

## Today's News - Tuesday, August 7, 2012

- ArcSpace brings us two railway stations that make us want to pack our bags right now.
- Farrelly minces no words when it comes to why London's Olympic planning "has comprehensively shown Australia up...where we made wrong decisions, they made right ones" (and it's not all about the architecture).
- Rochon hopes Toronto takes some lessons of what not to do from London in preparing for the 2015 Pan Am Games: "There's still time to shift passive voyeurism to long-term reactivated urbanism."
- Speaking of active urbanism, two reports from the recent Greater & Greener: Re-Imagining Parks for 21st Century Cities conference look at "trends transforming America's urban parks," and sometimes the most successful "can be tiny pockets squeezed in wherever there's room."
- Litt is almost delirious over Cleveland's revamped Perk Park, which is "a people-watching paradise, a patch of urban heaven" offering "an uplifting glimpse of the city Cleveland can become if it repeats this success elsewhere - and soon."
- Kamin gives (mostly) thumbs-up to Chicago's first parklets: "the program is off to a solid, if not particularly creative, beginning. The architects and their clients wisely played it safe."
- Franz gives thumbs-up to two workplace landscapes in Brisbane that "do more than just pretty up the building surrounds."
- Gerfen reports on Urban Movement Design's summer installation at the MAXXI in Rome, "where yoga meets architecture."
- Saffron, on a sadder note, bemoans the probable loss of Tacha's "Green Acres" in New Jersey: "As little respect as building architecture gets, landscape architecture receives even less."
- King voices a bit of concern about San Francisco's glass tower trend that "could give the city a colder, more generic look if left unchecked."
- Russell reports on tech companies seeking urban digs, "where the talent they seek increasingly wants to live...but cities haven't yet figured out how to meld suburban advantages with urban energy" (time to reinvent the skyscraper and the office park).
- A "star-studded shortlist" in the running to revamp London's Royal Opera House.
- Goldberger waxes nostalgic on news of Venturi's retirement: he's the "architect who taught us to stop worrying and love Las Vegas."
- Q&A with Lang Ho, curator of the Venice Biennale's "guerilla" U.S. Pavilion re: why this year's pavilion is more politicized than ever before, and her take on what "Common Good" actually means.
- The "worst seems to be over" for many South African architects who "appear to have ridden the choppy waves of the global recession" and now "looking to the rest of Africa" for more work.
- Malaysia has big plans for a series of pre-fab sustainable villages to "create smart growth."
- Two we couldn't resist: Kathryn Findlay's "favorite impermanent structures in London" (including a pollution measuring box that is "both invisible and beautiful").
- The Frank Lloyd Wright Designs Memory Game: "It all sounds simple until it begins to congeal into one big Usonian blur."

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-- von Gerkan, Marg and Partners/gmp: Tianjin West Railway Station, Hangzhou South Railway Station, China  
-- Aedas: West Kowloon Terminus, Hong Kong

Where the Brits have us beaten: The genial garden-party feel of our Olympics was...a pleasant surprise. Less surprising, sadly, is the ongoing catastrophe of Homebush Bay. London has comprehensively shown us up...where we made wrong decisions, they made right ones. It's not about architecture...legacy depends far more on front-end strategy, connectivity decisions; location, urban fabric, transport. By Elizabeth Farrelly- Sydney Morning Herald

The 2015 Pan Am Games, city form, and a commitment to fitness: ...a paltry £10-million has been spent on improving London's walking and cycling routes...There's still time, before the Games land in Toronto, to shift passive voyeurism to long-term reactivated urbanism + Helle Soholt on designing healthy cities (video). By Lisa Rochon -- Gehl Architects - Globe and Mail (Canada)

Trends Transforming America's Urban Parks: Once relegated to the sidelines, an amenity that could be dispensed with in tough times, parks are now seen as central to a city's quality of life by public officials, civic leaders and citizens. By Anne Schwartz -- Greater and Greener International Urban Parks Conference; Peter Harnik/Center for City Park Excellence/The Trust for Public Land; Helle Søholt/Gehl Architects - Gotham Gazette (NYC)

Thinking outside the parks: Green space spreads in the Big Apple: ...parks don't need to be grand, historic, 100-acre, designed spaces. They can be tiny pockets...squeezed in wherever there's room..."the green glue that holds a city together." By Rebecca Messner -- Helle Søholt/Gehl Architects; Greenstreets; Park(ing) Day [links] - Grist Magazine

Renovated Perk Park in Cleveland gives the city a new oasis of urban bliss: ...a people-watching paradise, a patch of urban heaven, and a powerful demonstration of why it's essential to make more places like it throughout the city's heart...a living laboratory of peaceful, respectful, democratic enjoyment and coexistence. By Steven Litt -- I.M. Pei (1972); Thomas Balsley Associates; McKnight & Associates [images] - Cleveland Plain Dealer

