

Today's News - Tuesday, February 17, 2015

- Kimmelman tackles the sticky wicket of "prison architecture and the question of ethics," and the AIA rejecting ADPSR's proposed amendment: if it's architects' calling to "make the world a better place - is it really too much to ask that the organization representing architects take a stand against projects whose sole purpose is to do the reverse?"
- Parman minces no words about what he thinks of AIA's rejection: "It was the wrong decision. It privileges business-as-usual and displays cowardice."
- Marshall offers a fascinating take on the lessons that can still be learned about urban planning from Las Vegas: "Long before America's current urban revival, the Strip was ditching its street-side car parks for promenades and conceiving its own version of the 'Bilbao effect.'"
- Betsky attempts to describe the "bigness - and beige-ness - in cities": "The city cannot be tamed. We have to figure out how to make our home, our place, and our sense of belonging within its contours. This is the work of architecture."
- Farrelly finds much to like about Nouvel's One Central Park in Sydney well beyond its big budget and "bringing much-needed pedestrian porosity to a disused industrial site clotting the city's heart. It makes sustainability seductive, enchanting, desired. If the design professions had to choose a mission for the future, that should surely be it."
- Bernstein cheers Rick Joy's big win for Princeton with a small train station - and an adjacent WaWa, "which has to be the most sophisticated convenience store ever."
- Rick Mather Architects wins Hay Castle restoration.
- The new German Embassy in Oman "will reflect both German modern architectural design as well as features of classic Omani architecture."
- Miranda has a great Q&A with FLW's Hollyhock House curator Herr re: its restoration, "the surprises they found along the way" (in some trash), and its history: the client "ultimately fired Wright." "Well, if the architect says it will cost \$50,000 to build and it costs three to four times that, it can make you cranky."
- Mount cheers the Landmark Trust that has rescued "desperate, troublesome or unfashionable" old properties by making them useful: "It would be easy to cast us Landmark obsessives as Downton Abbey wannabes. But I don't think that's right. A lot of the buildings are far from grand."
- Moore lists his pick of the "10 best ruins in Britain" that are "worthy of celebration."
- Good news on the education front: Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University is the first Chinese architecture program to be accredited by RIBA (kudos to our friend Austin Williams!) + Portland State University launches a Graduate Certificate in Public Interest Design.
- On a possibly more dubious note, the U.K.'s University of Warwick has big plans for a 6,000-student campus near Sacramento, California, but it's drawing criticism "for using a college campus as a stalking horse to get development approvals" (i.e. homes and businesses - sounds like a recipe for sprawl to us).
- Robert Robinson Taylor, "believed to have been both the first African-American graduate of MIT and the nation's first academically trained black architect," is honored with a postage stamp.
- Call for entries: Bangkok: I Am Fashion Hub open ideas competition (registration deadline looms!) + 2015 Brick in Architecture Awards + Barcelona's Monumental Future: design a new use for the city's old bullring.

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Prison Architecture and the Question of Ethics: Legality and morality are rising issues for architects: ...American Institute of Architects rejected a petition to censure members who design solitary-confinement cells and death chambers..."Many...believe they can make the world a better place..." So is it really too much to ask that the organization representing architects take a stand against projects whose sole purpose is to do the reverse? By Michael Kimmelman -- Raphael Sperry/Architects/Designers/Planners for Social Responsibility (ADPSR) - New York Times

Fifty Shades of Dismay: ...AIA declined to accept an amendment to its ethics code...It was the wrong decision...The resolution that ADPSR put forward is a finger in this dike, but it's our finger - our opportunity as a field to speak out against powers that torture and kill...The AIA's refusal endorses these powers and ignores the wishes of many of its urban constituents. It privileges business-as-usual and displays cowardice. By John J. Parman - Medium

Learning from Las Vegas: what the Strip can teach us about urban planning: Long before America's current urban revival, the Strip was ditching its streetside car parks for promenades and conceiving its own version of the 'Bilbao effect'...nobody remotely describable as a "tastemaker" has yet taken over..."in spite of these looser planning conditions, corporations became interested in implementing good planning and urban design principles." By Colin Marshall -- Robert Venturi; Denise Scott Brown; Steven Izenour [images] - Guardian (UK)

How Do You Describe the Bigness of Cities? Megalopolises offer...an intricacy of scale, texture, and imagery...Then there is speed...Only cars seem to move slower...The city, with all its bigness, complexity, and speed, has become a miasma...cannot be tamed...We have to figure out how to make our home, our place, and our sense of belonging...within its contours. This is the work of architecture. By Aaron Betsky - Architect Magazine

