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Today's News - Thursday, July 26, 2012

- Games, games - and then some: Woodman wonders if London construction will "fizzle out like the Olympic flame" - and actually comes to some optimistic conclusions.
- Buchanan boils down the "very different design strategies" between Hadid's Aquatics Centre and Hopkins' Velodrome that "raise questions pertinent to these confusing times about relevant approaches to design and architectural quality."
- Maynard looks back at Montreal's 1976 Olympics "boondoggle" and ponders whether its legacy can "finally right itself."
- Schindler and Spertus offer an in-depth look at two very different (and very large) Bronx housing projects and "consider how their histories can inform future innovation in affordable housing" (a fascinating read).
- de Monchaux pays tribute to Kallman and others: "for a brief, brilliant moment, the reigning style, particularly for civic buildings, was something called Brutalism...What did they know, and aspire to, that we don't?"
- Kamin x 2: he reports on a starchitect-studded letter to Chicago's mayor calling for Goldberg's Prentice Women's Hospital to be saved: "A building this significant - this unique in the world - should be preserved and reused."
- He cheers Target's takeover of Sullivan' Carsons Pirie Scott store: it "strikes the right balance between preserving the aesthetic integrity of one of the nation's great works of architecture and projecting the visual brand of one of the nation's biggest retailers."
- Brussat's heart is filled with joy at the prospect of Collegiate Gothic design returning to Providence College: it "represents a sort of homecoming."
- Hume revisits KPMB's Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art in Toronto: it is "one of those rare projects that remind us that buildings can be small and sophisticated but still loom large."
- Hawthorne has high praise for Downtown L.A.'s newest park that "makes exuberant use of a tough spot" (and oh those yummy magenta benches!).
- Berger gives thumbs-up to Steinbrueck's bold idea for redeveloping Seattle's central waterfront: it "looks a bit like the Sydney Opera house or a flapping manta ray" (that might even "glow in the dark like a bioluminescent sea creature").
- Meanwhile, a Paris-based team snags first prize in the Seattle Urban Intervention competition.
- Dvir reports on SANAA's plans for a new Bezalel Academy of Art and Design building in Jerusalem.
- The Delfina Foundation picks a winning duo of London- and Cairo-based firms to expand its London digs.
- Three finalists named in the pavilion competition for historic St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, DC.
- Two we couldn't resist: an Israeli writer commissions a 4-foot house to be built between the crack of two buildings in Poland (perhaps NYC should consider for its adAPT NYC competition?) + 8 Truly Embarrassing City Souvenirs (who wouldn't want The Eiffel Tower?!?!?).

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At the end of the Games, will London construction fizzle out like the Olympic flame? London may be in no danger of abandoning the grand ambitions...but a hiatus of some years lies ahead...Securing temporary uses to keep the Olympic Park animated over the coming decades is going to prove crucial if it is to be prevented from declining...That is an exciting challenge... By Ellis Woodman- Architectural Review (UK)

Zaha Hadid's Aquatics Centre versus Michael Hopkins' Velodrome: Style versus synthesis: two Olympic arenas and two very different design strategies go head-to-head...raise questions pertinent to these confusing times about relevant approaches to design and architectural quality - even as to what constitutes real architecture. By Peter Buchanan [images]- Architectural Review (UK)

For Montreal, Memories of the 1976 Olympics Boondoggle Remain: The games were largely considered a financial disaster. Can their legacy finally right itself? No one knew what was to come in 1970, when Montreal beat out Los Angeles and Moscow to land the games. By Micheline Maynard- The Atlantic Cities

A Few Days in the Bronx: From Co-op City to Twin Parks: Susanne Schindler and Juliette Spertus examine two very different large-scale, high-density housing developments and consider how their histories can inform future innovation in affordable housing. -- Urban Design Group (UDG); Herman Jessor; Giovanni Pasanella; Pasanella + Klein (now PKSB Architects); Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen; Terry Schnadelbach; Richard Meier; James Stewart Polshek; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) [images, links]- Urban Omnibus

