

Today's News - Thursday, January 9, 2014

EDITOR'S NOTE: MoMA rings in the New Year with a death knell for Williams & Tsien's Folk Art Museum. A sad news day, indeed. Obituaries abound. All eloquent. All depressing. Could Graves's Portland Building be facing the same fate? Never mind the "sellout" Sydney's Barangaroo has become. At least the sun is out and our thermometer has risen to 32 degrees...

- Goldberger: MoMA is "making a fatal mistake: A large cultural institution that cannot find a suitable use for such a building is an institution with a flawed architectural imagination."
- Davidson: "the new design does contain several persuasive virtues," but "feels less like an optimistic hosanna than a mournful chorus of compromises."
- Saltz (who has called the AFAM a "terrible building"): during an "excruciatingly verbose three-hour closed-door briefing I felt my eyes tear up and my stomach turn."
- McGuigan/Raskin: "many architects and architecture fans will mourn the loss of the slender, elegantly-crafted gem."
- Lamster: "an implicit admission that MoMA's 2004 redesign by Yukio Taniguchi, which cost more than \$800 million, has been a failure...seems a sad gesture, one lacking in architectural imagination."
- Pogrebin: the "sweeping redesign doesn't spare a notable neighbor."
- Rosenbaum: "the next phase of MegaMoMA looks like an imposing, intimidating headquarters for Art, Inc."
- Hill: despite "specious words about integrity," there is a "need to be creative about how buildings are reused. In this case the creativity is nowhere to be seen."
- Byrnes offers a round-up of reports on the possible fate of Graves's 1982 Portland Building that "almost no one likes" facing a \$95 million renovation or demolition: "Determining the cultural value of postmodern structures is a new frontier in the world of historic preservation."
- A New South Wales MP outlines the "anatomy of a sellout" when it comes to Sydney's Barangaroo: "Even if we accept the dreadful decisions...at least we can work out a scheme to get a decent return"; but given its history, "I'm not holding my breath."
- Gruen & Grimshaw win the competition to master plan L.A.'s Union Station, but critics question the scope of the changes and "the logic of tearing down the existing TOD Mosaic Apartments and the relatively new, taxpayer-funded Patsaouras Plaza bus terminal."
- Jacobs parses NYC's new mayor's agenda, and finds herself "pining, unexpectedly, for the old one": "the case needs to be made right now, loudly, that design isn't a luxury."
- And now some brighter news notes: Alfonso Architects is tapped to design the Museum of the American Arts and Crafts Movement in St. Petersburg, Florida (we know of a great building on West 53rd Street, though moving costs might be prohibitive).
- How is Starbucks making its "brand a little less brand-y? The answer: good design" (some "stunning" new stores!).
- Eyefuls of the T+L Design Awards 2014 winners that are making travel better (we can be packed and ready to go to any in 5 minutes!).
- Call for entries: Rebirth of the Bath House in Liepaja, Latvia.

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Friendly Fire on the Culture Front? Why the Museum of Modern Art is Making a Fatal Mistake: A city that allows such a work to disappear after barely a dozen years is a city with a flawed architectural heart. A large cultural institution that cannot find a suitable use for such a building is an institution with a flawed architectural imagination. By Paul Goldberger -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects - Vanity Fair

MoMA Reveals Its Expansion Plans — and the Fate of the American Folk Art Museum: ...Tod Williams and Billie Tsien's 12-year-old gem, has to go, because, like a cobbler's shack next to an airport, it's in the way...The new design does contain several persuasive virtues...But for now the design feels less like an optimistic hosanna than a mournful chorus of compromises. By Justin Davidson -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro [slide show]- New York Magazine

The Next MoMA Expansion Is As Big a Mess As the Last One: ...midway through this excruciatingly verbose three-hour closed-door briefing...I felt my eyes tear up and my stomach turn...From the days both the new MoMA and the American Folk Art Museum opened, it was clear to almost all in the art world that they were tragic failures in terms of their primary missions. Now those disasters are joined forever. By Jerry Saltz -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro [image]- New York Magazine

MoMA to Demolish Tod Williams Billie Tsien American Folk Art Museum After All: "I know the architecture community was hoping the conclusion would be different," added Diller...many architects and architecture fans will mourn the loss of the...slender, elegantly-crafted gem that was only in existence for a dozen years. By Cathleen McGuigan and Laura Raskin -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro [slide show; link to TWBTA statement]- Architectural Record

