

Today's News - Monday, June 18, 2012

- ArcSpace brings us an eyeful of Raimund Abraham's last (and soon to be completed) building.
- Doig delves into "tactical urbanism" - a "low-cost, low-commitment, incremental approach to city building" (like pop-up parks, etc.) that "smart cities" are embracing.
- Rochon x 2: the "power of pop-up architecture": it "can risk more - beginning with the need to invigorate neglected or marginalized public space right now."
- She cheers the new "living roof" atop Mies's 1969 Toronto-Dominion Centre: "the oasis was surreal and thrilling"; and green roofs sprouting above universities, condominiums health-care facilities.
- King gives (mostly) thumbs-up to San Francisco's new, green Public Utilities Commission building: even though the "reality falls short of the early grand vision," it "still includes sustainable design features that push the norm" and "demonstrates how sustainability efforts have a positive architectural effect."
- McEwen uses the recent Bab Al Bahrain Open Ideas Competition winning designs (that all effectively block public gatherings) to question architects' "responsibility to choose our projects wisely and to take responsibility for the potential society we help make possible."
- A design for a Colombian favela brings into question the "fine line between positive inspiration and political incorrectness: does shedding a new and positive light on socially unjust living conditions aid in the removal of the stigma?"
- Elsheshtawy sees a dusty Dubai neighborhood of "ageing concrete homes as a model for the way our cities should be built": "If you really want to study sustainable urbanism, you should study it here."
- Badger explores how L.A.'s Skid Row Housing Trust projects for the homeless are changing lives - and NIMBY attitudes.
- A look at how a small Norwegian firm is transforming the lives of needy communities in poor and underdeveloped countries.
- How can Malaysia promote (and improve) its architecture? "The answer is simple: more competitions!"
- Schumacher issues an eloquent call to save Saarinen's 1957 War Memorial ("the Calatrava of its time"): "Let's not neglect one of the best buildings - if not the best building - in Milwaukee" currently "in a shameful state of disrepair...let's move this tragedy-in-the-making to the top of the list of priorities."
- de Monchaux gives a standing ovation to Hardy's Claire Tow Theater at Lincoln Center: it "has a self-evident inevitability that is the consequence of long experience and the confidence to make fewer moves."
- Rose reviews the week that includes the revamped Kunsthalle Zurich, and "the end of the road for Glasgow's Red Road flats...As usual, you can't just blame the design" (NOT TO BE MISSED: link to amazing "exploding paint" Sony ad!!!).
- Call her Dame Zaha now!
- A sampling of the 23 Australian Institute of Architects' 2012 Tasmanian Architecture Awards.
- Toronto's Pug Awards morph from snarky to warm and fuzzy.
- Call for entries: deadline looms for Faith & Form/IFRAA International Awards Program for Religious Art & Architecture.

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Raimund Abraham: The Musician's House, Museum Insel Hombroich, Rhein County Neuss, Germany

Stop thinking big: Forget stadiums: Let's build a pop-up park. Smart cities know the future is cooler, cheaper - and smaller: ...tactical urbanism, that low-cost, low-commitment, incremental approach to city building...City Hall is taking a more active...role in these types of efforts, and sometimes even leading them. By Will Doig -- Mike Lydon/Street Plans Collaborative; Pavement to Parks; Project for Public Spaces (PPS)- Salon

The power of pop-up architecture: It's light, lyrical and cheap to construct...architecture as light as Twitter can risk more -- beginning with the need to invigorate neglected or marginalized public space right now...Maybe we're more likely to immerse ourselves in something daring if it comes with a limited shelf life. By Lisa Rochon -- Ai Weiwei; Herzog & de Meuron; Claude Cormier; Gilles Saucier; Patkau Architects; Diamond Schmitt Architects- Globe and Mail (Canada)

TD Centre's 'living roof' like a farm in the city: ...the oasis was surreal and thrilling...The transformation of heat-absorbing asphalt roof-scapes into energy-saving canvases of greenery is being embraced not only by businesses...What might Mies have said about the greening of his rooftop? ...might have agreed that, beside his famous maxim 'less is more,' green is core. By Lisa Rochon -- Mies van der Rohe; John B. Parkin; Bregman & Hamann/B+H Architects; Vertechs Design- Globe and Mail (Canada)

New PUC [Public Utilities Commission] building - green, seems almost alive: ...reality falls short of the early grand vision...still includes sustainable design features that push the norm...a step in the right direction rather than the culmination of the journey toward environmentally spotless large buildings...demonstrates how sustainability efforts have a positive architectural effect. By John King -- KMD Architects; Stevens Architects [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

