

Today's News - Friday, March 23, 2012

- Rybczynski explains what critics get wrong about Gehry's Eisenhower Memorial: it "would not sprawl over the entire site"; it's more a memorial "in what is effectively a new public park"; it's been described "as 'Gehryesque,' as if it were an alien presence. But this is precisely what it is not."
- Mays on Toronto's new mantra: "Build tall, live small - the post-war era of the spacious new detached house is well and truly over" (with some fascinating statistics to prove it).
- The incoming Australian Institute of Architects ACT chapter president says Canberra "shouldn't ignore its heartless reputation" - he wants to "up-end the planning apple cart and put the apples back where they should have been in the first place."
- Dubai approves replacement for Hadid's opera house - apparently design work is underway (there's a rendering) - but no architect's name attached.
- Palm Springs Art Museum taps Marmol + Radziner to transform a 1960 E. Stewart Williams building into an architecture and design annex.
- Dvir on the questionable fate of a former "home away from home for the jet set," now abandoned - and its possible new lease on life (too bad it's been turned "from modern architectural pearl to generic building").
- Rose's review of the week includes Wren's St Bride's Church in dire need of restoration, and the Maidstone Museum "gets blinged up - Prince Charles would doubtless add it to his 'monstrous carbuncle' file" (and lots more).
- Hume on Bell Canada's new cell phone towers disguised as pine trees: leave it to the private sector to recognize the importance of appearances - "Imagine the outrage" if taxpayer money were to be spent "on something as frivolous as preserving the landscape."
- Nield named Australian Institute of Architects Gold Medalist; he wanted to be Barangaroo's design director and "appeared a shade miffed to be passed over."
- Moore on Moussavi: she's "always inventive, never predictable, this architect's fascination lies in making pieces of city in a globalised world."
- Weekend diversions:
- Kennicott is taken by Aitken's "Song 1" projections on the Hirshhorn Museum: "As an urban intervention, it is brilliant, animating one of the city's monumentally grim dead zones...a perfect melding of messaging, ideology and architecture" (looks truly amazing!).
- Schumacher sings high praise for Hustwit's "Urbanized," an "ambitious film" that "hints at how hard urban design can be" and a "sign that urbanism has become less about tricked-out architecture and more about close-to-the-ground, community-driven innovations."
- "Drylands Design" at L.A.'s A+D Museum offers visionary responses to the challenges of water scarcity in the face of climate change.
- At the Farnsworth Museum in Maine, an impressive lineup of architects imagines a modern home for a growing family in "The Homestead Project - a Residence Reimagined."
- "Ralph Walker: Architect of the Century" explores the man who shaped New York's skyline in the 1920s - on view in one of his own classic buildings in Manhattan (great website!).
- "Princeton and the Gothic Revival: 1870-1930" is more than "any mere historical study...Why contemporary students would want to live in a Hogwort's dream such as Porphyrios's Whitman [dorm] is really what this show is about."
- In "Bird on Fire: Lessons from the World's Least Sustainable City," Ross ponders: "could Phoenix break free from its brown reputation?"
- Hicks Stone sets the record straight about his father: "It's an ironic story...Dad would have imagined me as the last one who have stepped up for this, and he would have had a good laugh."
- "Piecing Together Los Angeles: An Esther McCoy Reader" looks like a must-read to us (with link to excerpt).
- "Alexander Girard" is "not tempered with austere observations or cynicism" about this "obsessive design mind."
- One we couldn't resist (and the stuff of dreams): a Dutch engineer builds wings - and flies!

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Op-Ed: I Like Ike (and His Memorial): I am concerned that the growing public brouhaha will ultimately weaken the Eisenhower memorial design...would not sprawl over the entire site, as some critics have maintained...has been described, somewhat pejoratively, as "Gehryesque," as if it were an alien presence. But this is precisely what it is not. By Witold Rybczynski -- Frank Gehry
What Mr. Gehry has done is to place the memorial to the 34th president in what is effectively a new public park. - New York Times

In Toronto, the new mantra is: Build tall, live small: Study shows increased zest for high-rise condo living, and declining interest in detached housing ...the post-war era of the spacious new detached house is well and truly over...discovered that 62% of [sales] involved apartments in tall stacks...a dramatic turnaround from just a dozen years ago, when new high-rise lofts commanded only 23% of residential market share and...low-rise dwellings...accounted for most of the remaining 77%. By John Bentley Mays - Globe and Mail (Canada)

Canberra architect Tony Trobe wants planning shake-up in ACT: ...the city shouldn't ignore its heartless reputation...Being derided as an "f-off city", a place to go instead of waiting to die, is embarrassing says incoming Australian Institute of Architects ACT chapter president...wants to spark a debate, to up-end the planning apple cart and...put the apples back where they should have been in the first place. - The Canberra Times (Australia)

Dubai approves replacement for Zaha Hadid opera house: No architect has been named but reports suggest design work is already underway and construction could start soon. [image]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Palm Springs Art Museum plans architecture and design annex: ...by restoring a Midcentury Modern building by E. Stewart Williams (1960)...will be called the Edwards Harris Center for Architecture and Design. -- Marmol + Radziner Architects [images]- Los Angeles Times

The rise and fall of Israel's first aviation hotel: ...once a home away from home for the jet set, is a memento of a bygone era. Now the abandoned Avia Hotel in Yehud may have a new lease on life...An extended series of renovations have turned it from modern architectural pearl to generic building concealed behind glass facades. By Noam Dvir -- David Akadi/Uri Appenzeller (1961); Naama Malis - Ha'aretz (Israel)

