• We lose a master Edinburgh-based architect and lighting designer.
• Hawthorne reports it's official - Gruen/Grimshaw team to take on L.A.'s Union Station master plan: "Their 2050 scheme was among the most fanciful of the bunch."
• News from Down Under: Melbourne launches major initiatives to manage growth, including six new suburbs: "planners have admitted action has to be taken now to avoid the overall structural meltdown that occurs in excessively dense cities."
• At least now Australians will have the GBCA's Green Star - Communities rating system as a tool to "lift the bar for developments nationally."
• A study of Auckland's inner-city apartment dwellers finds that only 25% "feel they belong to a recognizable 'community'"; the results will be used "to develop ways to strengthen people's links with one another."
• Humie x 2: the Ideacity conference in Toronto ended Friday "expecting the worst but hoping for the best" (he seems not so optimistic).
• He's only somewhat cheered by a Toronto parking lot winning an IPI Award of Excellence. "Whatever beauty and drama the arch possesses is pretty well lost in the asphalt banality of the site."
• Q&A with Mike Lydon re: tactical urbanism, offering quick, affordable tools for making a big impact (perhaps he should head to Toronto?).
• Q&A with Olin re: landscape urbanism, the state of public space, and his new L.A. office: urban design is "an activity that lots of disciplines do together. It's ensemble work. It's one of the things we do when we play together well."
• NYC's Parks Commissioner Benepe heading to the Trust for Public Land to take on park and playground development across the country (the city will miss him - and we're big fans - but good news for the country!).
• An engaging history of zoning codes, "or, how Americans learned to legislate our NIMBY impulses."
• A Melton essay we missed last year that is well worth the read: beauty and buildings: "When the Modernists declared that form follows function, did they really intend for the built environment to look so ... dreary?" (with a dollop of "beauty and biophilia").
• Q&A with "The Reluctant Architect" author Keith Anderson: "Architects have become so enamored with the phrase 'form follows function' that discussions of beauty have all but been thrown out."
• A fairly starchitect-laden shortlist to design one of the world's largest research facilities in Sweden.
• A look at two pavilions at Expo 2012 in South Korea: one "stands out as one of the most technologically advanced, if aesthetically underwhelming," while the other "tests architectural and engineering limits in a different way - by being as low-tech as possible."
• More on MASS Design Group's efforts to improve healthcare delivery in Rwanda, Uganda, Haiti, and home.
• Crosbie found some rude awakenings on a pilgrimage to Chichen Itza, "one of the places on my architect's bucket list...our spirits ready to be lifted and someone is..."
• *20 Odd Questions* for Piero Lissoni, the "high-output, low-profile Italian designer.*
Foster + Partners, HOK and BIG shortlisted for European research hub: ...one of the world's largest research facilities...a European Spallation Source (ESS) materials research centre to be built in southern Sweden. -- Bethem Crouwel/West 8/Arup/Mandaworks; Bjarke Ingels Group/HOK/Topotek1/man made land; Foster + Partners/Peter Walker and Partners/Research Facilities Design/Ramboll Group/Berg/CF Møller Architects; Henning Larsen Architects/COBE/SLANNE Pharmaplan; Tengbom/Mecanoo Architecten/Buro Happold- BD/Building Design (UK)

Adventures in architecture at Expo 2012, Yeosu, South Korea: An unassuming town...is an unlikely place for one of the world's most advanced buildings...Korea pavilion...stands out as one of the most technologically advanced, if aesthetically underwhelming, of them all...Theme Pavilion...tests architectural and engineering limits in a different way...by being as low-tech as possible. -- Samoo Architects & Engineers; Soma Architects [images]- CNN

The architects of a new kind of health care: MASS Design Group aims to improve care delivery from Rwanda to Uganda to Haiti to back home. -- Paul Farmer/Partners in Health; Model of Architecture Serving Society - Boston Globe

Pilgrim's Progress: ...on a pilgrimage to the ruins of Chichen Itza, Mexico, one of the places on my architect's bucket list...And then it all went terribly wrong...there was another vendor, and another, and another...But I still hadn't seen a blasted ruin! We arrive at pivotal sacred sites around the world, our spirits ready to be lifted...and someone is trying to sell us gee-gaws. By Michael J. Crosbie- Faith & Form Magazine

20 Odd Questions: Piero Lissoni, the Quiet Italian: With major U.S. projects in the works, the high-output, low-profile designer talks Shaker chairs, Porsches and the best food in Milan..."for me New York feels like the most "European" city in the world. It's this incredible salad of cultures."- Wall Street Journal

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

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