

Today's News - Monday, November 9, 2015

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tomorrow will be a no-newsletter day. We'll be back Wednesday, November 11.

- Escher takes Giovannini to task for his "insulting and condescending tone" in articles criticizing Zumthor's LACMA plans: "His platitudes become tiresome" - politics and architecture "have little do with each other and muddling these issues serves no one."
- McKenna continues his mourning for Edinburgh's beauty being ravaged by "small minds" of the city council's "numpties and panjandrums" who, after approving "a vast gold-plated hotel," are about to sign off on "another hotel for the elite" that has "the appearance of Mickey Mouse's head."
- Rinaldi ponders the pros and cons of design review rules: "Ugly might be hard to define, but there is widespread agreement that it's on the rise. So are regulations. Would design rules create a better-looking city?"
- Schumacher has issues with renderings for Milwaukee's Lakefront Gateway Plaza, in which most of the people "are white and dripping with hipster chic" - and even the design team agrees: "In hindsight, I'm not sure I can explain why it happened, but it shouldn't have happened."
- After years of urban decay and civil war, Koffi & Diabate Architectes is determined to improve its home town of Abidjan, Ivory Coast, through design.
- Cohen delves into why "preservation of existing buildings might be key for enhancing a city's sustainability," but "advocacy will likely do little without significant policy reform."
- Bey queries Ross Barney re: why "good design is social justice - and her hope to design the Obama Library."
- The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects' new president "aims to arm members with sound economic arguments to ensure a more 'landscape led' approach to the urban environment that would see green infrastructure embedded into all projects."
- Eye-fuls of Adjaye's almost completed Aishti Foundation in Beirut, a seafront project that combines "two, often conflicting, worlds" - an art gallery and shopping center.
- Wayne Richards revisits Diamond Schmitt's 1985 YMCA in downtown Toronto that is not "just one more" on its long project list: "the Y continues to endure, resonate and inspire. The building transcends matters of style."
- An international team of architects, engineers, and scientists have big plans to rebuild a colossal, 400-foot-tall Colossus of Rhodes housing a library, museum, and more, and would be clad "in golden solar panels, making it entirely self-sufficient, which is appropriate for the Greek god of the sun."
- To "understand what the city of the future might look like, a good place to start would be" the WAF Award winners: "It's the best in breed and the best in show"; World Building of the Year goes to OMA/Buro Ole Scheeren (sorry - this future looks scary to us).
- Eye-fuls of the Australian Institute of Architects 2015 National Architecture Awards (a very small barn in Tasmania included). - The 39 U.S. DOT 2015 TIGER Grant winners divvy up \$500 million; standout projects include BRT and bike trails.
- One we couldn't resist: "20 design words you should never use: Aspirational: Euphemism for extremely and unnecessarily expensive."
- Call for entries: Storefront's Taking Buildings Down - removal is all that is allowed + 2016 North American Copper in Architecture Awards.

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Comment> The Case for Peter Zumthor: Architecture and the court of public opinion: We should remember why Rem Koolhaas'...scheme for LACMA's campus project was abandoned...one must separate politics from architecture. They have little to do with each other and muddling these issues serves no one...Let us distinguish between architecture that is complex and architecture that is complicated. By Frank Escher/Escher GuneWardena -- Joseph Giovannini- The Architect's Newspaper

Small minds are ravaging Edinburgh's beauty: The city's great buildings were created by people who loved the city. They are being demolished by those who don't: Depressingly, the numpties and panjandrums...on Edinburgh city council have squandered the opportunity to heal the wounds of the past...Plans to turn Old Royal High School into another hotel for the elite, complete with two free-standing accommodation blocks, give it the appearance of Mickey Mouse's head. This school...is one of the crown jewels of Scotland's built heritage. By Kevin McKenna- Guardian (UK)

Denver architecture: Would design rules create a better-looking city? Everyone in the building business admits some unease over government-imposed design review...Yet nearly everyone backs them...Ugly might be hard to define, but there is widespread agreement that it's on the rise. So are regulations...Would widespread design review save more of Denver? By Ray Mark Rinaldi- Denver Post

In Renderland, including designs for lakefront project, few faces of color: ...increasingly photorealistic renderings...help us imagine a not-too-distant future...And that is especially problematic when nearly all of the people in a rendering are white and dripping with hipster chic...In what should be a representation of one of the most democratizing spaces in one of the most racially segregated cities in the United States, the renderings for Lakefront Gateway Plaza included very few people of color. "It's a legitimate criticism," said John Kissinger..."In hindsight, I'm not sure I can explain why it happened, but it shouldn't have happened." By Mary Louise Schumacher -- Graef; PFS Studio; Rinka Chung Architecture- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

