

Today's News - Monday, November 12, 2012

- ArcSpace brings us a park brought back to life in Belgium, a stunning library in Scotland, and a museum in Finland.
- Florida has a most enlightening Q&A with Andrew Zoll and Jonathan Rose, who "weigh in on how to prepare our cities to fight back against nature."
- Bernstein reports on NYC architects' desire and efforts to respond to post-Sandy aid - but are stymied (for the moment) by the state's lack of "Good Samaritan" laws.
- Finn sits down with Washburn, NYC's urban design director (and himself impacted by Sandy): "the urbane architect is more interested in concocting public spaces than constructing impressive buildings."
- The Committee for Sydney's chief exec takes on Farrelly's trouncing of Sydney's urbanism: the city's "decision-making deficit must be overcome...But wait. That sound I hear is of Sydney beginning to remember where it might have put that mojo."
- Australia's Healthabitat offers reams of evidence from the Housing for Health survey/fix program that "disproves a number of entrenched myths" about housing for disadvantaged communities, and is more than a bit concerned that "the largest ever investment in indigenous housing is proceeding in a manner that disregards this evidence base and the lessons learned."
- Wainwright x 2 (from the bold to the blatantly absurd, if not laughably ludicrous - in our opinion, anyway): pop-up' housing for homeless people: A proposal for pop-up housing for the homeless in London: "Is this a bold new vision to exploit underused space for urgent housing need, or a recipe for ghettoized barracks that will exacerbate the problems of deprived inner-city areas?"
- He digs deep into a "new billionaires' craze" for building "iceberg houses" - i.e. "luxury bunkers" under their posh London homes (his descriptions are priceless).
- Perth does an about-face "following outrage at plans to tear down a local landmark": its original 1928 component, now in storage, will be rebuilt on a man-made island (better than nothing, right?).
- A Chinese architect contends: "planners need to take account that urbanization is also a mental process for people, not just about physical relocation" (and some may want chickens in their mega-city apartments); also, he doesn't think "there is any division between Chinese and foreign architects, just between good and bad ones."
- McDonald cheers Scotland's Department of Education first design competition since 1973, though he - and architects - are dismayed by "the obsession with fees," and "design quality ranking way down the list of criteria."
- Q&A with AIA's Ivy re: "why it's important for architects to cross-pollinate ideas with software programmers": "we want more proof that buildings are making an impact. We want evidence."
- McGuigan highlights the highlights of Record's 10th annual Innovation conference: "Anyone who can't understand why architecture remains such an alluring profession should have dropped in."
- Gallagher sees greatness in Hadid's Broad Art Museum at MSU: she is "now the latest outsider to gift a great building to Michigan."
- Litt revisits Gehry's Peter B. Lewis Building at Case Western 10 years later: yes, it's had its "snags," but it "could be considered a case study on the positive impact architecture can have on the soul of a business school."
- London's oldest memorials are still the best: "most of the new memorials fail to move or inspire as they should...divided between banal literalism and meaningless abstraction."
- Heathcote finds "proportional perfection" in two homes "separated by about four centuries and the Pacific Ocean," yet "are among those that most influenced the modern movement."

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-- OMGEVING: Boekenberg Park, Deurne, Belgium  
-- schmidt hammer lassen: New Library, University of Aberdeen, Scotland  
-- Steven Holl Architects: Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland

[The Rush to Resilience: 'We Don't Have Decades Before the Next Sandy': Two experts weigh in on how to prepare our cities to fight back against nature.](#) By Richard Florida -- Andrew Zoll/PopTech; Jonathan Rose/Jonathan Rose Companies - The Atlantic Cities

[Architects Respond to a Call for Post-Sandy Aid: ...AIANY Design for Risk and Reconstruction committee...put out a call for help..."more than 200 responses" from architects willing to survey affected neighborhoods...But that doesn't mean they will get to try out their new skills...\[they\]are prevented from performing damage assessment—as volunteers—by the absence of..."good samaritan" laws...New York is without such protection.](#) By Fred A. Bernstein - Architectural Record

[What Design Brings to the Table: Alexandros E. Washburn, the urban design director for the NYC Department of City Planning, is charged with making the cityscape...a more palatable place...the urbane architect...is more interested in concocting public spaces than constructing impressive buildings..."You control nothing, but hopefully you influence everything."](#) By Robin Finn - New York Times

[City might appear to be down, but it is far from out: The chief executive of the Committee for Sydney responds to Elizabeth Farrelly's column...on Sydney's urbanism...We need to fix a broken planning system but in a way that enhances community participation...\[its\] decision-making deficit must be overcome...But wait. That sound I hear is of Sydney beginning to remember where it might have put that mojo.](#) By Tim Williams - Sydney Morning Herald

