

Today's News - Tuesday, January 14, 2014

- ArcSpace brings us a (great) photo-essay re: architecture in Doha, Qatar; and a profile of BIG that is "winning commissions left and right" that "all burst of unflinching confidence and supercharged youthful energy."
- More MoMA musings mincing no words: Kimmelman: razing AFAM is "just more MoMA madness" - the plan "lacks vision" that "adds too little"; saving/re-using AFAM would be a "truly radical" move.
- Filler fairly fumes re: DS+R's "sad little sellout...they have undergone a dire transformation from vanguard mavericks to corporate apparatchiks," and not since razing Penn Station has NYC's "architectural patrimony been dealt such a low blow."
- Saltz sends a scathing letter to MoMA's Trustees: even though he's advocated for demolition, the proposed replacement is even worse - a "generic technocratic edifice scornful to art. This isn't museum architecture; it's heady stagecraft that trivializes most art and turns looking into nifty convivial public entertainment."
- Iovine re: "why we should care if one more quirky little building disappears."
- It looks like the on-again-off-again plans for a Guggenheim in Helsinki are on again; an international competition should launch this spring (but decision to build won't be made until the winner is known).
- Crowther and Osborne cheer "the state of play in Australian architecture - we are now exporting much of our talent, skill and cultural expertise rather than importing it."
- Brake looks around Maki's 4WTC, "the shortest, quietest, and most deferential of the four planned towers. It may also prove to be the best."
- Moore cheers the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse that risked "being an architectural waxwork"; instead, it's "a strange play of authenticity and illusion, a switchback of unreal/real/unreal. The Globe complex is a peculiar place, but it is good-peculiar."
- More on the battle for the Preston Bus Station: it "has a sticky, rubber-tiled floor, and a smell that speaks of cheap deodorant fighting an endless battle with something nasty and nameless. Yet it also has something of the heroic about it."
- Eyefuls of Gillespies and Fielden Clegg Bradley's winning design for the enormous Park Russia theme park (gigantic flagpole included).
- The Contemporary Austin Announces names 3 finalists for the landscape master plan for the "picturesque historic treasure" Laguna Gloria.
- Micro-apartments are on the march across the country, though they might not work in smaller or less expensive cities lacking mass transit, night life and culture to lure younger workers to live downtown.
- Marvel hopes NYC's new mayor makes micro-units "a standard building option to reach his affordable housing goals" - they are "an essential piece of the puzzle for New York to remain a city for everyone."
- A look at a "growing body of evidence" suggesting the often-touted open office plan "undermines the very things that it was designed to achieve."
- Hamburg's Ronald McDonald House has a roster of international design stars behind its design, but critics question whether McDonald's "is misusing the goodwill."
- Tributes to the "extraordinarily gentle" architect Kathryn Findlay.
- 10 women in architecture to watch in 2014 (Findlay would surely have been one of them).
- Call for entries: 37th Annual SMPS Marketing Communications Awards.

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-- Photo Report From Doha. By Pygmalion Karatzas -- Arata Isozaki; Legorreta + Legorreta; Jean Nouvel; NORR; Coelacanth K&H; Allies & Morrison; OMA; Cesar Pelli; etc.
-- BIG: ...Bjarke Ingels Group...risen to world-wide renown in record time, winning commissions left and right...all burst of unflinching confidence and supercharged youthful energy. By Jakob Harry Hybel

The Museum With a Bulldozer's Heart: MoMA's Plan to Demolish American Folk Art Museum Lacks Vision: It would be truly radical for MoMA to save the former folk art building, but that's not what the museum has ever really been about...It is a move that, aside from vandalizing MoMA's claim to be a custodian of architecture and design, adds too little. By Michael Kimmelman -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Yoshio Taniguchi; Jean Nouvel - New York Times

MoMA Loses Face: This bland and banal scheme possesses all the presence and panache of a commercial parking garage entry...DS+R's sad little sellout...have undergone a dire transformation from vanguard mavericks to corporate apparatchiks...Not since the vandalizing of Charles Follen McKim's Pennsylvania Station half a century ago has New York City's architectural patrimony been dealt such a low blow. By Martin Filler -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Diller Scofidio + Renfro - New York Review of Books

Jerry Saltz to MoMA's Trustees: Please, Reject This Awful Expansion Plan: ...a design that replaces American Museum of Folk Art — a useless place for the exhibition of art, and a building whose demolition I have advocated — with even worse spaces...generic technocratic edifice is scornful to art...This isn't museum architecture; it's heady stagecraft that trivializes most art and turns looking into nifty convivial public entertainment. -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro - New York Magazine

At MoMA, a New Plan to Resolve Old Issues; The Museum of Modern Art is expanding—again. To make room, a cherished gem must be demolished...why we should care if one more quirky little building disappears...After all, buildings come and go all the time...But the American Folk Art Museum is a casualty of a different sort, and tearing it down will not usher in the new era of popularity that MoMA seems to be aiming for. By Julie V. Iovine -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Tod Williams Billie Tsien, - Wall Street Journal