Urban Design Serves as Tool of Repression in Bahrain: Consider the Bab Al Bahrain Open Ideas Competition...each winning project effectively anticipates and prevents the sort of peaceable assembly and democratic protest that occurred at Pearl roundabout...as contemporary designers we act as agents of change...With that comes a responsibility to choose our projects wisely and to take responsibility for the potential society we help make possible. By Mitch McEwen/Superfont [images, link to winners]- Huffington Post

Architecture Inspiration from Slums -- Innovation or Insanity? One key area that walks the fine line between positive inspiration and political incorrectness is when designers take design ideas from controversial social -- and social justice -- issues...does shedding a new, and positive light on socially unjust living conditions aid in the removal of the stigma? Are there definitive lines demarcating what we can and cannot cross as architects... -- Favela Cloud [images, links]- DesignBuild Source (Australia)

Sha'biyat Al Shorta residents hold on to the 'our' in neighbourhood: It may not look like much, but it's home. That is the sentiment of people who live in the Dubai-Sharjah border area...A local academic agrees, and says their lives should shape their urban surroundings. -- Yasser Elsheshtawy- The National (UAE)

How High Design Can Help the Homeless: Beautiful social housing in Los Angeles is trying to change the lives of its residents and the way communities feel about them...Architecture really helps sometimes by showing it's not a 'homeless project,' it's not a shelter. It's an apartment building." By Emily Badger -- Theresa Hwang; Skid Row Housing Trust; Michael Maltzan Architecture [images, links]- The Atlantic Cities

Norwegian architects reach out to the needy: Transforming the lives of needy communities in poor and underdeveloped countries sets the TYIN tegnestue Architects firm a world apart. [images]- New Straits Times Press (Malaysia)

Improving architecture in Malaysia: Can Malaysia follow South Korea in having world-class designs and creative industries? The answer is simple: ...more competitions! ...competition in the private sector is driving innovation..."They recognise that good design always sells, and architectural talents are improving in response." -- PAM/Malaysian Institute of Architects; Hamzah and Yeang; Hijas Kasturi Associates - The Star (Malaysia)

Saving the Saarinen: In 1957 the War Memorial was the Calatrava of its time, snagging headlines around the world...Let's not neglect one of the best buildings – if not the best building – in Milwaukee...it is visibly crumbling. Our state's most important memorial...is in a shameful state of disrepair...let's move this tragedy-in-the-making to the top of the list of priorities. By Mary Louise Schumacher -- Eero Saarinen; David Kahler (1975) [images, links]- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Crit> LCT3: Thomas de Monchaux on H3 Hardy Collaborative Architecture's addition to the Lincoln Center: Claire Tow Theater has a self-evident inevitability that is the consequence of long experience and the confidence to make fewer moves. - The Architect's Newspaper

Constructive criticism: the week in architecture: Architecture celebrates the world's greenest buildings, the Swiss are on a roll with their revamped Kunsthalle Zurich, and it's the end of the road for Glasgow's Red Road flats...As usual, you can't just blame the design. By Steve Rose -- Love Architecture Festival 2012; Tonkin Liu; Buckminster Fuller Challenge; Living Building Challenge; Gigon/Guyer; Atelier ww; Sam Buntun (1969) [images, links]- Guardian (UK)

Zaha Hadid becomes dame in the Queen's Birthday Honours list: The double Stirling Prize winning architect [and Aquatics Centre designer] receives honour for services to architecture...A number of other honours were handed out to construction professionals involved with this year's Olympics. - BD/Building Design (UK)

MONA (Museum of Old & New Art) wins People's Choice Prize and the Alan C Walker Award for Public Architecture: ...among the 23 architectural projects awarded prizes and commendations at the Australian Institute of Architects' 2012 Tasmanian Architecture Awards. -- Fender Katsalidis; John Wardle Architects; Circa Morris-Nunn; Liminal Spaces; Preston Lane Architects; Paul Johnston Architects; HBV Architects [images]- Architecture & Design (Australia)

A Kinder, Gentler Pug Awards: Once focusing on the worst, architecture awards now highlight public's choices for the best new buildings in Toronto. -- Diamond Schmitt Architects; Stantec Architecture; Sweeny Sterling Finlayson & Co.; Burka Architects; Goldsmith Borgal & Company; architectsAlliance; E.I. Richmond Architects; AUDAXarchitecture [slide show]- Torontoist

Call for entries (deadline reminder): Faith & Form/IFRAA International Awards Program for Religious Art & Architecture: categories include Religious Architecture, Sacred Landscape Architecture, Liturgical/Interior Design, Unbuilt Work, and Student Work (new category); deadline: June 30- Faith & Form Magazine

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