

Today's News - Monday, January 6, 2014

EDITOR'S NOTE: Happy New Year! It's good to be back. And so much to catch up with after being offline so long...lots of year-in-reviews, previews - and even news - all well worth a look!

- ArcSpace brings us Meyer's assessment of OMA's towering Shenzhen Stock Exchange, where "people look down onto a sterile ideal city."
- Wainwright x 2: a thoughtful (and hilarious) "10 New Year's resolutions for architects in 2014: Remember that buildings shouldn't melt things" + Foster's SkyCycle - "elevated bike paths hoisted aloft above railway lines, allowing you to zip through town blissfully liberated from the roads."
- Russell ruminates ever so eloquently on the good (there was/will be some), the bad ("a cabal of architecture-school dropouts pumping out slum towers of the future"), and the ugly ("we've trashed theatricality for a moralistic austerity") that came and are coming our way.
- Iovine finds a silver lining in austerity: "the best new buildings still had to hold to tight budgets - with an emphasis on being smart over being edgy."
- Hawthorne x 2: he cheers a new L.A. identity taking shape in "an urban reawakening" that is entering "new civic territory" + His "Best of 2013" - in tweet form.
- Anderton outlines 10 ways L.A. is "witnessing a region not only grow but actually change character."
- Kimmelman calls for more "oversight of New York's lordly towers...that dwarf their neighbors, sometimes elegantly but too often not"; the dilemma: "taste is tricky to legislate."
- Chaban reports on the MAS "Accidental Skyline" report that illustrates how mega-thin, mega-tall skyscrapers being built along Manhattan's West 57th Street "are turning Central Park into Central Dark."
- Samton says "it is time to rethink the effects of super-tall buildings on our open spaces - a crucial issue that until now has been all but ignored."
- Heneghan Peng rises to the top of the shortlist to design the National Centre for Contemporary Arts in Moscow.
- The shortlist to master plan the University of Connecticut's Storrs campus is narrowed down to three.
- Kennicott reports on the three teams shortlisted to design the renovation of Washington, DC's Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, with high hopes it will become a "knock-your-socks-off" site.
- Ingels in the spotlight: is he "an architect for a moment or an era?"
- NRDC's report "The Green Edge: How Commercial Property Investment in Green Infrastructure Creates Value" is another useful tool for your sustainability toolbox.
- One we couldn't resist: another thoughtful (and amusing) list: "Urbanist Buzzwords to Rethink in 2014."

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OMA: The Speed of Shenzhen: Rem Koolhaas' new Shenzhen Stock Exchange in China...people look down onto a sterile ideal city. By Ulf Meyer [\[images\]](#)

Ten new year's resolutions for architects in 2014: Remember that buildings shouldn't melt things, windows should let in light and copying others is fine - but just try not to annoy the skateboarders. By Oliver Wainwright [\[images\]](#) - Guardian (UK)

Norman Foster unveils plans for elevated 'SkyCycle' bike routes in London: Plan for 220km [£220 million] network of bike paths suspended above railway lines could see commuters gliding to work over rooftops...designers currently looking for backing to fund a feasibility study. By Oliver Wainwright - Exterior Architecture; Foster + Partners; Space Syntax [\[image\]](#) elevated bike paths hoisted aloft above railway lines, allowing you to zip through town blissfully liberated from the roads. - Guardian (UK)

Architecture 2013 - 2014: Wealth Transforms the City; Parklets Aren't a Panacea; Miami's Triumph, Sandy's Lessons, Green Gains: There must be a cabal of architecture-school dropouts pumping out these slum towers of the future...we've trashed theatricality for a moralistic austerity that too often begets mediocrity or worse. By James S. Russell - Christian de Portzamparc; Jeanne Gang; Zaha Hadid; Herzog & de Meuron; Thomas Balsley; Weiss/Manfredi; Michael van Valkenburgh; West 8; Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Steven Holl; Morphosis; Coop Himmelb(l)au; Renzo Piano; ARO; Walter B. Melvin; Diller Scofidio & Renfro; Miller Hull; Perkins+Will; BNIM; NBBJ; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Handel Architects [\[images\]](#) - Sticks & Stones

The Virtues of Restraint: 2014 may well be awash in skyscraping luxury condos and other examples of architectural sensationalism. But thanks to the slow pace of economic recovery, the best new buildings completed in 2013 still had to hold to tight budgets...with an emphasis on being smart over being edgy. By Julie V. Iovine - Renzo Piano; Louis Kahn; David Chipperfield; Hugh Hardy/H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture; Eero Saarinen; Thom Mayne/Morphosis; Herzog & de Meuron; Weiss/Manfredi; Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects [\[images\]](#) - Wall Street Journal

