
Today's News - Friday, July 13, 2012

- Pearman parses the Shard: visually, he likes it on the skyline, and it's "a start for Britain when it comes to making tall buildings which can multi-task a little" - but it "doesn't have nearly enough ordinary stuff in it."
- Altabe finds it "hard to understand Londoners' outrage over their newest skyscraper" - sure the Shard "can be viewed as an arrogant symbol of power. But there's nothing new about such symbols."
- Badger offers a most interesting take on the American shopping mall as it turns 60: Gruen "came to rue his creations. But now they are dying off anyway."
- Lewis laments that as urban vitality grows, housing affordability will shrink: can innovative engineering and architectural design help? "Regrettably, increases in land, labor and material costs persistently outstrip savings attributable to design."
- Kennicott cheers Adjaye's two D.C. branch libraries that "express well-channeled exuberance, a playfulness that is never merely arbitrary, and a deep sense of respect for what the building should do and for whom it does that work. Quality needs no gimmicks."
- An architect raises questions re: the Sydney Opera House revamp: "What is more important, the look or the function of architectural icons?"
- Hawthorne hails the "markedly" changed Los Angeles County Museum of Art campus: it's not the buildings, but "art, piece by gigantic piece. In an age of rather mindless museum expansion, there is something refreshing about LACMA's approach."
- Philly's Rodin Museum reopens today "as something both familiar and utterly startling."
- Q&A with Jonsdottir (a "fierce female architect") re: the intersection between architecture and art, projects from L.A. to Beirut, and the challenges of being a female architect.
- NEA hands out Our Town Grants to support creative placemaking in 80 communities across the country.
- Deadline reminder: 2012 Healthcare Design Remodel/Renovation Competition.
- Weekend diversions:
- Goldberger on the "practical, poetic" Heatherwick show at the V&A: "He may be the most original designer working today" (great slideshow).
- Kamin is taken by "a small but thoughtful and altogether delightful" FLW show in Chicago.
- Calatrava's "sprawling retrospective" at the Hermitage "seems to be as much about his ego as his art."
- HWKN's "spiny blue beauty" at MoMA/PS1 is "eye catching, a little ridiculous, and already looks fun to hang out with."
- An amusing stroll through the NBM's mini-golf course "designed by some devilish masterminds": "So how hard could a mini-golf course designed by architects, landscape architects, and building contractors actually be? Turns out kind of hard" (fun and stress included).
- Rogers Marvel Architects' monograph: "few have changed NYC so physically as RMA and Robert Moses, but comparing their practices shows the strides made towards humanistic design over 80 years."
- Hustwit's "Urbanized" introduces a "multitude of individuals who create our beguiling, often exotic, metropolises - architects don't always fair well."
- Gorst's "Modern Tide: Midcentury Architecture on Long Island" documents a fast-disappearing architectural legacy in this age of mega-mansions.
- Happy Friday the 13th!

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Renzo Piano's Shard in London. Not bad, but NOT a 'vertical city': ...like the earlier Gherkin [it] is very well placed...Some find this irksome. I think we can tell the difference...It doesn't have nearly enough ordinary stuff in it...But [it] is a start for Britain, certainly, when it comes to making tall buildings which can multi-task a little...Visually I like it on the skyline... By Hugh Pearman [images] - HughPearman.com (UK)

A skyscraper as a sky-stabber: It's hard to understand Londoners' outrage over their newest skyscraper...can be viewed as an arrogant symbol of power. But there's nothing new about such symbols. -- Joan Altabe - Examiner

The American Shopping Mall Turns 60 (and Prepares to Retire): The inventor of the suburban indoor mall came to rue his creations. But now they are dying off anyway...In one of the strangest legacies of his career, just as Victor Gruen was building these suburban shopping malls, he was trying to revitalize urban downtowns with pedestrian-friendly master plans... By Emily Badger -- Jeff Hardwick; Ellen Dunham-Jones - The Atlantic Cities

As the District's vitality grows, housing affordability will shrink: Can housing be made significantly more affordable through innovative engineering and architectural design...Regrettably, increases in land, labor and material costs due to inflation persistently outstrip savings attributable to design. By Roger K. Lewis - Washington Post

Bound to be special: D.C. libraries by David Adjaye are stylish additions to distressed areas: They express a similar, well-channeled exuberance, a playfulness that is never merely arbitrary, and a deep sense of respect for what the building should do and for whom it does that work...Quality needs no gimmicks. By Philip Kennicott [slide show] - Washington Post

Sydney Opera House Revamp Raises Questions of Form vs. Function: What is more important, the look or the function of architectural icons? ...the architectural integrity of Australia's most iconic built space may be challenged in order to allow for a functional upgrade. -- Ken Woolley; Peter Hall[images] - DesignBuild Source (Australia)

