

Today's News - Friday, September 20, 2013

- Hall Kaplan parses the pages and the "litting phrases" of Lubell and Goldin's "Never Built Los Angeles": "As a student of L.A. histrionics and history, the book makes one wonder about what might have been - and weep."
- DePillis minces no words about Washington, DC's height-limit debate: "An overplayed fear of urban 'canyons' is only one part of the opposition" - oh, the politics of it all! (a great read).
- Long compiles 95 Theses, arguing that "today's obsession with authorship and celebrity leads to serious imbalances in the way we see design," calling "for an overhaul of the way design is curated."
- Exploring whether architecture is still a boys' club, three women architects in New Zealand "show a new direction for the design industry."
- A quick take on some good examples of vacant big-box spaces repurposed for other uses.
- Wainwright weighs in on plan to build an unbuilt FLW in the U.K.: "there is little evidence the maestro of 'organic architecture' would be entirely comfortable with a zombie villa" - it "seems to be less about accuracy and intent, and more about soothing the FLW Foundation by employing one of its architects."
- Eyefuls of the inspiring winners in the inaugural Social Impact Design Award program.
- Barber Osgerby bags the Bodleian Libraries Chair Competition (it was our pick, too).
- One we couldn't resist: A new game you'll have a hard time putting down (or so they say): Prison Architect is "a brilliant game that gives players complete freedom in the creation and management of prison full of dangerous convicts."
- Weekend diversions:
 - Moore cheers a Barbican film fest of flicks based in London that "reveals how fog, rain and gloom of all kinds add to the mystique of the capital."
 - Hutt's "Sukkah City" documents the competition from "jury-room deliberations and internal arguments" to the exhibition in NYC's Union Square (public screening in the square this Sunday!).
 - An "exhibit about buildings that don't exist might not sound all that exciting," but "Never Built Los Angeles" at A+D Los Angeles certainly is.
 - "Sheep Station" at a former Getty filling station in Manhattan's Chelsea offers a "curious little patch of grass" that is "a psychological breath of fresh country air for the post-industrial traveler" on their way to the High Line (pix are great!).
 - The "expertly" curated "Richard Rogers: Inside Out" at London's Royal Academy is "a testament to how architectural designs are devised and developed through an infinite number of methods and can lead to some truly groundbreaking buildings" (lots of pix).
 - "Reinventing the Library: Washington's New Centers for Learning" at AIADC's District Architecture Center offers "stunning photographs and tightly distilled explanatory texts" in a "superior, if small and understated, show."
 - Litt lauds a "luminous" and long-overdue exhibition celebrating the premier architect of Cleveland's Gilded Age: "Charles F. Schweinfurth: Uncompromising Architect of Cleveland's Valiant Age."
 - A rundown of Rykwert's four best books that prove he is a most worthy winner of the RIBA Gold Medal.
 - Weighing in at 17 pounds, Zeidler's "spectacular autobiography" is "the most ambitious autobiography anyone in Canada has ever written - he writes without jargon or pretension."
 - A round-up of tomes reviewed, including Rawsthorn's "Hello World: Where Design Meets Life," and Bird's "Hightide: Queensland Design Now" - "a concise yet compelling look at an often understated chapter of Australia's design identity."

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Book Review: "Never Built Los Angeles" by Sam Lubell and Greg Goldin; foreword by Thom Mayne: The contradictions and challenges of Los Angeles as a metropolitan conceit of perpetual promise continue. By Sam Hall Kaplan - ArchNewsNow

Want to shrink government? Let D.C. grow: Washington D.C. is nearing the end of its examination of whether to relax the city's strict height limit, but it's no closer to actually doing so...even after concluding that allowing taller buildings would be an economic benefit, it's probably further away...An overplayed fear of urban "canyons" is only one part of the opposition... By Lydia DePillis - Washington Post

Sinister objects demand attention just as much as beneficial ones: V&A senior curator Kieran Long argues that today's obsession with authorship and celebrity leads to serious imbalances in the way we see design in the world and calls for an overhaul of the way design is curated in the 21st century: Curating for the Contemporary: 95 Theses... - Dezeen

The changing face of architecture: On the eve of the first Women+Architecture exhibition, Nicola Stock asks is architecture still a boys' club? Three women...show a new direction for the design industry. -- Phoenix Wang/Studio Gascoigne; Sarah Hewlett Diprose/Warren and Mahoney; Raukura Turei/Stevens Lawson Architects [images]- New Zealand Herald

Take Two for Big Boxes: ...good examples all around the country of vacant commercial and retail spaces that have been repurposed for other uses. -- Corner Greer & Associates; MS&R Architecture [images]- Build a Better Burb

Frank Lloyd Wright's final house will be built in an unlikely setting – Somerset: Villa designed for Santa Barbara cliffs to grace lakeside south of Bristol, with blessing of Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation...there is little evidence...the maestro of "organic architecture"...would be entirely comfortable with a zombie villa...the lesson seems to be less about accuracy and intent, and more about soothing the Foundation by employing one of its architects. By Oliver Wainwright -- Stephen Nemtim; Stephen Brooks [images]- Guardian (UK)

