

Today's News - Tuesday, January 26, 2016

- ArcSpace brings us Kiser's take (and great pix!) of the Len Lye Centre in New Zealand: "its sculptural steel exterior and subtle kinetic interior light shifts embody and personify Lye and his body of work."
- Kennicott ponders why we need to build another World War I memorial, and parses why none of the five finalists' designs "rises to a standard" that should be championed - the "same clichés keep recurring"; meanwhile, we'll know who the winner at 2pm today.
- Capps parses how "Chicago leaders are horse-trading with the cultural resources of poorer neighborhoods" and "setting a dangerous precedent" in its plans for the Obama Library - excellent points made (but a regrettable "bound to fail" title).
- Welton cheers the coming of Raleigh's 308-acre Dix Park, and hopes the city is up to the challenge of getting it right, which "means looking back to the recent past for lessons learned from the politics of design" (with tips from some notable landscape architects who might be in the running for the master plan).
- A fascinating look at "why Copenhagen is building parks that can turn into ponds": they're "cheaper - and more fun" than a massive sewer expansion, with a "remarkable payback for society as a whole."
- While proposed style guides to regulate Sydney's architecture may be well-meaning, they could "ultimately be abused. The issue falls down to the difference between the roles of a planner and a designer."
- Kimmelman cheers two NYC projects that are "proof that affordable housing can still be done right. Neither project splurged on design, but in both cases, architecture mattered, to save energy, improve the neighborhood, spread dignity, add joy" (dignity and joy - a joy to hear!).
- Budds looks at a "bold experiment" in New Orleans as a model of "design for the 50%" - i.e., homes the middle class can afford.
- De la Mare explains "why schools and hospitals should be more like theme parks" ("delight," "surprise" - and dare we say joy - included).
- A North Carolina startup "is using bacteria to grow bricks from scratch" (heat and clay not needed).
- Widmer pens a most eloquent ode to Sert, "a Mediterranean humanist who lost his way in Boston's skyline."
- Heritage conservation architect Flaman bemoans the fate of Wiens' Siltan Chapel, a Modernist masterpiece: "For the lack of eight glulam beams, we may lose another critically important and poetic piece of Canadian architecture" (amazing pix!).
- Zeiger cheers Hejduk's The House of the Suicide memorial (finally) finding a new life in Prague: "These projects have been looking for a home for 30 years."
- Volner spends some serious time at Yale's "Place & Pedagogy" exhibition - and with soon-to-be former Dean Stern - to explore the school's legacy - and Stern's own: he "says he'll keep pacing the winding hallways of Rudolph Hall as long as they'll let him."
- Three finalists in the running to win the PXSTL design-build competition in St. Louis.
- Call for entries: International competition to design a 3-hectare urban park in Prato (Tuscany), Italy + Mies van der Rohe Foundation's "Fear of Columns" international competition to design a temporary recreation of the columns and pedestals for Mies's 1929 Barcelona Pavilion + Association of Siamese Architects International Design Competition 2016: What is the new "Basic"?

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Patterners Associates: Len Lye Centre, New Plymouth, New Zealand: The building's design, with its sculptural steel exterior and subtle kinetic interior light shifts, embodies and personifies Len Lye and his body of work. By Kirsten Kiser [\[images\]](#)

America is chock-full of World War I memorials, so why build another one? All five of the designs obliterate [M. Paul Friedberg's Pershing Park], rather than building on it...None of the proposals...rises to a standard the commission should champion...Something has clearly gone wrong not just in the design competition, but also more fundamentally in the language of memorialization prevalent today. It is, in a word, exhausted. The same clichés keep recurring... By Philip Kennicott -- Johnsen Schmalig Architects; Kimmel Studio; Joseph Weishaar; STL Architects; Counts Studios [\[images\]](#)- Washington Post

Why the Obama Presidential Library Is Bound To Fail: It will be beautiful, sure. But Chicago leaders are horse-trading with the cultural resources of poorer neighborhoods: ...setting a dangerous precedent...taking 20 acres from [Jackson Park or Washington Park]...Essentially, the Barack Obama Foundation gets an Olmsted park for its yard...There are many alternatives... By Kriston Capps -- John Ronan Architects; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects; SHoP Architects; Snøhetta; Renzo Piano; David Adjaye - CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

Doing right by Raleigh's Dix Park: Breathtaking seems the best adjective for the 308-acre property...the only aspect more breathtaking than its size, scope and beauty is how far-reaching a challenge this rolling, wooded landscape presents the city. Its development as a park calls for solutions that get it right...That means looking back to the recent past for lessons learned from the politics of design. By J. Michael Welton - News & Observer (North Carolina)