[Healthabitat vs the Myth of Indigenous Housing: ...the rigorous collection of data that goes along with the Housing for Health survey/fix program...disproves a number of entrenched myths...Healthabitat's contention that the largest ever investment in indigenous housing...is proceeding in a manner that disregards this evidence base and the lessons learned.](#) By Justine Clark [images] - Australian Design Review

[Garages to provide 'pop-up' housing for homeless people: Proposal by the Building Trust could see sheds turned into prefab homes in London...Pop-up HAWSE \(Homes through Apprenticeships With Skills for Employment\)...Is this a bold new vision to exploit underused space for urgent housing need, or a recipe for ghettoised barracks that will exacerbate the problems of deprived inner-city areas?](#) By Oliver Wainwright -- Levitt Bernstein Architects [images] - Guardian (UK)

[Billionaires' basements: the luxury bunkers making holes in London streets: A new billionaires' craze for building elaborate subterranean extensions is making swiss cheese of London's poshest streets - but at what cost? ..."planning laws...cover everything about the surface of the ground, but nothing beneath it"..."basements are hidden, and they don't change the land use."](#) By Oliver Wainwright -- Admir Volic/Volume3 [images, links] - Guardian (UK)

[Perth to rebuild local landmark on Swan River island: Following outrage at plans to tear down a local landmark as part of the major Elizabeth Quay project...historic Florence Hummerston Kiosk will be reconstructed and incorporated into the man-made island...original 1928 component...has been put into storage until late in 2014...](#) [image] - Architecture & Design (Australia)

[Architecture is 'about solving living problems': ...planners need to take account...that urbanization is also a mental process](#)

for people and not just about physical relocation...Chinese city planners have been criticized for tearing down hutong areas but...they have had little choice to adapt to the modern world..."I don't think there is any division between Chinese and foreign architects, just between good and bad ones." -- Wang Yun/Atelier Fronti- [China Daily](#)

Building schools: could do better: ...Department of Education competition...the first such contest since 1973...the obsession with fees, as opposed to design...widespread dismay...about the way schools are procured, with design quality ranking way down the list...architects and progressive school principals should be allowed more scope for creativity... By Frank McDonald -- [ARPL](#); [de Blacam and Meagher Architects](#); [Coady Partnership](#); [Grafton Architects](#); [Michael Kelly Architect](#); [BDP Dublin](#)- [Irish Times](#)

Q&A: Robert Ivy, CEO, the American Institute of Architects: ...can deftly steer a conversation on innovation from the history of U.S. urban planning to why it's important for architects to cross-pollinate ideas with software programmers..."we want more proof that buildings are making an impact. We want evidence."- [SmartPlanet](#)

Innovation at Every Scale: Using high technology and low, architects are pushing new ideas in design and construction...Anyone who can't understand why architecture remains such an alluring profession should have dropped in on Record's 10th annual Innovation conference..."Design Leaders Envision the Next Decade." By Cathleen McGuigan -- [Jeanne Gang/Studio Gang Architects](#); [David Adjaye](#); [Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture](#); [William Pedersen/Kohn Pedersen Fox \(KPF\)](#); [Sheila Kennedy/Kennedy & Violich](#); [Francis Kéré](#); [Dennis Shelden/Gehry Technologies](#) [[links](#)]- [Architectural Record](#)

Architect gifts a great building to MSU and the cultural region: The instant that the new Broad Art Museum opens...on Michigan State University's campus, it will take its rightful place in the first rank of Michigan architecture. Angular, eye-popping and slightly disorienting...also is inspiring, superbly sized and sited, and perfectly fit for its role as an oasis of global modern art. By John Gallagher -- [Zaha Hadid](#)- [Detroit Free Press](#)

Now 10 years old, the Peter B. Lewis Building is quietly transforming business education at CWRU/Case Western Reserve University: ...the building had sky-high potential in 1996...Then came the snags...could be considered a case study on the positive impact architecture can have on the soul of a business school...TheWeatherhead School has adopted design methodology as a major theme of management training...[its] architecture is very much part of the message, and students get it. By Steven Litt -- [Frank Gehry](#) [[images](#)]- [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#)

London is now full of war memorials, but the oldest are still the best: The timeworn efforts of Charles Jagger and Edwin Lutyens still stand head and shoulders above London's newer monuments and war memorials...Aesthetically, most of the new memorials fail to move or inspire as they should...divided between banal literalism and meaningless abstraction. By Ian Jack- [Guardian \(UK\)](#)

Proportional perfection: ...Separated by about four centuries and the Pacific Ocean this pair of houses...so far apart in time and space, are among those that most influenced the modern movement. The Katsura Imperial Villa...I don't know if Rudolf Schindler visited...it is through his extraordinary house [in West Hollywood] that the Japanese aesthetic first spread through 20th-century modernist culture. By Edwin Heathcote - "The Meaning of Home" [[images](#)]- [Financial Times \(UK\)](#)

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