EDITOR'S NOTE: We'll be preparing for the 2013 AIANY Honors and Awards Luncheon tomorrow, so there will be no newsletter - we will return Thursday, April 18.

• Ron Thom and Douglas Cardinal take home RAIC | Architecture Canada's Prix du XXe siècle, which honors enduring excellence in Canadian architecture.
• Brooks Pfeiffer brings us an exclusive tour of FLW's Fir Tree House: "With its grandly rustic architectural elegance, it stands alone in Wright's oeuvre" (we want one!).
• Heathcote riffs on two homes by Koenig and Gehry: "One is a clean, crystal-clear villa, the other is a tough, gritty street hood. And both remain hugely influential."
• McGuirk mulls OMA's "Tools for Life": "OMA designing hydraulic machinery for Knoll, sponsored by Prada, is the industrial revived not as tragedy but as farce."
• Lui digs into the conundrum faced by "budding architects" and "a unique obstacle in starting their own firms - the prohibitive costs of design software" that could result in "a self-selecting pool of designers" who can afford to compete.
• A profile of Architecture for Health in Vulnerable Environments (ARCHIVE) founder who's out to improve global health through better design: "paving floors can improve the cognitive development of a child by as much as 96%" (and other intriguing stats).
• Badger uses Chicago as focal point to ponder, "What happens to the Olympics Plans of cities that don't win them? Does a city get anything out of the exercise?"
• Booth gets behind RIBA's concern that changes in social housing standards "could exacerbate the phenomenon of 'rabbit-hutch Britain'" (of course, a builders' lobby group that says, "The objective of all this is to cut red tape and reduce standards, not the other way round," bodies well, doesn't it?).
• Booth says it might be a good idea for the U.K. to take a page from Denmark's architecture policy: "Lesson #1: High Quality Design Makes Economic Sense."
• Lubell reports on bold plans for Alameda Square, which "could become the hub of L.A.'s burgeoning Arts District" (shipping containers included, of course).
• Wainwright is almost as dramatic as the dramas going on in the National Theatre's pop-up Shed: it "recalls a diminutive Battersea Power Station as if built by Amish barn-raisers - half packing crate, half temple - but it seems a natural addition."
• Ron Thom and Douglas Cardinal take home RAIC | Architecture Canada's Prix du XXe siècle, which honors enduring excellence in Canadian architecture.

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4 Lessons the UK Should Take from Denmark: ...a review of the country's architecture policy... "will be a rallying point for the profession"...Lesson #1: High Quality Design Makes Economic Sense...it remains to be seen whether the review will generate any noticeable changes at all. By Rory Stott -- Terry Farrell; Thomas Heatherwick; Alison Brooks; Alain de Botton - ArchDaily

Fashionable Arrival: Alameda Square could become the hub of LA's burgeoning Arts District: ...includes the redevelopment of four 1916 factory buildings...at 1.5 million square feet...scheme is flexible...campus could stay relatively small or keep expanding...while uses within each building could change. By Sam Lubell -- Shimoda Design Group [images] - The Architect's Newspaper

The National Theatre's pop-up Shed is a model for the South Bank's future: Haworth Tompkins' bright red timber auditorium learns from the nimble speed and agility of theatre production itself...The Shed...recalls a diminutive Battersea Power Station as if built by Amish barn-raisers...half packing crate, half temple -- but it seems a natural addition... By Oliver Wainwright - Guardian (UK)

Architect works to save lives by improving design: Peter Williams founded Architecture for Health in Vulnerable Environments (ARCHIVE) to improve global health through better design...about to start work in Nepal, "based on findings that paving floors can improve the cognitive development of a child by as much as 96%..." - Minnesota Public Radio (MPR)

Unexpected Costs: Big ticket design software versus alternate methodologies: Budding architects face a unique obstacle in starting their own firms -- firms in the prohibitive costs of design software...could be resulting in a self-selecting pool of designers who are able to compete...we need to develop an awareness of the fact that architecture is affected by the tools of its production at all scales. By Ann Lui - Archinect

OMA's "Tools for Life": Sizing up the firm's new collection for Knoll at the Milan furniture fair: A photograph of Rem Koolhaas...trying to look poised with both feet dangling in the air...OMA designing hydraulic machinery for Knoll, sponsored by Prada, is the industrial revived not as tragedy but as farce. By Justin McGuirk [slide show] - Architectural Record

West Coast: pure cool v crack house: Two homes, by Pierre Koenig and Frank Gehry, embody different aspects of Los Angeles cool...One is a clean, crystal-clear villa, the other is a tough, gritty street hood. And both remain hugely influential. By Edwin Heathcote (from "The Meaning of Home") [images] - Financial Times (UK)

Wright Rediscovered: Exclusive: a tour inside a Frank Lloyd Wright house in the Southwest reveals the power of the original interiors, never before published...With its grandly rustic architectural elegance, the Fir Tree House stands alone in Wright's oeuvre. By Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer -- Pamela Duncan [slide show] - Architectural Record

Prix du XXe siècle honours enduring excellence in Canadian architecture: RAIC | Architecture Canada, in partnership with the Heritage Canada Foundation (HCF), is honouring two iconic post-secondary buildings...Grande Prairie Regional College and Massey College. -- Ron Thom (with Thompson, Berwick & Pratt, 1962); Douglas Cardinal (1974) [images] - Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC)