- BIG-Bjarke Ingels Group; Arquitectonica; Solomon Cordwell Buenz/SCB; McFarlane Partners; Levy Design Partners; Stanton Architecture; Skidmore Owings & Merrill/SOM [images] - San Francisco Chronicle

Why LA Looks the Way It Does, with No Steward of the Built Environment: With no real arbiters with standing, it is lawyers, facilitators, and former government officials that are free to tweak the design of proposed projects to the pleasure and profit of their developer clients - remaining deaf to pledges of public transparency...For whom do we design our cities? By Sam Hall Kaplan - The Planning Report

Frick's Plan for Expansion Faces Fight Over Loss of Garden: Preservation groups opposed to the Frick Collection's plans for a six-story addition say the museum is going back on a 1973 promise to make a garden permanent...prominent design voices weighing in against the museum's plan... By Robin Pogrebin -- Russell Page; Carrère and Hastings; Davis Brody Bond [images] - New York Times

Will this Royal Opera House redevelopment be an improvement? Rupert Christiansen voices his concerns over the £35

million plans...It is, on the whole, a good and thoughtful proposal...I have some questions, reservations and disappointments... -- Dixon Jones (1990s); Stanton Williams - Telegraph (UK)

Are we safe? Of course not: climate scientist's NYC warning after Sandy; Klaus Jacob, who predicted the devastation wrought by 2012 storm, tells Lilah Raptopoulos why city planners could be making things worse, not better, for future generations..."the hottest potato politically, is strategic resettlement." - Guardian (UK)

Bloordale takes back the future: Long-neglected Toronto neighbourhood livens up without succumbing to the sameness that sometimes comes with gentrification...For how much longer remains to be seen...the corporate carpetbaggers have yet to arrive...For the time being...this stretch is blissfully free of the chains that have enveloped cities everywhere with a dreary sense of sameness. By Christopher Hume [images] - Toronto Star

Singing the praises of slow regeneration in Berlin: Cheap rents have long made Berlin a haven for creatives. But the benefits are writ large in the design and construction of a vibrant visual and civic landscape...new and shiny buildings - both smartly modernist and sculptural and quirky - are cropping up...slotting happily into this diverse cityscape. By Veronica Simpson -- Britta Jürgens/Matthew Griffin; AMP; Gil Wilk [images] - FX Magazine / DesignCurial

Out of Dust and Debris, a New Jewel Rises: The dazzling Fulton Center is seen by some as Lower Manhattan's answer to Grand Central Terminal...New Yorkers, accustomed to thinking of transit hubs like Penn Station and Times Square as places to suffer through, will find...a kind of Crystal Palace, crowned by a dome that funnels daylight two stories below ground. By Vivian Yee -- Grimshaw Architects; Arup; James Carpenter Design Associates [images] - New York Times

The State of Art with the Statesman of Architecture: Stanley Tigerman on the Chicago Architecture Biennial: "The theme...pays homage to a landmark 1977 conference..."This Biennial is the beginning of something. Picking up on the phrase "The State of the Art of Architecture" is, to me, an obvious way to begin." By F. Philip Barash -- Joseph Grima; Sarah Herda - Newcity Design (Chicago)

The Brain on Architecture: Looking at buildings designed for purposes of contemplation - like museums, churches, and libraries - may have positive measurable effects on mental state...the decision to use architects was a strategic one...conceded that the team "totally loaded the deck" by examining a horde of architects... By Emily von Hoffmann -- Academy of Neuroscience for Architecture (ANFA) - The Atlantic

Sydney tower named Best Tall Building Worldwide by CTBUH: "There have been major advances in the incorporation of greenery in high-rise buildings over the past few years -- but nothing on the scale of One Central Park has been attempted or achieved." -- Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat; Ateliers Jean Nouvel; PTW [images] - Architecture & Design (Australia)

David Chipperfield Architects among shortlist of three for Beethoven concert hall: Beethoven Festspielhaus along the Rhine river in the composer's hometown of Bonn, Germany. -- kadawittfeldarchitektur; valentiny hyp architects [images] - designboom

The RAIC welcomes a new executive director: Ian Chodikoff, FRAIC...a widely respected architect, urban designer, educator and former editor of Canadian Architect magazine. - Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC)

Guggenheim Creates New Curatorial Position for Architecture and Digital Initiatives: Troy Conrad Therrien Appointed to Advance the Guggenheim's Innovative Programs for Architecture, Urban Studies, and New Digital Initiatives...immediate component of his work will be...Guggenheim Helsinki Design Competition...will help organize an exhibition of six shortlisted submissions... - Guggenheim Museum

Call for entries: Request for Qualifications/RFQ: New National Gallery and Ludwig Museum (in City Park Budapest) open, international, two-stage design competition; no entry fee; total prize money: €325.000; deadline: December 1 - Museum of Fine Arts Budapest / Városliget Zrt.

Call for entries: Detroit Station for the Arts international architectural competition for students and young architects to rehabilitate the abandoned Michigan Central Station; cash prizes; early registration (save money!): December 16 (submissions due March 1, 2015) - ArchMedium

ANN Feature: Spaceship Lucas Lands in Chicago: Given the civic importance of the site, it's difficult to imagine how this vision for "Chicago 2020" [Lucas Museum of Narrative Art] won't stir up a lot of very vocal opposition to it. And rightly so. By Martin C. Pedersen -- Ma Yansong/MAD Architects - ArchNewsNow

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