

Today's News - Monday, May 21, 2012

EDITOR'S NOTE: We're back from the AIA convention and have a lot of catching up to do! Today is just the beginning...

- ArcSpace brings us eyefuls of soma's EXPO 2012 pavilion in South Korea, and Mecanoo's Maritime and Beachcombers Museum in the Netherlands.
- Kimmelman travels to Medellín to see for himself how - or if - public architecture and public spaces really are changing the city's future, and finds the skepticism of younger architects to be "the most encouraging sign I had encountered."
- Peirce parses Philly's "Green City, Clean Waters" initiative to make "water conservation a centerpiece of its economic and environmental strategy" for its future: it is also "a route to environmental and social justice."
- Doig minces no words about why some cities' efforts to create urban entertainment districts end up being places where you'll find everything except a lot of people, while other cities' efforts thrive.
- Goldberger weighs in on the Nasher's scorching problem with its new towering neighbor: "aren't builders and their architects and engineers supposed to know the properties of a material before they use it?"
- Kamin reflects on public spaces and protests as the action heats up in Chicago (and the legacy of Zuccotti Park): "We have the freedom to assemble - but where?"
- Gehry tweaks his Eisenhower Memorial to "stress leadership over youth" with "heroic-size statues of Eisenhower as president and general" (better than bas-reliefs as photo-ops for tourists is what we see).
- Kennicott offers a thoughtful explanation of what went wrong: Gehry might have "seemed an unlikely fit...but that impression was always based on two misunderstandings."
- Russell, Rosenbaum, Hawthorne, Davidson, Saltz, and Dobrin give their thumbs-up's - and thumbs-down's - to the new Barnes (all eloquent - even the ouches).
- A terrific round-up of library projects that use a variety of partnerships to create some great spaces.
- Q&A with urban planner Mehrotra re: "the rise of 'parasitic' gated communities in India's cities, and the need for planning experts in its smaller towns" that could "start exploding in a pattern that we have not anticipated."
- Q&A with MoMA's Gadanho re: curating as "the new criticism" and his first show: "practice is still more interesting to me than its finished product."
- Rose reviews the week in architecture: Koolhaas's "TV colossus" [China's CCTV] opens for propaganda, some Dutch architects blow bubbles, and lots more.
- Deadline reminder: 72 Hour Urban Action in Stuttgart 2012 Real-Time Architecture Competition - May 26 deadline looms!

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-- soma: "One Ocean" Thematic Pavilion EXPO 2012, Yeosu, South Korea
-- Mecanoo architecten: Kaap Skil Maritime and Beachcombers Museum, Texel, The Netherlands

A City Rises, Along With Its Hopes: Medellín, Colombia...if you asked architects and urban planners for proof of the power of public architecture and public space to remake the fortunes of a city, they'd point here..."There's a general feeling among young architects of a missed opportunity here"...Their skepticism seemed almost the most encouraging sign I had encountered... By Michael Kimmelman -- Alejandro Echeverri; Federico Restrepo; Giancarlo Mazzanti; Lorenzo Castro/Ana Elvira Vélez; JPRCR Architects; Plan B Architects; Rogelio Salmons; Arquitectura y Espacio Urbano; Catalina Ortiz [slide show]- [New York Times](#)

Water Plan for the Century: Philadelphia's Breakthrough: ...making water conservation a centerpiece of its economic and environmental strategy...intent on filtering out, block by block, the fast, storm-induced runoff of pollutants...that accumulate on concrete and asphalt surfaces, then wash into and pollute streams and rivers...a route to environmental and social justice..."Green City, Clean Waters" initiative... By Neal Peirce- [Citiwire](#)

Urban entertainment districts: Blocks where no one has fun: Cities keep trying to create downtown cool with dull nightlife districts. But who wants to hang out at the mall? Dallas' Victory Park and Arts District...the folly that is Kansas City's Power & Light District...Boston's Kenmore Square...What these areas of Cincinnati, Milwaukee and Cleveland have in common is...urban authenticity...Planned districts are about "applying a label and hoping your city lives up to it"...cities should "foster a natural emergence of character. You never know what's going to pop up." By Will Doig -- Nathaniel Hood; Patrick Kennedy/Space Between Design Studio- [Salon](#)

A Glare Grows in Dallas: Why a New Condo Tower Has the City's Art Community Up in Arms: The hottest news in architecture right now is, well, about heat. And light. And how there is too much of both of them...Museum Tower...has risen beside the Nasher Sculpture Center...aren't builders and their architects and engineers supposed to know the properties of a material before they use it? By Paul Goldberger -- Renzo Piano; Peter Walker; Scott Johnson [images]- [Vanity Fair](#)

We have the freedom to assemble - but where? Fortress Chicago we're not, but public and private spaces can be contested grounds...the right to protest at even an iconic public space can be contestable and negotiable...If nothing else, the NATO summit has helped ignite a debate about the contours and character of the public spaces that shape our lives. By Blair Kamin- [Chicago Tribune](#)