Guggenheim Museum Will Invite Architects to Imagine a Finnish Outpost: The on-again-off-again proposal to build an outpost...in Helsinki, Finland, appears to be on again...This gives the Guggenheim the green light to start an open international architectural competition...expected to begin in the spring...- New York Times

Building a nation: the state of play in Australian architecture: ...we are now exporting much of our talent, skill and cultural expertise rather than importing it. By Philip Crowther and Lindy Osborne/Queensland University of Technology-- Woods Bagot; Hassell; Cox Architecture; HBO + EMTB; GHD; Hames Sharley; Thomson Adsett Architects; Glenn Murcutt; Francis-Jones Morehen Thorpe/fjmt/Archimedia; Taylor Cullity Lethlean + Paul Thompson; Denton Corker Marshall [images]- Infolink (Australia)

Crit> 4 World Trade Center: Alan G. Brake looks around Fumihiko Maki's New York City skyscraper: ...the shortest, quietest, and most deferential of the four planned towers on the original trade center site. It may also prove to be the best...an elegant addition to the cityscape...encapsulates the feeling of our awakened, anxious times, and allows for both a return to business on the site with a deference for remembering what was lost. - The Architect's Newspaper

Sam Wanamaker Playhouse: With a mythological ceiling painting and trompe-l'oeil decorations, it also risks being an architectural waxwork. As with the 1997 Globe, the risk is averted...a strange play of authenticity and illusion, a switchback of unreal/real/unreal...The Globe complex is a peculiar place, and sometimes awkward in its transitions, but it is good-peculiar. By Rowan Moore -- Jon Greenfield; Allies and Morrison [images, video]- Observer (UK)

Love, hate and concrete: The battle for Preston Bus Station; To some, it's a Brutalist monstrosity which blights the town it purports to serve. To others, it's a practical building of immense beauty: ...has a sticky, rubber-tiled floor, and a smell that speaks of cheap deodorant fighting an endless battle with something nasty and nameless, and just out of sight. Yet it also has something of the heroic about it... -- Building Design Partnership/BDP (1969) [slide show]- Independent (UK)

Gillespies and Fielden Clegg Bradley scoop Park Russia theme park contest: ...winning design proposed dividing the enormous [1,000-hectare] site -- 30 kilometres south of Moscow -- into southern and northern sectors and erecting a 175 metre-tall flag in the centre. [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

The Contemporary Austin Announces Finalists for Laguna Gloria Master Site Plan Landscape Architectural Services: ...Laguna Gloria, Austin's picturesque historic treasure. -- Andrea Cochran Landscape Architecture; Reed Hilderbrand Landscape Architecture; Snøhetta- Contemporary Austin (Texas)

Cities Try to Lure Young Professionals With Cheap 'Micro' Units; Officials in many of the nation's most expensive housing markets have embraced 'micro apartments' ...Some real-estate executives aren't sure that micro apartments would work in smaller or less expensive cities...they don't always have the mass transit, night life and cultural facilities to lure younger workers to live downtown. - Wall Street Journal

Op-Ed: Micro-units could be housing's big solution: Mayor Bill de Blasio should make micro-units a standard building option to reach his affordable housing goals...After decades of making the industrial city more livable and attractive, New York needs to embark on a new kind of rebalancing...micro-unit housing is an essential piece of the puzzle for New York to remain a city for everyone. By Jonathan Marvel/Marvel Architects - Crain's New York Business

Ronald McDonald House garners star architects, criticism: 12 internationally renowned architects have donated their blueprints for the newest Ronald McDonald House in Hamburg. Critics say McDonald's is misusing the goodwill; families say the homes have saved lives. -- GRAFT; Zaha Hadid; Rem Koolhaas; Manuelle Gautrand; Sara Spiro [images]- Deutsche Welle (Germany)

The Open-Office Trap: A growing body of evidence suggests that the open office undermines the very things that it was designed to achieve. By Maria Konnikova- New Yorker

Kathryn Findlay: 'An uncategorisable and unpredictable talent': Profession pays tribute to 'extraordinarily gentle' architect. -- Peter Cook/CRAB Studio; Deyan Sudjic; Neil Baxter/RIAS; Ushida Findlay - BD/Building Design (UK)

10 women in architecture to watch in 2014: The results of the Architects' Journal's annual survey on women in architecture made depressing reading but here are 10 female architects breaking through the glass ceiling and designing a new one. -- Zaha Hadid; Amanda Levete/AL_A; Angela Brady/Brady Mallalieu Architects; Nathalie Rozencwajg/Rare; Sarah Wigglesworth; Cindy Walters/Walters & Cohen; Alison Brooks; Hannah Lawson/John McAslan + Partners; Eva Jiricna; Deborah Saunt/DSDHA- Guardian (UK)

Call for entries: 37th Annual SMPS Marketing Communications Awards; deadline: March 3- Society for Marketing Professional Services (SMPS)

ANN Feature: Lost in Space: Calori & Vanden-Eynden on the Positive Payoffs of Integrated EGD: Ever been lost in a building, feeling your stress level rise by the minute? If so, the lack of effective environmental graphic design is very likely the culprit. By Claire Wilson [images]- ArchNewsNow

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