

Today's News - Thursday, June 18, 2015

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tomorrow is this week's "floating" no-newsletter day - we'll be back Monday, June 22.

- ArcSpace brings us details of "Snøhetta - World Architecture," opening at the DAC in Copenhagen today, which "gives a unique insight to the talented people, crazy projects, and the alternative thinking" inside the firm's universe.
- Architects pay tribute to Charles Correa + Olcayto's 2013 interview with the master.
- Hurst hails the 2015 RIBA National Awards winners that show how "architects are wringing every drop of firmness, commodity and delight out of ultra-tight budgets."
- Wainwright x 2: "this year's RIBA awards recognize the best - and worst - of British housing" - with "an absence of the flashy cultural projects that usually dominate the gong."
- He offers a terrific where-are-they-now by tracking down Serpentine pavilions: "what happens to these starchitect baubles after their summer in the sun?" (with fab photos of many in their then and now states).
- Bridger delves into a Baugruppen project in Berlin, an architect-led co-housing development: the "revolution to-be in housing is not perfect, though, at the very least, it certainly promises something different."
- Anderton checks out UCLA's BIHOME: "Can LA solve its affordable housing crisis with portable plastic outdoor homes where we live alongside lizards?" (we're game!).
- McGuirk cheers the "rise in commonly owned spaces and services," and efforts "to reclaim the city for the public good. But how can it be upscaled from local garden projects? In theory, at least, the commons is full of radical potential."
- King gives two thumbs-ups to San Francisco's new Boys & Girls Club "that makes everything around it better, including the lives of children who otherwise might have few options. The quality of the design, its understated strength and hints of youthful spirit - that's the icing on the cake."
- Eye-fuls of a gaggle of cabins at a Swiss campground offer the bare basics "along with a hefty dollop of architectural panache."
- Rogers and Smithson pen "an impassioned open letter to all architects" in a last-ditch attempt to save Robin Hood Gardens.
- A new report offers evidence of the lower cost of timber-built commercial buildings.
- Eye candy for the day x 2: a new Chinese history museum with an "anti-gravity feel."
- Babina's "Archidirector": 27 imaginary movie director-designed homes (too bad some aren't real!).
- Call for entries: EOI for Tintagel Castle: Bridge Design Competition for a structurally-daring cliff-top footbridge in Cornwall.
- Weekend diversions:
- Calatrava takes over three blocks of Park Avenue with seven blade-like sculptures (and they're not all white!).
- Dunlap delves into what the Summer Solstice on Sunday will bring to Grimshaw/Carpenter's Fulton Center in Lower Manhattan: "Druids, take note" (though the weather gods may not be on their side).
- WAF London showcases a selection of the WAF 2015 shortlisted projects in "a magnetically suspended gallery" designed Populous.
- Heathcote hails Hatherley's "Landscapes of Communism: A History Through Buildings": it is "hugely ambitious. But he also treads too carefully in his critiques."

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"Snøhetta - World Architecture" at the Danish Architecture Centre in Copenhagen: ...gives a unique insight to the talented people, crazy projects and the alternative thinking that have gained this Norwegian architecture firm worldwide fame...inviting you to step into Snøhetta's office, workshops and universe. June 18 - September 27 [images]

Architects pay tribute to Charles Correa + Rory Olcayto's 2013 interview with Correa -- David Adjaye/Adjaye Associates; Stephen Hodder/RIBA; Angela Brady; Lucy Mori/Edward Williams Architects - The Architects' Journal (UK)

Will Hurst: RIBA winners still delight despite climate of austerity: This year's winning schemes have overcome severe budgetary constraints through ingenuity and close co-operation with clients...architects are wringing every drop of firmness, commodity and delight out of ultra-tight budgets and prioritising flexibility to ensure these schemes are built to last. All in all, it's a far cry from the 'wow factor' architecture promoted by John Prescott only a decade ago. - The Architects' Journal (UK)

Raising the roof: housing schemes toasted in RIBA awards: From a functional Glasgow tenement to a controversial megalith of glass and steel on London's South Bank, this year's awards recognise the best -- and worst -- of British housing: ...there is an absence of the flashy cultural projects that usually dominate the gong... By Oliver Wainwright -- Elder and Cannon Architects; Page\Park; Niall McLaughlin; Duggan Morris Architects; Evans Vettori Architects; Richard Rogers; Skene Catling de la Peña; Alford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM); Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands [images] - Guardian (UK)

Beach cafe, billionaire's retreat, wedding marquee: second lives of the Serpentine pavilions: Everyone from Ai Weiwei and Frank Gehry to Zaha Hadid has designed a folly...but what happens to these starchitect baubles after their summer in the sun? ...most pavilions have been sold off to private collectors + Julia Peyton-Jones on 15 years of selling the Serpentine pavilions. By Oliver Wainwright -- Smiljan Radic; Daniel Libeskind; Toyo Ito; Herzog & de Meuron; Selgas Cano [images] - Guardian (UK)