Frank Gehry offers Eisenhower Memorial revisions that stress leadership over youth: ...retains the metal tapestries surrounding an urban park framework...Gone are bas-relief sculptures in favor of three-dimensional, heroic-size statues of Eisenhower as president and general... [slide show]- [Washington Post](#)

Frank Gehry's Eisenhower Memorial design: The plan and what went wrong: To some, it seemed an unlikely fit, Gehry designing a memorial honoring Ike, but that impression was always based on two misunderstandings. There is a vulgar idea that Gehry is all about flamboyant buildings, radical structures...The popular perception of Ike is no more accurate. By Philip Kennicott- [Washington Post](#)

Barnes Art Thrives in \$150 Million Philadelphia Home: The imposing architecture is beautifully crafted, dignified, deferential...Thankfully...much better than a hollow simulacrum of Barnes's vision...Regrettably, [it] no longer feels like the private realm of a connoisseur...Still, [his] extraordinary eye and feisty approach triumph over the well-intentioned swaddling in stone, bronze and oak. By James S. Russell -- Laurie Olin; Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Fisher Marantz Stone [images]- [Bloomberg News](#)

Scenes (and thoughts) from the Barnes Foundation's Preview: ...even "diehards" and "purists" (like me) should be able to eventually suspend disbelief about the artificial stage set that the architects have meticulously constructed...now imbued with improved lighting... By Lee Rosenbaum -- Fisher Marantz Stone; Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Laurie Olin [images, video]- [ArtsJournal](#)

A poor replica of Barnes Foundation museum: The Philadelphia facility has a new-looking exterior, but the interior display space is a replica...makes it feel like a fake...a high-culture, high-stakes experiment...The result is less success or failure than cautionary tale...the new and the fake-old are entirely walled off from each other...circling each other warily but never managing to find a place or a way to talk. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Paul Cret (1922); Laurie Olin - Los Angeles Times

The Philadelphia Story: The Barnes Collection's splendid new building can't vanquish art claustrophobia...The building's design is exquisitely tasteful...Yet [it] still gives off the whiff of one man's inextinguishable weirdness...the best compromise that this peculiar project allowed: a ravishing reliquary for a dead man's embalmed dreams. By Justin Davidson + Yet maybe, just maybe, the old kook knew what he was doing. By Jerry Saltz -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien; OLIN - New York Magazine

Barnes move to Parkway is progress, but a quirky something has been lost: Gone forever, of course, is any claim to authenticity...McBarnes, its most indignant critics are calling it...Albert C. Barnes has become, in death...the art world's most conspicuous martyr to the commercialization of the modern art museum...Progress, however, argues its case persuasively. By Peter Dobrin -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien - Philadelphia Inquirer

Powerful Partnerships | Library by Design: Best Practices + Shared Sites + Shared Buildings + Mixed-use Development: ...more than a dozen buildings where libraries partnered with another organization...have revitalized neighborhoods and led to innovation in service delivery. -- Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture; Schwartz/Silver Architects; Humphries Poli Architects; Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects; Dewberry and Tipton Associates/Cockfield Jackson Architects; Sink Combs Dethlefs; Holzheimer Bolek + Meehan Architects/Dansizen Architects; Grimm + Parker Architects; Santos Prescott and Associates; Ruffcorn Mott Hinthorne Stine; Engberg Anderson; RRMM Architects/Carrier Johnson/Anderson Brule; richard + bauer [images] - Library Journal

A Conversation With: Urban Planner Rahul Mehrotra: ...authored "Architecture in India Since 1990"...discussed the rise of "parasitic" gated communities in India's cities, and the need for planning experts in its smaller towns..."as we put in infrastructure...small towns will start exploding in a pattern that we have not anticipated...we need to nuance our planning by having different approaches for different parts of the urban landscape." - New York Times

Pedro Gadanho: curating is the new criticism: MoMA's new curator for Contemporary Architecture discusses his program and practice, and expands on his first show, opening in September: ..."practice is still more interesting to me than its finished product...I am interested in architecture becoming more of a cultural field than a service profession" - Domus

Constructive criticism: the week in architecture: The ruined castle that was home to Lady Jane Grey hits the holiday market, Rem Koolhaas's TV colossus opens for propaganda, and some Dutch architects blow bubbles...the opening of the new Photographers' Gallery... By Steve Rose -- Witherford Watson Mann architects; O'Donnell & Tuomey; Ole Scheeren/Buro-OS; OMA; DUS [images] - Guardian (UK)

Call for entries/applications deadline reminder: 72 Hour Urban Action in Stuttgart 2012 Real-Time Architecture Competition; cash prize; application deadline: May 26 - 72 Hour Urban Action International

Who Designed the Space Needle? Victor Steinbrueck's contributions have been given short shrift, leaving the design of what is arguably Seattle's most important structure clouded by assumption and innuendo to this day. By Dale Cotton -- John Graham, Jr. [images] - ArchNewsNow

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