Less parking, more parklets: City hopes new 'people spots' will increase foot traffic; first designs are more pragmatic than creative...judging by the first two parklets, the program is off to a solid, if not particularly creative, beginning. The architects and their clients wisely played it safe... By Blair Kamin -- dSpace Studio; moss design [images] - Chicago Tribune

Gardens for a healthier life: Two workplace landscapes in Brisbane...do more than just pretty up the building surrounds. The University of Queensland's Ipswich Campus Resource Centre and the CSIRO Ecosciences Precinct are designed to improve the health and wellbeing of the daily inhabitants. By Jill Franz -- Wilson Landscape Architects [images] - ArchitectureAU (Australia)

Where Yoga Meets Architecture: Unire/Unite, the winning installation of Fondazione MAXXI's Young Architects Program (YAP) in Rome, combines the design and movement therapy talents of the founders of Urban Movement Design. -- Sarah Gluck/Robyne Kassen; MoMA PS1; HWKN [slide show] - Architect Magazine

Without review, NJ Department of Environmental Protection plans to dump a commissioned work of art: As little respect as building architecture gets, landscape architecture receives even less...Barring a change of heart by the state...Green Acres to be demolished in early 2013. In the name of sustainability, the DEP will sacrifice not just a work of art, but a piece of the state's history. By Inga Saffron -- Athena Tacha - Philadelphia Inquirer

Glass towers could be awkward S.F. fit: This trend could give the city a colder, more generic look if left unchecked...San Francisco's downtown isn't perfect, but it has far more character than most large American cities. If a wave of cold glass boxes dilutes this, we'll have squandered something special. By John King -- Solomon Cordwell Buenz; Arquitectonica; Pelli Clarke Pelli; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) [slide show]- San Francisco Chronicle

With \$2,000 Bikes, Tech Firms Flee Suburbs for City Homes: ...tap into the creative- industry energy of cities, where the talent they seek increasingly wants to live...but cities haven't yet figured out how to meld suburban advantages with urban energy. It's time some savvy designers and companies reinvented both the skyscraper and the office park. By James S. Russell -- Studio O+A; Legorreta + Legorreta; Gensler; Foster + Partners [images]- Bloomberg News

Big names line up for Royal Opera House job: A star studded shortlist has been unveiled for a prestigious project...in London. -- Heatherwick Studio; Jamie Forbert Architects; Stanton Williams Architects; Amanda Leveté Architects; Caruso St John Architects; Witherford Watson Mann Architects; Diller Scofidio + Renfro- The Architects' Journal (UK)

A Fond Farewell to Robert Venturi, the Architect Who Taught Us to Stop Worrying and Love Las Vegas: The news that he is retiring from his firm, Venturi Scott Brown and Associates (which will be renamed VSBA), is bittersweet...In the end, his buildings didn't wow you. They made you think. By Paul Goldberger [images]- Vanity Fair

"Is Counterculture Getting Mainstream?" Curating the Venice Architecture Biennale's Guerilla U.S. Pavilion: Cathy Lang Ho discussed why this year's pavilion is more politicized than ever before, and her take on what "Common Good" actually means. -- Rebar; Architecture for Humanity Chicago; COMMONstudio; Candy Chang; Rockwell Group; Alexandra Pulver; Höweler + Yoon Architecture; WORKac [slide show]- Artinfo

The worst seems to be over for architects: South African architectural firms appear to have ridden the choppy waves of the global recession. Much of this can be attributed to SA's huge infrastructure backlog...But, while larger and smaller firms seem to have survived best, medium-sized practices have not necessarily fared as well...along with SA's construction companies, the country's architects are looking to the rest of Africa. -- Paragon Group; Nina Cohen and Fiona Garson Architects; Sarah Calburn Architects - BDIlive/Business Day (Johannesburg, South Africa)

A Pre-Fab Sustainable Village To Create Smart Growth: A self-contained "smart village" in Malaysia shows how even the smallest rural community can be prosperous and self-sustaining...plans to build as many as 12 more villages like Rimbunan Kaseh... [images]- Fast Company

Kathryn Findlay on her Favourite Impermanent Structures in London: ...demonstrating the adaptability of our city and the possibilities for the future...she makes us notice the Westminster Council pollution measuring box...she qualifies the structure as being both invisible and beautiful. -- Ushida Findlay Architects [Crane.tv video]- Huffington Post

Boost Your Brain Power with Frank Lloyd Wright Designs Memory Game: It all sounds simple until all of the nature-infused patterns and telescoping triangles begin to congeal into one big Usonian blur.- UnBeige

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