

Today's News - Monday, March 18, 2013

- It's Ito's Pritzker Day (and we say YAY!): Russell, Goldhagen, Nobel, Hawthorne, Rosenbaum, and Pogrebin are all very happy to tell us why that's a good thing (each in their own eloquent way, and all well worth reading).
- Williams takes issue with American "ethics tsars" arguing that architects should not be designing prisons: "Being morally blackballed for accepting what others deem to be an unethical commission is a slippery slope."
- King reports on a change in design of San Francisco's Transbay Transit Center: it looks like it will "shed its glass skin" for perforated aluminum: "The new look in part reflects budget realities" (and not necessarily a bad thing).
- It looks like the knight in shining armor riding in to save the Preston bus station will be turned away at the gates - demolition seems to be the preferred future.
- Eyefuls of Chicago's Wrigley Building facelift (including original 1920s bronze chandeliers that had been missing for decades).
- Urban planning goes digital in Santander, Spain, a "smart city" in reality: "It's not an option, it's obligatory."
- Peirce parses the reasons Medellín, Colombia, was voted the City of the Year (over Tel Aviv and New York): its "arc of recovery isn't new construction downtown, as substantial as that's been. It's social inclusion.
- Providence, Rhode Island, wins Bloomberg Mayors Challenge with a "cutting-edge early education initiative."
- Six women who are really making things happen in cities (we cheer them all! - "no, Jane Jacobs is not on the list").
- It's up to a judge to decide if Pei Partnership Architects can go forward with lawsuit against the (designed but never-started) U.S. National Slavery Museum in Virginia.
- It may not be the final winning project, but Sage and Coombe's NYFi wins popular vote in NYC's Reinvent Payphones Design Challenge.
- Call for entries: revamp of London's Canada House in Trafalgar Square.

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James S. Russell: Toyo Ito Wins \$100,000 Pritzker Prize for Bravura Designs: In Ito's projects, playfulness warms dull sobriety...Repairing the Sendai Mediatheque took him back to the scene of the Fukushima devastation. Unhappy with the pace of rebuilding, he worked with volunteer architects on "Home-for- All"... "It's caused us to rethink the fundamental question, 'What is architecture?'"...It's a rare architect who would ask such a question after a successful four-decade career. - Bloomberg/BusinessWeek

Sarah Williams Goldhagen: Toyo Ito's Pritzker Prize: An architect with a sense of the body: ...when big money, artistic accomplishment, and the public good coincide, it's time to celebrate. Smile, then...For an architect, producing even a handful of masterpieces makes him more than deserving of veneration. That Ito is developing an architectural vision that both has and should clear a path for tomorrow's architects and buildings—now, that man deserves a prize. - The New Republic

Philip Nobel: Toyo Ito Wins the 2013 Pritzker Prize: ...there's a whiff of justice in the pick...what sets Ito apart has been his refusal...to make it easy on himself...Mistakes are a sign that an architect is doing something right. In its variety, in its ambition, even in its moments of mediocrity, Ito's work gives us a living picture of a true designer at work... [images]- Architect Magazine

Christopher Hawthorne : Toyo Ito, 71, wins Pritzker Prize: In a return to form for the most prestigious award in architecture...After honoring younger and lesser-known figures in recent years...Pritzker jury chose a well-established architect with 40 years of built work to his credit. For at least a decade Ito has been a presumed Pritzker front-runner. -- Wang Shu; Ryue Nishizawa/Kazuyo Sejima/SANAA/ Kenzo Tange/ Fumihiko Maki - Los Angeles Times

Lee Rosenbaum: Berkeley's Loss: Toyo Ito Wins the 2013 Pritzker Architecture Prize: What you can't see is an Ito building in the U.S. His only commission in this country got scratched: the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. [images, links]- ArtsJournal

Robin Pogrebin: Architectural Iconoclast Wins the Pritzker Prize: Toyo Ito...who broke from Modernism and designed a library that survived Japan's 2011 earthquake...said he was gratified by the honor, especially because it represents an acceptance of his position as an iconoclast who has challenged the past 100 years of Modernism. [images]- New York Times

McC-arch-yism: ...the ethics tsars are at work in America arguing that architects be not engaged in the construction of prison facilities...Being morally blackballed for accepting what others deem to be an unethical commission is a slippery slope. By Austin Williams - Future Cities Project (U.K.)

Transbay Transit Center design change proposed: ...still just a hole in the ground, but it already may have shed its glass skin...the architects now propose to cloak it in perforated aluminum...The new look in part reflects budget realities...should result in a \$10 million savings... By John King -- Pelli Clarke Pelli [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

Preston councillors set to reject offer to save bus station: Cabinet recommended to turn down bid from local businessman in favour of demolition...Simon Rigby wants to refurbish the Preston bus station...including space for shops and business start-ups. -- BDP (1969); Frank Whittle Partnership - BD/Building Design (UK)

A facelift for the Wrigley Building: The original 1920s bronze chandeliers are back...had been missing for decades...part of the \$70 million revamp the iconic terra cotta skyscraper...renovation also includes the creation of an open-air shopping arcade along the city-owned plaza between the two towers. -- Charles Beersman/Graham Anderson Probst & White (1922); Goettsch Partners [images]- Crain's Chicago Business

Living Lab: Urban Planning Goes Digital in Spanish 'Smart City': Cities around the world aim to become "smart cities," but in Santander, Spain, the goal has already become a reality. Thousands of sensors help alert residents to traffic jams, regulate the watering in city parks and dim the street lamps..."It's not an option, it's obligatory." [images]- Der Spiegel (Germany)

Million-vote Poll Affirms Medellín's Rebirth: Why would Medellín, Colombia, once known as...murder capital of the world...be voted the City of the Year...how could Medellín garner more votes than the two other finalist cities – Tel Aviv...and New York...[its] arc of recovery isn't new construction downtown, as substantial as that's been. It's social inclusion... By Neal Peirce - Citiwire

Providence Takes Top Award in Bloomberg Mayors Challenge: Bloomberg Philanthropies gives Providence \$5 million to implement system to monitor low-income families...a "cutting-edge early education initiative"...Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, and Santa Monica also made the top five list, each taking away \$1 million... [links]- The Architect's Newspaper

Urban Influencers: Six Women Making Things Happen in Cities: And no, Jane Jacobs is not on the list. -- Jennifer Pahlka/Code for America; Majora Carter/Sustainable South Bronx/Startup Box: South Bronx; Janette Sadik-Khan/NYC DOT; Mimi Hoang/nARCHITECTS; Toni Griffin/J. Max Bond Center on Design for the Just City; Saskia Sassen- Next City (formerly Next American City)

Judge deciding whether to let U.S. National Slavery Museum architects move forward with lawsuit: Pei Partnership

[Architects has asked the court to lift restrictions that it says affect the value of the 38-acre parcel of land in Fredericksburg, hurting how much it would be able to collect if the property is sold.](#) - Richmond Times-Dispatch (Virginia)

[10-Foot-Tall Double-Sided Touchscreen Wins NYC's Reinvent Payphones Design Challenge: In addition to the NYFi, the five other designs...will all be considered as the city attempts to narrow down its design criteria for the final design specifications.](#)
-- Sage and Coombe Architects; Frog Design; FXFOWLE; Control Group/Titan; Parsons/NYU/Cooper Union; Rama Chorpash Design/Cheng+Snyder [images] - Wired

[Call for entries: Major contest launched for overhaul of London's Canada House in Trafalgar Square: Canadian government has begun the search for a design team to mastermind the £10.3 million revamp; deadline: April 23](#) - The Architects' Journal (UK)

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