Art on an architectural scale at LACMA: In 'Levitated Mass' and other works, Michael Govan appears to be forging his track record not with buildings but with art, piece by gigantic piece...In an age of rather mindless museum expansion, there is something refreshing about LACMA's approach. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Renzo Piano; Peter Zumthor [images] - Los Angeles Times

The Rodin Museum is set to reopen - and to be seen as its creators intended: After more than three years of torn-up landscaping, yellow caution tape...and, lately, a building shut as tight as a limestone crypt, the museum on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway is about to emerge as something both familiar and utterly startling. By Stephan Salisbury -- Paul Cr  t; Jacques Gr  ber; Louis Kahn (1929) [images] - Philadelphia Inquirer

Fierce Female Architect Gulla Jonsdottir, On Designing From Los Angeles To Beirut: Q&A about the intersection between architecture and art...and the challenges of being a female architect. -- G + Design [slide show] - Huffington Post

National Endowment for the Arts Announces 2012 Our Town Grant Recipients: \$5 million supports creative placemaking in 80 communities across the country - National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

Deadline reminder: Call for entries: 2012 Healthcare Design Remodel/Renovation Competition: Pediatric Environments and Facility Art Programs (no fee); deadline: July 27 - Healthcare Design magazine

Paul Goldberger on the Practical, Poetic Thomas Heatherwick Exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum: ""Heatherwick Studio: Designing the Extraordinary": He may be the most original designer working today, and he is certainly the one who has done the most to erase the boundaries that divide...the realms of architecture, furniture, public space, and vehicle design. [slideshow]- Vanity Fair

How Frank Lloyd Wright resolved his inner struggles; a small but thoughtful and altogether delightful exhibition details architect's early vital years in Chicago: "Wright's Roots" argues (mostly persuasively) that these years produced seeds which would later flower into greatness. By Blair Kamin -- Tim Samuelson; John Vinci [images]- Chicago Tribune

Santiago Calatrava Takes the Hermitage Museum's Winter Palace With His Sprawling Retrospective: It's an expansive show, both in scope and size, that seems to be as much about his ego as his art..."Quest for Movement"...choices show the evolution of his sculptural work as it transformed from from cubist shapes to more organic forms... [slide show]- Artinfo

Partying with Wendy: HWKN's spiny blue beauty is a return to form for MoMA P.S.1's Young Architects Program: Part architectural experiment and part well-branded cartoon character, the giant blue sea urchin...will skim pollutants out of the air...eye catching, a little ridiculous, and already looks fun to hang out with... [images]- Architectural Record

National Building Museum's Mini-Golf Course: So how hard could a mini-golf course designed by architects, landscape architects, and building contractors actually be? Turns out kind of hard. All 12 holes...offer unique challenges... -- OLIN; Studios Architecture; Landscape Architecture Bureau; SOM; E/L Studio; Grizform Design Architects; Wiencek + Associates Architects; Hargrove [images]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Marvelous Interventions: Rogers Marvel Architects' monograph records the influence they've had on New York City's built environment...few have changed the city so physically as RMA and Robert Moses, but comparing their practices shows the strides made towards humanistic design over 80 years. [images]- Metropolis Magazine

Greater than the slum of its parts: By 2050, three-quarters of the world's population will live in cities."Urbanized" asks how on earth we will manage...introduces us to the multitude of individuals who create our beguiling, often exotic, metropolises...architects don't always fair well...the activists Gary Hustwit follows fight their own battles for a better, more liveable city. -- Rem Koolhaas; Norman Foster; Amanda Burden; Jane Jacobs- Brisbane Times (Australia)

Video: "Modern Tide: Midcentury Architecture on Long Island": Now, with the advent of the mega-mansion...it is becoming increasingly difficult to preserve such iconic and progressive architectural projects...Jake Gorst seeks to highlight some of the region's best work..."Sadly, much of it has disappeared because of redevelopment and natural disaster." -- Paul Goldberger; Albert Frey; Wallace Harrison; Frank Lloyd Wright; Marcel Breuer; Philip Johnson; Charles Gwathmey; Barbara and Julian Neski- ArchDaily

Campus Collective: Leers Weinzapfel Associates Rethinks Higher Education Design: Addressing the interconnectivity of campus environs and student experience. By John Gendall- ArchNewsNow



-- Toyo Ito & Associates: Ken Iwata Mother and Child Museum, Imabari City, Japan
-- Exhibition: "Show Me Your Model" - Danish Architecture Centre/DAC, Copenhagen, Denmark
-- Steven Holl Architects: Daeyang Gallery and House, Seoul, Korea

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