

Today's News - Monday, December 2, 2013

EDITOR'S NOTE: A few days away, and so much catching up to do - with bunches and bunches of must-reads today!

- ArcSpace brings us eyefuls of Perrault's sketches from his Moleskin book; revisits Zumthor's Shelters for Roman Archaeological Site in Switzerland ("It's astonishing to think it was designed and built almost 30 years ago"), and FOA's 2002 Yokohama International Port Terminal; and cheers "The Monocle Guide to Better Living" that is "global to the bone."
- Niemeyer's 1989 Latin America Memorial in Sao Paulo goes up in flames (no details yet on how much damage).
- A great take on the "bombastic new headquarters" tech companies are planning "to immortalize their grandiose ambitions."
- Moore takes on "Miami's new vice - an addiction to star architects": though there's much he likes, he also thinks it's "a shame, because Miami held out for some time against the voodoo belief that some billion-dollar permutation of Foster/Hadid/Koolhaas/Herzog/Calatrava/Gehry/Nouvel would be the key to fame and fortune."
- Viglucci offers a reason to cheer for "the grandest old Miami building no one knows about": it's "springing back to life" this week as the Miami Center for Architecture and Design.
- Rybczynski spends some serious time in Poundbury and finds "there is a lot more than meets the modernist critic's jaundiced eye - it embodies social, economic, and planning innovations that can only be called radical."
- Brussat is a bit befuddled: how could Rybczynski write "this fine essay" and also vote for Gehry's Eisenhower Memorial - "It just does not compute."
- Ransford explains how developers and neighborhood activists find common ground: "public discussions need to start with a focus on built form - 'Show me, don't tell me" (more important than "visions, values and wish lists")."
- Townsend offers a fascinating look at the "bizarre real estate economics" behind Japan's "penchant for avant garde housing": some houses seem like "follies to the futility of home ownership...clients quietly rebel in the best way they can - through design. Besides, they'll eventually tear it all down anyway" (great business for up-and-coming "outwardly shy, yet media-savvy architects," though).
- Kennicott gives (mostly) thumbs-up to the Kimbell's Piano Pavilion: it "will please some as modest and unobtrusive and displease others for the same reasons - while subtly deflecting the biggest problem of all, that the modern museum is unsure of what it wants to be and why it exists."
- Dunlap finds the formerly "forbidding" and now light-filled Queens Museum transformation "astonishing."
- Saffron cheers Drexel University's new business school that "does a brilliant job of helping to turn the badly treated intersection back into a real place again" and "conjures real architecture out of space and light" (the real surprise is who designed it).
- Lamster lauds the Dallas parks department for its pavilion program, and is smitten with the most recent - a Snøhetta/Architexas-designed "wonky pavilion with a tennis-ball-yellow interior" (great pix).
- Theis & Khan "scoops contentious RIBA office competition."
- Aspden has a most amusing and informative (and sometimes intimidating) interview with Gehry: "Just don't call him a 'starchitect'": "journalists invented it, and now they use it to damn us," sayeth the master ("scrunched-up pieces of green paper" and a deadpan response makes this a must-read!).
- Wainwright weighs in on the outcries to scale back Hadid's stadiums in Qatar and Japan (which is nothing new, actually), and some of the biological/scatological name-calling: "Hadid has little time for such lewd comparisons."
- A look at how Hadid uses a hologram to show off her One Thousand Museum Tower in Miami that "that will soon join the Magic City skyline."
- Call for entries: Louisville Children's Museum: Revitalization of a Downtown Edge international ideas competition + Deadline reminder: DOCOMOMO US 1st Annual Modernism in America Awards.

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-- Atelier Peter Zumthor: Shelters for Roman Archaeological Site, Chur, Switzerland (1986): It's astonishing to think it was designed and built almost 30 years ago.
-- Choreography of Thought: Dominique Perrault's Sketches: "The silence, the mystery that surrounds a sketch constitutes a space in which thought is free."
-- Foreign Office Architects (FOA): Yokohama International Port Terminal (2002), Yokohama, Japan -- Farshid Moussavi; Alejandro Zaera-Polo
-- "The Monocle Guide to Better Living" helmed by founder Tyler Brülé...It is big....global to the bone and filled with stuff of superb quality.

Oscar Niemeyer building hit by fire in Sao Paulo, Brazil: The Latin America Memorial, built in 1989, was empty at the time of the fire ...The cause of the fire is unclear. [images]- BBC

From Apple to Amazon: The New Monuments to Digital Domination: Technology giants...are building bombastic new headquarters to immortalize their grandiose ambitions...plans...accessible to the public thanks to administrative urban planning procedures...leave no doubt that these are supposed to be more than mere corporate headquarters. -- Norman Foster/Foster + Partners; Frank Gehry; NBBJ; Gensler [images]- Der Spiegel (Germany)

Miami's new vice -- an addiction to star architects: The Florida city's main asset was once a TV police series. Now...it is America's fastest-changing city. Can it do better...It is easy to see where it all gets a bit shallow, starting with the sudden mania for collecting big-name architects...Which is a shame... By Rowan Moore -- Grimshaw; Zaha Hadid; Rem Koolhaas/OMA; Norman Foster; Richard Meier; John Pawson; Herzog & de Meuron; Enrique Norten/TEN Arquitectos; Bjarke Ingels Group/BIG; Frank Gehry; Raymond Jungles; , Rene Gonzalez [images]- Observer (UK)