Social Impact Design Award Presents Two Firms with Top Honor: Inaugural Public Architecture Program Recognizes Outstanding Projects Serving the Public Good. -- AIA San Francisco; InterfaceHolst Architecture; Wheeler Kearns Architects [images]- Public Architecture

Barber Osgerby wins Bodleian Libraries Chair Competition: ...beat shortlisted chairs by Amanda Levete Architects/AL_A...and Matthew Hilton...three-legged oak chair...the third new chair developed specifically for the Bodleian since 1756. [images]- Design Week (UK)

Prison Architect: a yet unfinished indie game that's already better than most: ...a brilliant game that gives players complete freedom in the creation and management of prison full of dangerous convicts: Crawling through "500 yards of s--t smelling foulness" is a cakewalk next to putting down Prison Architect. [images]- NY Daily News

Urban Wandering: Film and the London Landscape: A season of films [at the Barbican] about London reveals how fog, rain and gloom of all kinds add to the mystique of the capital...beneath smug architecture, and wrapped in fog, rain or dark, there is something more compelling and complex, if not always nice. By Rowan Moore - Observer (UK)

New Film on an Old Tradition: Can Biblical rules be re-imagined by modern architects? ... Jason Hutt's "Sukkah City," a documentary on the competition...follows jury-room deliberations and internal arguments...and their eventual transportation and assembly for a weekend exhibition in Union Square... By Alex Carp -- Joshua Foer; Roger Bennet/Reboot- Metropolis Magazine

In Los Angeles, Showcasing A City That Might Have Been: A museum exhibit about buildings that don't exist might not sound all that exciting. But the Architecture & Design Museum [A+D] has had its crowds grow to 10 times their normal level for a show called "Never Built Los Angeles." -- Sam Lubell; Greg Goldin- National Public Radio (NPR)

Manhattan Sheep Find Greener Grass in Chelsea: New York City has a beautiful sheep's meadow..."Sheep Station" by François-Xavier Lalanne at a former Getty filling station...curious little patch of grass is an unusually welcoming pit stop, a psychological breath of fresh country air for the post-industrial traveler. [images]- [Huffington Post](#)

'Richard Rogers: Inside Out' at the Royal Academy: ...brings together an unparalleled collection of work in a show which has been expertly curated...a testament to how architectural designs are devised and developed through an infinite number of methods and can lead to some truly groundbreaking buildings. -- Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners [images]- [ArchDaily](#)

DC Branch Libraries Acclaimed "Reinvention" Revealed in Architectural Photography Show: ...the District Architecture Center's current offering: "Reinventing the Library: Washington's New Centers for Learning"...stunning photographs and tightly distilled explanatory texts...superior, if small and understated, show... By Anthony L. Harvey [link to images]- [InTowner](#) (Washington, DC)

Celebrating premier architect of Cleveland's Gilded Age: ...the city's greatest late-19th-century architect and a star of the early 20th century...Charles who, you say? ...the subject of a luminous exhibition at ARTneo (formerly the Cleveland Artists Foundation)...authored many of the city's most impressive buildings between the 1880s and the 1910s. "Charles F. Schweinfurth: Uncompromising Architect of Cleveland's Valiant Age" By Steven Litt [images]- [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#)

Joseph Rykwert - his four best books: may not have much of a built legacy, but the influence of his architectural writing will probably outlive buildings by many other Gold Medal winners: "The Idea of a Town"; "The Seduction of Place"; "The Dancing Column: On Order in Architecture"; "The Judicious Eye: Architecture Against the Other Arts " - [BD/Building Design](#) (UK)

Eberhard Zeidler's autobiography is by his own design: At age 87, after a spectacular career, he's produced a spectacular autobiography. It's the most ambitious autobiography anyone in this country has ever written: "Buildings Cities Life: An Autobiography in Architecture"...In telling how buildings happen he writes without jargon or pretension. - [National Post](#) (Canada)

Four books in review: "Hello World: Where Design Meets Life" by Alice Rawsthorn; "Hightide: Queensland Design Now" by Jason Bird...a concise yet compelling look at an often understated chapter of Australia's design identity; "Brand Spaces: Branded Architecture and the Future of Retail Design" ed. by S Ehmman and S Borges; "Wonder Wood: A favorite material for design, architecture and art" by Barbara Glasner and Stephan Ott - [Australian Design Review](#)



-- Travel guide: London: ...some of the most significant projects in contemporary London architecture, with a wink at some of the city's classics and an exquisite selection of hotel and restaurant tips.

-- Zaha Hadid Architects: ...the uncrowned queen of contemporary iconic architecture. Her buildings practically scream, "I'm a Hadid."

-- Eisenman Architects: Cidade da Cultura de Galicia, Santiago de Compostela, Spain

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