• lovemore: Ouroussoff "moving on" leaves us wondering if the NYT will replace him; "at least he was there writing about architecture for the general public, one of the last of a rare breed" (we wish him all good things).
• Gwathmey Siegel adds a third name with a new majority share holder (we're just glad they're keeping Charlie's name).
• Public spaces get public airings everywhere: High Line Part Deux opens today to cheers for being an "economic dynamo" for the city - its $115 million investment spawned $2 billion in private investment dubbed "Architects Row."
• On the other side of Manhattan Island, South Street Seaport goes back to the drawing board ("after 40 years of missteps"); "Any effective design must carefully balance retail space with public space for the community."
• Maya Lin redesigns Newport, RI's Queen Anne Square "to make the space more inviting to visitors after years of decline" and honor Doris Duke.
• Kucharek finds the opera company's "demountable home" the "product of a weird and wonderful collaboration."
• Hawthorne gives a qualified thumbs-up to Ojai Music Festival's new pavilion: "Is challenging music somehow less threatening than challenging architecture?"
• Gruber has a gripe about Santa Monica Landmarks Commission wanting control over the design process of City Hall's front yard that "is inhospitable and boring" and "cries out for a re-design" (already in the works by Corner's team who assumed it had "a rather free hand.").
• The Dead Hand of the Present: Santa Monica Landmarks Commission turned the nondescript plaza in front of City Hall into the equivalent of a landmark...the designers were thought to have a rather free hand...gives the commission control over the design process...City Hall's front yard is inhospitable and boring...The place cries out for a re-
• Kamin on the iffy future of Gang's Ford Calumet Environmental Center: "If you're an optimist, it's on hiatus. If you're a pessimist, it's just been given the kiss of death."
"Nature is a brilliant engineer": In her cutting-edge research at MIT, Israeli-born architect Neri Oxman aims to apply naturally occurring physical processes to the design of objects and buildings. “You have to have a large degree of naivete to invest in research of my kind. I can’t live without naivete; it gives me the freedom to imagine.” By Noam Dvir — Paola Antonelli/MoMA; Eran Neuman/Tel Aviv University; Zaha Hadid; Frank Gehry — Ha`aretz (Israel)

Jeanne Gang’s Ford Calumet Environmental Center is either a) on hold; or b) dead: Consider this a Rorschach test: If you’re an optimist, the Ford center is on hiatus. If you’re a pessimist, it’s just been given the kiss of death. By Blair Kamin — Studio Gang Architects — Chicago Tribune

Wandering minstrel: Scene changer: Designing an opera pavilion that can be trucked off to Northampton for the winter demanded a flexible approach...Garsington Opera’s handsome new £1.8m demountable home...pavilion is the product of a weird and wonderful collaboration...it took a lot of concentrated thought and work for a building that will only exist for three months a year. By Jan-Carlos Kucharek — Snell Associates; Space Sound Consultants — RIBA Journal (UK)

Crit> Museo Soumaya, Mexico City: Is Fernando Romero's museum more than an iconic sculpture?...while a gorgeous object, rises pretentiously, with troubled construction techniques and flawed exhibition design...while it possesses a strong formality on the exterior, the same cannot be said about the interior. By Luis Othon Villegas — Fernando Romero Enterprise/EFFEE — The Architect's Newspaper

Ghost Lab 13, June 14-17: Plotting a New Course for Architecture; A conference organized by Brian MacKay-Lyons aims to push locavore design to the forefront...to counter the numbing effects of globalization and a design culture that seems to favor theory over craft and spectacle over place...can a small summer conference...tucked up in Nova Scotia, really make waves? “We’re all boonies architects. But I think when we come together as a group, there is a strength in numbers.” By Cathleen McGuigan — Architectural Record

63% of Architects Surveyed Report Stalled Projects: Lack of Financing Cited as Primary Cause...the average value of each project was almost $50 million per firm. — American Institute of Architects (AIA)


INSIGHT: Collaboration and Compromise: A Misunderstood Aspect of the Design Process: True collaboration is a symbiosis between the architect’s design ideas, a project’s setting, and the intentions of its users. By Peter Grisolfi, AIA, ASLA, LEED AP — ArchNewsNow

— Steven Holl Architects: Nanjing Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing, China
— Olafur Eliasson: Your rainbow panorama, ARoS Art Museum, Aarhus, Denmark