In downtown Miami, a grand architectural revival: ...the grandest old Miami building no one knows about is springing back to life...The Old Old U.S. Post Office...will reopen to the public in December 6 as...the Miami Center for Architecture and Design...the timing is propitious as...the area sits at the cusp of yet another transformative -- and, as ever, controversial -- wave of development. By Andres Viglucci -- AIA Miami; Allan Shulman/Shulman + Associates; John Forbes/Forbes Architects [images]- Miami Herald

Behind the Façade: Critics have blasted Poundbury's aesthetics. But...some forward-looking principles are driving..."the town that Prince Charles built"...there is a lot more...than meets the modernist critic's jaundiced eye...embodies social, economic, and planning innovations that can only be called radical...I can almost imagine an International Style--revival Poundbury...But modernism has been notably deficient in creating an urban fabric. By Witold Rybczynski -- Léon Krier; Peterjohn Smyth; Ben Pentreath; John Simpson; Quinlan and Francis Terry; James Gorst; Barbara Weiss Architects; Calderpeel Architects [images]- Architect Magazine

Witold Rybczynski on Poundbury: This fine essay...is so very good. So very good, in fact, that...I still cannot understand how Rybczynski could write this essay and also vote, while on the U.S. Fine Arts Commission, for Frank Gehry's proposed

monument to Eisenhower. It just does not compute. By David Brussat- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Finding that common ground: Developers and neighbourhood activists can work together to shape communities: ...unlikely partners? Not really. In fact, some of the best neighbourhoods have been planned and built as a result of the effective collaboration...public discussions...need to start with a focus on built form and the real physical aspects...rather than shirking these realities while talking about visions, values and wish lists. "Show me, don't tell me"...city hall seems to be the problem on this one... By Bob Ransford- Vancouver Sun

Why Japan is Crazy About Housing: ...its penchant for avant garde housing may be driven by the country's bizarre real estate economics, as much as its designers' creativity...since no one wants to buy a pre-owned home...some of the avant-garde houses seem like...folies to the futility of home ownership...clients reclaim control and quietly rebel in the best way they can – through design. Besides, they'll eventually tear it all down anyway. By Alastair Townsend/BAKOKO -- Sou Fujimoto; Hiroyuki Shinozaki Architects; Suppose Design Office; Hiroshi Kuno + Associates; Container Design; Torafu Architects; Shinichi Ogawa & Associates [images]- ArchDaily

Kimbell Art Museum's new building provides perfect accompaniment to Louis Kahn's classic: ...expansion will please some as modest and unobtrusive and displease others for the same reasons...as you explore the tendrils of connection, you realize how much Piano has accomplished while subtly deflecting the biggest problem of all, that the modern museum is unsure of what it wants to be and why it exists. By Philip Kennicott -- Renzo Piano [slide show]- Washington Post

Daylight and \$69 Million Transform a Queens Museum: The museum, formerly called the Queens Museum of Art, was a forbidding bookend to Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. Now it fits its environment...transformation...is astonishing. By David W. Dunlap -- Eric Owen Moss (2005); Grimshaw Architects; Ammann & Whitney [images]- New York Times

Drexel University's new business school takes its surroundings into account: ...if Gerri C. LeBow Hall's design is any indication, Drexel recognizes its obligation to create vibrant spaces that benefit the whole city...does a brilliant job of helping to turn the badly treated Market Street intersection back into a real place again...conjures real architecture out of space and light. By Inga Saffron -- Robert A.M. Stern Architects; Voith & Mactavish Architects [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

New pavilions are revitalizing Dallas parks: The structure at College Park exemplifies how the program fosters innovative design while providing practical neighborhood gathering spaces...one of Dallas' most inventive new structures, a wonky pavilion with a tennis-ball-yellow interior...the 25th thus far completed..."it's the small projects that matter as much as the large, glamorous projects." By Mark Lamster -- Snohetta; Architexas; Cooper Joseph Studio [images]- Dallas Morning News

Theis & Khan scoops contentious RIBA office comp: The 2010 Stirling Prize finalists saw off competition from Ben Adams, Moxon Architects, Shedkm, Piercy & Company and Spacelab for the £2.7 million job to revamp RIBA's new administrative centre...- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Interview: Frank Gehry: His buildings have become a byword for regeneration through culture. Just don't call him a 'starchitect': ...his feelings over that seemingly harmless little word encapsulate a broader, and pointed, debate over his position in the pantheon of contemporary architects..."journalists invented it, and now they use it to damn us"...But in truth, the world seems to enjoy saying yes, yes, yes to Gehry. By Peter Aspden- Financial Times (UK)

Zaha Hadid's sport stadiums: ...London-based Iraqi architect under fire as pressure mounts for designs in Qatar and Japan to be scaled back One looks like a futuristic bicycle helmet, stretched across its Tokyo site in an aerodynamic sweep. The other has been said to resemble...a great vulvic bulge...Hadid has little time for such lewd comparisons. By Oliver Wainwright- Guardian (UK)

Zaha Hadid Uses Hologram to Reveal Futuristic Design of Miami's One Thousand Museum Tower: ...underscores Hadid's commitment to curvilinear forms, especially prevalent in this sculptural tower that will soon join the Magic City skyline. [images, links]- The Architect's Newspaper

Call for entries: Louisville Children's Museum Competition: Revitalization of a Downtown Edge international ideas competition; cash prizes; deadline: February 10, 2014- AIA Louisville / Construction Specification Institute/CSI Louisville

Call for entries (deadline reminder): DOCOMOMO US 1st Annual Modernism in America Awards: celebrate the documentation, preservation and re-use of modern buildings, structures and landscapes built in the United States or on U.S. territory; earlybird deadline (save money!): December 15; final deadline: January 15- DOCOMOMO US

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