The architects planning to reshape urban Africa: In Ivory Coast, years of urban decay and civil war have left some parts of the capital Abidjan in a bad state...But Issa Diabate, co-founder of Koffi & Diabate Architects...is determined to improve the city through design. [video]- BBC (UK)

Amid Focus on Sustainable Cities, Promoting Preservation Is Key: You might roll your eyes at NIMBYs every time they cry "neighborhood preservation" in the name of stopping change. But...preservation of existing buildings might be key for enhancing a city's sustainability...advocacy will likely do little without significant policy reform. By Josh Cohen -- Jean Carroon/Goody Clancy; Preservation Green Lab/National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP)/Urban Land Institute (ULI)- Next City (formerly Next American City)

Good design is social justice, says Carol Ross Barney: Accomplished architect discusses her recent work, how and why it was designed, the recognition, and her hope to design the Obama Library. By Lee Bey [audio]- Rivet Radio

Daniel Bennett on landscape architecture and liveable cities: The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects' newly appointed president aims to arm...members with sound economic arguments for the importance of landscape in achieving liveable and sustainable cities...to ensure a more "landscape led" approach to the urban environment...would be part of the advocacy for a National Green Infrastructure Policy that would see green infrastructure embedded into all projects. -- AILA- The Fifth Estate (Australia)

Adjaye Associates unwraps Beirut seafront project: Art gallery and shopping centre presented typological challenge...Aishti Foundation building is nearing completion on a brownfield coastal site..."The juxtaposition of art and shopping presented the practice with the challenge to create a design for an entirely new typology that would integrate two, often conflicting, worlds." [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Metropolitan Central YMCA: Larry Wayne Richards revisits Diamond Schmitt Architects' YMCA in downtown Toronto...a small modest project that could easily be "just one more" on Diamond Schmitt's long project list. But this is not the case: the Y continues to endure, resonate and inspire...The building transcends matters of style. [images]- Canadian Architect

One of the grandest structures of the ancient world could be reborn: ...a plan put forth...seeks to rebuild the ancient statue [Colossus of Rhodes]...At 400 feet tall, the new Helios would be nearly four times the height of the original...includes an interior

library, museum, cultural center, exhibition hall, and, of course, a crowning lighthouse...exterior would be completely covered in golden solar panels, making it entirely self-sufficient, which is appropriate for the Greek god of the sun. -- Ari A. Palla; Ombretta Iannone, etc. [images]- Business Insider

And the World Building of the Year is...: If you want to understand what the city of the future might look like, a good place to start would be [the] World Architecture Festival (WAF)... "It's the best in breed and the best in show," says Paul Finch... This year's top honor... the Interlace - an ambitious residential development in Singapore - by OMA and Buro Ole Scheeren. -- BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group; Turenscape International; DineelJohansson; Yazgan Design Architecture; etc. [images]- CNN

2015 National Architecture Awards announced by the Australian Institute of Architects: ...from "a nationally significant cultural destination" to a very small barn in Tasmania. -- ARM Architecture; Fender Katsalidis Architects; John Wardle Architects/NADAAA; JPW; Tzannes Associates; Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp (FJMT); Jackson Clements Burrows Architects; workbyizandalex; Hassell; Howlett & Bailey Architects; Koning Eizenberg Architecture; etc. [images]- ArchitectureAU (Australia)

2015 TIGER Grant Standouts for Cities Go to BRT, Bike Trails and More: The U.S. Department of Transportation announced the seventh batch of Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery awards...\$500 million in grants to 39 projects in 34 states. - Next City (formerly Next American City)

20 design words you should never use: From "artisanal" to "timeless", these words are the most slippery and overused in the design industry: Aspirational: Euphemism for extremely and unnecessarily expensive... Timeless: Designed to last but destined to be replaced next year. - Icon (UK)

Call for entries: Call for Ideas: Taking Buildings Down - The Competition of the Competition of Competitions: proposals for the production of voids; the demolition of buildings, structures, and infrastructures; or the subtraction of objects and/or matter as a creative act. Removal is all that is allowed; cash prizes; registration deadline: January 12, 2016 (submissions due January 20, 2016)- Storefront for Art and Architecture

Call for Entries: 2016 North American Copper in Architecture Awards outstanding application of architectural copper alloys; deadline: January 31, 2016- Copper Development Association/Canadian Copper & Brass Development Association

A More Active Approach to Design Can Save Lives: Businesses are investing billions to make their workspaces more environmentally sustainable. But they should also consider how sustainable those workspaces are for the human beings who work in them. By Jonathan Webb- ArchNewsNow.com



OMA: A new art space for Fondazione Prada located in a former industrial complex [in Milan] may sound like the cliché of the 21st century gallery. It is, however, anything but: ...it is undoubtedly the zenith of the collaboration between the two cultural powerhouses... Totally open to the city and rooted in the existing fabric of the site... a provocative and totally new kind of art space... By Nina Tory-Henderson [images]

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