A new L.A. identity takes shape in 2013 as city embraces urban life: Los Angeles entered fresh civic territory as a range of initiatives across the city helped fuel an urban reawakening...High-level debate over the future of the L.A. River; new parks...victories for preservation...All contributed this year to the sense that L.A. has crossed a major divide and entered new civic territory. By Christopher Hawthorne - Los Angeles Times

Best of 2013: Christopher Hawthorne picks Citi Bike, L.A.-centric 'Her': ...the year's top developments, including 4 World Trade Center and L.A.'s cornfield plan...the best of culture in 2013 in tweet form. - "Building Seagram"/Phyllis Lambert; Fumihiko Maki; "Never Built Los Angeles"/Greg Goldin/Sam Lubell; etc. - Los Angeles Times

DnA/Frances Anderton: Onwards and Upwards: 10 Ways L.A. Rang in the Changes — of Character — in 2013: ...we are witnessing a region not only grow but actually change character...a list of some of the notable cityscape events... - Frank Gehry; Rem Koolhaas; AC Martin; Aja Brown; James Corner Field Operations; Peter Zumthor; CO Architects; Mia Lehrer; Curtis Fentress; Brenda Levin; Patrick Tighe Architecture; Michael Maltzan; Diller Scofidio + Renfro [\[images, links\]](#) - KCRW (Los Angeles)

Seeing a Need for Oversight of New York's Lordly Towers: The rise of skyscrapers that dwarf their neighbors, sometimes elegantly but too often not, has prompted an argument: Should New York City put more limits on its skyline? ...What do these projects add at street level where the other 99% live?...We need to be careful...taste is tricky to legislate. By Michael Kimmelman - Christian de Portzamparc; Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill; Robert A.M. Stern; SHoP Architects; Rafael Viñoly - New York Times

Developers are turning Central Park into Central Dark with mega-thin towers: A new generation of mega-tall skyscrapers

being built along 57th St. for foreign billionaires will cast a long shadow over New York's premier greenspace...The Municipal Art Society's report 'Accidental Skyline' reveals how the southern part of the park would be almost entirely covered by shadows... By Jan Ransom and Matt Chaban [images]- NY Daily News

Building Up to the Sky: Peter Samton writes that it is time to rethink the effects of super-tall buildings on our open spaces...Kimmelman's critique of a flock of new super-tall residential towers just south of Central Park opens a crucial issue that until now has been all but ignored.- New York Times

Heneghan Peng scoops Moscow art museum competition: 'Stacked galleries' design impresses judges...Irish practice was shortlisted with Spanish firm Nieto Sobejano Arquitectos and local company MEL...National Centre for Contemporary Arts (NCCA) is intended to be Russia's leading institution for contemporary art... [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

UConn Will Create A Master Plan For Storrs Campus: University of Connecticut...prompted partly by the taxpayer-financed \$1.5 billion Next Generation Connecticut plan that will bring with it extensive development and renovation, including at least one new science building and residence hall...has narrowed it to three: NBBJ; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); and Michael Dennis & Associates. - Hartford Courant (Connecticut)

Three architecture teams in running to design renovation of D.C.'s Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library: Firms will present plans to make the problematic but significant MLK building a "knock-your-socks-off" site. By Philip Kennicott -- Mies van der Rohe (1972); Patkau Architects/Ayers Saint Gross/Krueck and Sexton; Mecanoo/Martinez and Johnson Architecture; STUDIOS Architecture/Freelon Group- Washington Post

Bjarke Ingels: An Architect For A Moment Or An Era? In a business that's often poorly paid and anonymous, the 39-year-old has become something rare, especially at his age: a "starchitect" in demand...He can be charming, and modest at times, but it's his confidence that has helped catapult him to the big leagues. -- Bjarke Ingels Group/BIG- National Public Radio (NPR)

New Report Shows How Green Infrastructure Investments Can Create Value for Commercial Property Owners and Tenants: "The Green Edge: How Commercial Property Investment in Green Infrastructure Creates Value" shows why it's essential for players in the commercial real estate industry to consider the full range of benefits... [link to report]- Switchboard / Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)

Urbanist Buzzwords to Rethink in 2014: Yes, including the word "urbanism"...Bus Rapid Transit/BRT; Placemaking; Tactical Urbanism and "Guerrilla" Anything; Rust Belt; Gritty; Stakeholders; Smart Growth; Gentrification; etc.- The Atlantic Cities

One-on-One: Architecture is not exactly global: Interview with Orlando Garcia: The Colombian architect talks about how good architecture and urban design can reach the greatest number of ordinary people. By Vladimir Belogolovsky [images]- ArchNewsNow

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