The Other Modernism: These days...it can be startling to remember that for a brief, brilliant moment, the reigning style, particularly for civic buildings, was something called Brutalism...it's worth asking about those Brutalist architects and the public servants who were their primary patrons: What did they know, and aspire to, that we don't? By Thomas de Monchaux -- Mies Van Der Rohe; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Le Corbusier; Reyner Banham; Alison and Peter Smithson; Paul Rudolph; Gerhard Kallmann; Michael McKinnell- n+1 magazine

Frank Gehry, Jeanne Gang and other leading architects urge Mayor Emanuel to save old Prentice Women's Hospital: "As members of the architecture community, we believe Bertrand Goldberg's Prentice should be given a permanent place in Chicago's cityscape. A building this significant--this unique in the world--should be preserved and reused. By Blair Kamin- Chicago Tribune

Retailer's redesign hits the Target; company stays true to Louis Sullivan design in ex-Carsons Pirie Scott store in Loop: CityTarget strikes the right balance between preserving the aesthetic integrity of one of the nation's great works of architecture and projecting the visual brand of one of the nation's biggest retailers. By Blair Kamin -- Gunny Harboe; Rich Varda; RSP Architects- Chicago Tribune

St. Dominic inspires Providence College's Ruane Center for the Humanities: ...with its Collegiate Gothic design, represents a sort of homecoming... By David Brussat -- S/LA/M Collaborative; Sullivan Buckingham Architects [images]- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art one of Toronto's most inviting: ...one of those rare projects that remind us that buildings can be small and sophisticated but still loom large...offers proof positive that architectural tricks are unnecessary; good materials and design are all that's needed for excellence...[its] brilliance lies in its contradictory ability to fit in yet stand out. By Christopher Hume -- Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg/KPMB Architects- Toronto Star

Downtown's Grand Park makes exuberant use of a tough spot: The location isn't ideal, but dramatic views and designs push Grand Park...to the front of a refocused downtown...rejects the easy nostalgia and the bland, focus-grouped inoffensiveness that mark so much public-sector design in L.A. these days. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Rios Clementi Hale Studios; Sussman/Prejza [images, video]- Los Angeles Times

A bold idea to transform the ferry terminal: Peter Steinbrueck has something different in mind for redeveloping Seattle's central waterfront. Could his Sea Center idea for the ferry terminal float? ...looks a bit like the Sydney Opera house or a flapping manta ray...would be a signature structure...But importantly, it would serve the practical purpose of moving people around this complex, water-bound metropolitan area... By Knute Berger [image]- Crosscut (Seattle)

Public Awakening: Winners of Seattle Urban Intervention competition announced: winning project, In-Closure, by Paris-based ABF-lab...emphasized the notion of protecting and preserving the landscape through a flexible and adaptable human-scaled approach. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Plan for new Bezalel Academy of Art and Design building in downtown Jerusalem unveiled: ...envisions a building of about 40,000 square meters...to encourage students to meet in a common space. By Noam Dvir -- Kazuyo Sejima/Ryue Nishizawa/SANAA- Ha'aretz (Israel)

Delfina Foundation Announces Expansion Architects: London-based Studio Octopi and Cairo-based Shahira Fahmy Architects are the winning duo of an architecture competition...will make it the largest international artist residency provider in London when it re-opens in autumn 2013. [image]- ArtLyst (UK)

Catalytic Competition: Finalists named for pavilion at old D.C. St. Elizabeths Hospital site: ...meant to accommodate food stalls, food trucks, a farmers market, and other community uses... -- I STUDIO Architects/MCN Build; Ayers Saint Gross/Donohoe Construction; /Davis Brody Bond/KADCON- The Architect's Newspaper

Famous Israeli Writer Commissions 4-foot Wide Parasitic House: Etgar Keret commissioned Jakub Szczesny from Centrala to build a tiny house between the crack of two buildings in Poland. [images]- Green Prophet (Middle East)

8 Truly Embarrassing City Souvenirs: it's really the afterthought that counts...The Eiffel Tower, San Francisco Canned Fog, Czech Out Prague, etc. [images, links]- The Atlantic Cities

The Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence Marks 25 Years: New Director Anne-Marie Lubenau, AIA, reflects on the past, looks to the future.- ArchNewsNow



Urbanus: Nanshan Marriage Registration Center, Shenzhen, China: a new architectural idea that gives an experience for life and a permanent memory of the journey of marriage to new couples.

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