Why Copenhagen Is Building Parks That Can Turn Into Ponds: Instead of massive sewer expansion to prepare for climate change, the city chose something cheaper - and more fun: ...a holistic approach placing citizens at the heart of future-proofing their own city has remarkable payback for society as a whole. -- Tredje Natur [\[images\]](#)- Citiscope.org

Style Guides Should not Regulate Sydney's Architecture: ...while well-meaning, could be a dangerous move. The design of cities often becomes a debate between innovation and uniformity...The problem...is that they will ultimately be used and abused...The issue falls down to the difference between the roles of a planner and a designer...If...a Style Guide does occur, then we need a completely new approach to how this is done. By Chris Johnson/Urban Taskforce Australia - Sourceable

How to Build Affordable Housing in New York City: Recent projects in which public housing was renovated by private developers could show a path forward: ...proof that affordable housing can still be done right...Neither project splurged on design, but in both cases, architecture mattered, to save energy, improve the neighborhood, spread dignity, add joy. By Michael Kimmelman -- Perkins Eastman; SCAPE Landscape Architecture - New York Times

A Bold Experiment In Building Homes The Middle Class Can Afford: Homeownership has become the great American (pipe) dream: ...Starter Home* program - a model of infill development that turns underused, unbuildable lots into entry-level residences...There's a lot of attention paid to the lower end...and likewise on the high end...But nobody is looking at the middle"...strategy could be applied to any city where infill development on vacant land is a possibility. By Diana Budds -- Jonathan Tate [\[images\]](#)- Fast Company / Co.Design

Why Schools And Hospitals Should Be More Like Theme Parks: Understanding how designers create theme parks could help us reimagine our most important social institutions...Great design starts by following the rhythms of life and one's heart. It ends with something that delights, surprises, and even exceeds users' expectations. By Nick de la Mare/Big Tomorrow - Fast Company / Co.Design

[How This Startup Is Using Bacteria to Grow Bricks From Scratch: North Carolina-based startup BioMason has found a way to create masonry without heat or clay.](#) - Inc. magazine

[How a Mediterranean humanist lost his way in Boston's skyline: ...it is surprising that the city fathers turned over some of the most coveted commissions...to a Barcelona architect...in his eagerness to secure commissions, he developed a tin ear for what he once claimed to hear - the voice of the people...He made mistakes, but his architecture is as indelibly woven into the city's fabric as that of Bulfinch or Richardson, and his overreach can teach as effectively as his early idealism.](#) By Ted Widmer -- Josep Luis Sert- Boston Globe

[Looking Back: Clifford Wiens' rural Silton Chapel is suffering from worrisome deterioration: It's a story that is playing out again and again across Canada, where churches...are struggling to deal with maintenance. Except...instead of Gothic or Romanesque revival architecture...it is a Modernist masterpiece...For the lack of eight glulam beams, we may lose another critically important and poetic piece of Canadian architecture...](#) By Bernard Flaman [images]- Canadian Architect

[John Hejduk's The House of the Suicide structures get new life in Prague: ...designed in the late 1980s as an ephemeral memorial...permanent versions of the two structures were installed in Jan Palach Square...It took a long time for The House of the Suicide and the House of the Mother of the Suicide to find their way to the square..."These projects have been looking for a home for 30 years"...](#) By Mimi Zeiger -- James Williamson; MCA Studio; Václav Králíček [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

[The Dean's Parting Show: Robert A.M. Stern will step down from his post at the Yale School of Architecture this year, but not before helping to curate an exhibition that explores the school's legacy - and his own: What the future holds for Yale - what Deborah Berke's panel in "Place & Pedagogy" might look like - is anyone's guess, but Stern says he'll keep pacing the winding hallways of Rudolph Hall as long as they'll let him.](#) By Ian Volner - Architect Magazine

[Three finalists named in PXSTL design-build competition: The Pulitzer Arts Foundation and the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis...culled from a list of 35 artist, architects, and designers solicited by the organizer. -- Merve Bedir/Jason Hilgert/Land+Civilization Compositions; Mary Ellen Carroll; Amanda Williams/Andres L. Hernandez - The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Call for entries: Parco Centrale di Prato: International two-phase design competition for a new 3-hectare urban park in Prato \(Tuscany\), Italy; deadline: February 29- Municipality of Prato \(Italy\)](#)

[Call for entries: Mies van der Rohe Foundation's "Fear of Columns" \(international\): a temporary recreation of the eight columns and two pedestals that presided over the Barcelona Pavilion in 1929, to be installed for five months; deadline: February 29- Mies van der Rohe Foundation](#)

[Call for entries: ASA International Design Competition 2016: What is the new 'Basic'?; cash prizes; free registration; deadline: March 15- Association of Siamese Architects under Royal Patronage](#)

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