One Central Park, Sydney: The most engaging thing about the immense mixed-use development...is neither its \$1.6 billion price tag nor its role in bringing much-needed pedestrian porosity to a disused industrial site clotting Sydney's heart...It makes sustainability seductive, enchanting, desired. If the design professions had to choose a mission for the future, that should surely be it. By Elizabeth Farrelly -- Ateliers Jean Nouvel [images] - Architectural Record

First Look: Rick Joy Architects's Princeton Train Station: ...a win for Princeton, which has sometimes stumbled in its efforts to move beyond its Collegiate Gothic past. Joy's station...suggests the Gothic, with its cathedral-like interior. But the suggestion is a gentle one...designed several adjacent structures, including a new WaWa, which has to be the most sophisticated convenience store ever. By Fred A. Bernstein [images] - Architectural Record

Rick Mather Architects wins Hay Castle restoration: ...will see the

once-great medieval stronghold in Hay-on-Wye - known as the town of books - opened to the public year-round for the first time. -- Acanthus Clews Architects; Jeremy Rye Studio [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Omani footprint in new German embassy building: ..."will reflect both German modern architectural design as well as features of classic Omani architecture"... -- Hoehler+Partner [image]- Times of Oman

Q&A: Curator Jeffrey Herr on restoration, trash digging at Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House: ...what makes the house so special, the surprises they found along the way and how, through a little sleuthing, they were able to re-create important period details...Aline Barnsdall ultimately fired Wright. "Well, if the architect says it will cost \$50,000 to build and it costs three to four times that, it can make you cranky." By Carolina A. Miranda - Los Angeles Times

The Landmark Trust: Wonderful old buildings with staying power: From inauspicious beginnings, the Landmark Trust has proved that the best way to save old properties is to make them useful...It would be easy to cast us Landmark obsessives as Downton Abbey wannabes. But I don't think that's right. A lot of the buildings are far from grand. By Harry Mount - Telegraph (UK)

The 10 best ruins in Britain: Britain is rightly known for its great stately houses, castles and churches – and its ruins are also worthy of celebration. By Rowan Moore -- Isi Metzstein/Andy MacMillan [images]- Observer (UK)

XJTLU Becomes First Chinese Architecture Course with Unconditional RIBA Accreditation: ...awarded unconditional RIBA Part 1 accreditation to the undergraduate program at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University in Suzhou...the first Chinese architecture program to be certified by the UK architecture body...set up in 2011, the architecture program has rapidly become one of China's most prestigious architecture courses- ArchDaily

Center for Public Interest Design [at Portland State University School of Architecture] launches Graduate Certificate in Public Interest Design: ...created as a means to prepare future leaders in architecture, urban planning, sustainability, community development and other fields to aid currently underserved populations through sustainable, human-centered design methods. - Portland State University

U.K. University of Warwick to move forward on Placer County campus: ...on a patch of farmland...donated by a partnership led by one of Sacramento's leading land developers...goal is a 6,000-student campus...west of Roseville...to be located on 1,159 acres...About half the land will be used to build the campus. The rest will be developed with homes and businesses...criticized by some environmental groups for using a college campus in order to get development approvals for other landholdings...- Sacramento Bee (California)

Architect Robert Robinson Taylor Honored in Black Heritage Stamp Collection: [His] designs shaped the Tuskegee Institute, as well as buildings around the Southern United States and Liberia...believed to have been both the first African-American graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the nation's first academically trained black architect. - Architect Magazine

Call for entries (registration deadline reminder!): Bangkok: I Am Fashion Hub open ideas competition (international); cash prizes; registration deadline: February 25 (submissions due March 16)- HMMMD / Homemade Dessert

Call for entries: 2015 Brick in Architecture Awards (U.S., Canada, and U.S. territories); deadline: April 30- Brick Industry Association

Call for entries: Barcelona's Monumental Future: design a new use for Barcelona's old bullring La Monumenta; international architecture competition for students and young architects; cash prizes; earlybird registration deadline (save money!): February 27 (submissions due March 30)- Archchallenge

Delicately Rearranging Intangibles in Public Space: The Art of Rogers Partners Architects+Urban Designers in "Learning Through Practice": A new monograph highlights transformative designs by a firm strikingly dedicated to re-enchanting public space. By Norman Weinstein [images]- ArchNewsNow

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