Don't Call It A Commune: The architect-led, collectively funded R50 Baugruppen project in Berlin is a new model for housing: ...cohousing project...to demonstrate how people can act as developers of their own homes...revolution to-be in housing is not perfect, though, at the very least, it certainly promises something different. By Jessica Bridger -- ifau; Jesko Fezer; Heide & von Beckerath [images] - Metropolis Magazine

DnA/Frances Anderton: Could Affordable Eco-Housing Be in Your Backyard? Can LA solve its affordable housing crisis with portable plastic outdoor homes where we live alongside lizards? ...BIHOME, an energy-efficient and low-water using "lightweight cottage"...the creation of students in UCLA's departments of architecture and urban design (aka cityLAB), and the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability... -- Dana Cuff; Kevin Daly; Jon Christensen; Ursula Heise [images] - KCRW (Los Angeles)

Urban commons have radical potential - it's not just about community gardens: A rise in commonly owned spaces and services hopes to reclaim the city for the public good, providing a participatory alternative to exclusive urban development. But how can it be upscaled from local garden projects? By Justin McGuirk -- Atelier d'Architecture Autogérée; "Designing the Urban Commons" at the LSE - Guardian (UK)

Boys & Girls Club design enhances surroundings, and kids' lives: Don Fisher Clubhouse - a poised presence...that makes everything around it better, including the lives of children who otherwise might have few options...here's a message as

well...Not all of the physical bounty of our current boom is off-limits to the less-well-off...The quality of the design, its understated strength and hints of youthful spirit ... that's the icing on the cake. By John King -- TEF Design [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

Gone camping: a new scheme in Switzerland's Jura promises a perfect blend of nature and architecture: Touching the ground lightly (if at all)...contemporary structures...offering the bare basics to their guests - along with a hefty dollop of architectural panache. -- Sylvain Dubail/dB/dubail begert/architectes; Architectural Farm; Knowspace; LoT; Arquitectos Matos; Anonymous; BXB Studio; Loic Picquet; Haberstroh [images]- Wallpaper\*

Richard Rogers: 'Deluge heritage minister with appeals to list Robin Hood Gardens'; ...has teamed up with his colleague Simon Smithson, son of the scheme's architects, Alison and Peter Smithson, in a last-ditch attempt to save it...They have written an impassioned open letter to all architects... - BD/Building Design (UK)

Timber buildings - evidence of lower costs emerge; New research appears to prove the case and the timber development sector is educating the rest of the industry..."Commercial Building Costing Cases Studies – Traditional Design versus Timber Project". By Willow Aliento- The Fifth Estate (Australia)

Atelier Alter and Hordor Design create Chinese history museum with 'anti-gravity feel': Qujing Culture Center in Yunnan, China will house some of China's oldest and most precious artefacts...its huge structural parts are stepped out...and balanced on a small podium at one end, so it appears to be hovering. [images]- CLAD (Community of Leisure Architects & Designers)

Federico Babina illustrates the imaginary architecture of movie director-designed homes: "Archidirector"...27 imaginary houses that correlate to a collection of famous film directors, from Wes Anderson to Stanley Kubrick. [images]- designboom

Call for entries: Expression of Interest (EOI): Tintagel Castle: Bridge Design Competition; international, two-stage competition for a structurally-daring cliff-top footbridge in Cornwall; Stage 1 deadline: July 21 - Malcolm Reading Consultants / English Heritage

Santiago Calatrava brings his signature style to Park Avenue: ...seven blade-like sculptures...have an expressive form that is classic Calatrava, but are not the all-white creations...between 52nd and 55th Streets. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Sunlight on Summer Solstice Will Light Up Fulton Center Hub: The sun's rays will burnish the Sky Reflector-Net, a 79-foot-high convex tracery of aluminum panels and stainless steel cables in the transit center's atrium, for more than nine hours on Sunday...Druids, take note...Whether anyone will call it Stonehenge remains to be seen. By David W. Dunlap -- Arup; Grimshaw Architects; James Carpenter Design Associates [images]- New York Times

WAF London announces showcase for the global architecture community, June 24-27: ...a free showcase of international, game changing architecture and design...Populous to create a magnetically suspended gallery that will display all the WAF 2015 shortlisted projects. - World Architecture Festival (WAF)

"Landscapes of Communism: A History Through Buildings" by Owen Hatherley: A study of Soviet-era architecture highlights much that was valuable but treads lightly in its critiques: ...a determinedly socialist chronicler of the dire state of British cities...tours...the urban infrastructure of communism to see if something can be learnt...The answer is no, not really. But also, tantalisingly, perhaps, a little bit yes...hugely ambitious...But he also treads too carefully in his critiques. By Edwin Heathcote- Financial Times (UK)

ANN feature: Keeping Supertalls Grounded, Connected: Q&A with SWA's John Wong, FASLA, FAAR: Tall buildings "are beautiful, sleek structures, truly awe-inspiring, but a lot of a building's long-term economic success is dependent on the integration and beauty at the ground level." [images]- ArchNewsNow.com

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