MoMA to Demolish Landmark Neighbor in Expansion: ...American Folk Art Museum...an implicit admission that MoMA's 2004 redesign by Yukio Taniguchi, which cost more than \$800 million, has been a failure...seems a sad gesture, one lacking in architectural imagination and that will not be a long-term solution to the museum's core crowding problem. By Mark Lamster -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Jean Nouvel- Dallas Morning News

Ambitious Redesign of MoMA Doesn't Spare a Notable Neighbor: ...a sweeping redesign...reaffirmed its intention to demolish the former American Folk Art Museum..."You pass a tipping point where there's not enough of the original structure to actually maintain its identity." By Robin Pogrebin -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Diller Scofidio & Renfro- New York Times

Museum of Modern Art's Folk-Art Decision: It's a Knockdown: ...the next phase of MegaMoMA's inexorable campaign to conquer W. 53rd and 54th Streets...looks like an imposing, intimidating headquarters for Art, Inc., not..."a place that is at once subversive and affirming"... By Lee Rosenbaum -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Tod Williams Billie Tsien [images]- ArtsJournal

Goodbye Folk Art, Hello "Art Bay": ...a plan that tries to extend but also improve the 2004 building of Yoshio Taniguchi rather than make any concessions to the little gem that stood in its way...specious words about integrity. As sustainability and the need to preserve buildings increases, so does the need to be creative about how buildings are reused. In this case the creativity is nowhere to be seen. By John Hill -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Tod Williams Billie Tsien- A Daily Dose of Architecture

Should Portland Save a Building It Really, Really Hates? Almost no one likes the Michael Graves office building...Now facing a \$95 million renovation, some city commissioners are calling for its demolition...31-year-old Portland Building...incredibly playful, attention-demanding facade represents what 1980s America wanted out of its architecture...Determining the cultural value of postmodern structures...is a new frontier in the world of historic preservation. By Mark Byrnes [images, links]- The Atlantic Cities

Barangaroo: anatomy of a sellout: One of Sydney's prime public spaces is to be devoured by a casino — and now the city won't even get enough money in return to build a decent park...Even if we accept the dreadful decisions...at least we can work out a scheme to get a decent return...Given the history though, I'm not holding my breath. By David Shoebridge -- Hills Thalix architects; Jan Gehl- Guardian (UK)

Station to Station: Scheme selected for Los Angeles Union Station master plan: ...an extensive redesign of L.A.' transit hub

and its surrounding 40 acres...Critics have questioned the scope of the changes...Additional questions concern the logic of tearing down the existing TOD Mosaic Apartments and the relatively new, taxpayer-funded Patsaouras Plaza... -- Gruen Associates/Grimshaw Architects [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

A Tale of Two Agendas: ...New York's new mayor has our columnist pining, unexpectedly, for the old one: Bill de Blasio didn't get elected on a platform of good design...but I don't get the impression that the discipline appears on his short list, either...the case needs to be made right now, loudly, that design isn't a luxury...Design is something we make here. We need to regard it as an industry... By Karrie Jacobs - Metropolis Magazine

Alfonso Architects Selected to Design the Museum of the American Arts and Crafts Movement (MAACM) in St. Petersburg, Florida [images]- ArchDaily

With Stunning New Stores, Starbucks Has a New Design Strategy: Act Local: The intense customization is meant to make the Starbucks brand a little less brand-y...So how do you make the world's largest coffee house feel like a neighborhood haunt? The answer: good design. -- Bill Sleeth [images]- Wired

T+L Design Awards 2014: Innovative design makes travel better...10th annual competition jury chose the best of the year. -- Fernanda Canales + Arquitectura 911sc; Norm Architects; Mathieu Mercier; Rintala Eggertsson Architects; Yabu Pushelberg/ISC Design Studio; Herzog & de Meuron; Kazuyo Sejima/Ryue Nishizawa/SANAA; Luis Rebelo de Andrade for Arquitraço; Federico Rivera Río; Priestmangoode; Mary Lou Design; Roman & Williams; Tokujin Yoshioka [slide show]- Travel + Leisure

Call for entries: Rebirth of the Bath House: ...Liepaja Seaside Park in Liepaja, Latvia...vision for the revitalisation and further development of the 'Bath House,' designed by Paul Max Berchi in 1902; cash prizes; earlybird registration (save money!): January 30 (submissions due May 23)- Homemade Dessert



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]

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