Constructive criticism: the week in architecture: Christopher Wren's St Bride's Church is in dire need of funding for a restoration. Meanwhile, Maidstone Museum gets blinged up...Prince Charles would doubtless add it to his "monstrous carbuncle" file...Coca-Cola's Olympic pavilion...designed by rising young architects... By Steve Rose -- Roger Stephenson Architects; Hugh Broughton architects; Pernilla & Asif [images]- Guardian (UK)

Pining for Bell Canada's new cellphone towers: ...disguised as pine trees brings new meaning to the term trunk line...Aesthetic considerations have been deemed a frill we can no longer afford...So it's interesting it should be the private sector that recognizes the importance of appearances. Imagine the outrage if, say, the TTC had tried something similar; if it had spent money...on something as frivolous as preserving the landscape. By Christopher Hume - Toronto Star

Architect takes gold in Olympic-inspired win: Lawrence Nield awarded the Australian Institute of Architects Gold Medal...While he has just received the industry's top award, he failed in a recent bid to get a job as design director for the Barangaroo Delivery Authority and appeared a shade miffed to be passed over. -- Bligh Voller Nield/BVN Architecture [images]- Sydney Morning Herald

Farshid Moussavi: opening our eyes to new ways of city living: Always inventive, never predictable, this architect's fascination lies in making pieces of city in a globalised world. By Rowan Moore -- Alejandro Zaera-Polo; Foreign Office

Architects/FOA; Farshid Moussavi Architecture- [Guardian \(UK\)](#)

Hirshhorn Museum's "Song 1" by Doug Aitken is all about projection: ...an exercise in "liquid architecture"...As an urban intervention, it is brilliant, animating one of the city's monumentally grim dead zones...you wonder if there's a dystopian urban future hinted at in this project — a perfect melding of messaging, ideology and architecture. By Philip Kennicott -- [Gordon Bunshaft \[images, video\]- Washington Post](#)

Gary Hustwit's "Urbanized": ...confronts us with a vision of cities that represent unsolved problems and fantastic mistakes...The ambitious film...hints at how hard urban design can be...sign that urbanism has become less about tricked-out architecture and more about close-to-the-ground, community-driven innovations. By Mary Louise Schumacher -- [Amanda Burden; Candy Chang; Rem Koolhaas; Norman Foster - Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#)

"Drylands Design" at the Architecture + Design Museum > Los Angeles (A+D Museum): work by architects, landscape architects, engineers, and urban designers responding to the challenges of water scarcity in the face of climate change...winning visions were chosen from...submissions to the William Turnbull International Drylands Design Competition [\[images, links\]- Designer](#)

"The Homestead Project - a Residence Reimagined": 10 architectural firms...charged with creating a home for a growing family...loosely modeled on the Farnsworths of 1849... -- [Eric Alyn/Houses & Cottages; Anmahian Winton Associates; Christopher Campbell Architecture; Henry N. Cobb/Pei Cobb Freed; Bruce Norelius Studio; Susan T. Rodriguez/Ennead Architects; Julio Salcedo/scalar Architecture; Smith-Miller + Hawkinson Architects; Theodore + Theodore Architects; Albert, Righter & Tittmann Architects \[images\]- Farnsworth Art Museum \(Rockland, Maine\)](#)

"Ralph Walker: Architect of the Century": the first ever exhibit to explore the life and work of Walker (1889-1973)...he shaped New York's skyline in the 1920s...and captivated people with his work in the 1930s with the Chicago and New York World's Fairs. The show is housed in one of his classic telephone buildings completed in 1929, recently renamed Walker Tower on West 18th Street, NYC.- [Ralph Walker Exhibit](#)

Schooled in goth: Medieval architecture exhibit focuses on Princeton itself: "Princeton and the Gothic Revival: 1870-1930"...a more interesting subject than any mere historical study because of the recent completion of Whitman College, the sprawling dorm designed by Demetri Porphyrios...Why contemporary students would want to live in a Hogwart's dream such as the Whitman is really what this show is about.- [The Star-Ledger \(New Jersey\)](#)

"Bird on Fire: Lessons from the World's Least Sustainable City" by Andrew Ross: Desert cities are notorious water-guzzlers, but could Phoenix break free from its brown reputation?- [OnEarth Magazine](#)

Building Redemption: Son sets the record straight on legendary architect Edward Durrell Stone: "...my book is about a father's redemption — an architect's redemption. It's an ironic story...Dad would have imagined me as the last one who have stepped up for this, and he would have had a good laugh." -- [Hicks Stone- Monterey County Herald \(California\)](#)

New Book Explores Architect's Influence: "Piecing Together Los Angeles: An Esther McCoy Reader" edited by Susan Morgan...anthology is the first collection of writings by the groundbreaking architectural historian who articulated the concepts and vibrant character of West Coast modernism as it was being created. [\[link to excerpts\]- KHHS \(Santa Clarita, California\)](#)

"Alexander Girard" by Todd Oldham and Kiera Coffee: ...reveals the obsessive design mind of this significant figure of mid-20th century American design...not tempered with austere observations or cynicism.- [Australian Design Review](#)

Biomimicry In Action: This Man Built His Own Bird Wings, Successfully Flies: Dutch engineer Jarno Smeets created his wings with 37 ounces of fabric...says his design is inspired by the albatross. [\[video\]- Fast Company](#)



[Carrilho da Graça arquitectos: School of Music, Polytechnic Institute/Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal](#)

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