

Today's News - Wednesday, February 12, 2014

EDITOR'S NOTE: A word of forewarning - if ANN doesn't show up in your inbox tomorrow, it's because we'll be digging out from under Winter Storm Pax (we wonder whose bright idea it was to name a major storm "Peace"?!!?).

- Desouza delves into the dilemma of resiliency in emerging megacities: "The solution: frugal engineering and local knowledge."
- An architect's ode to women in green: "women in sustainable design are the true believers, the mentors, and the change agents" (and he names names).
- An environmental planner pens a 2-parter re: the green schoolyard movement gaining momentum, the "trends that give us hope," and how to actually create them.
- Some pre-storm Sturm und Drang: a Cornell professor says Koolhaas's Milstein Hall is "by virtually any conceivable objective criterion, a disaster" (it "hasn't won him many friends in Ithaca").
- Cornell's Kleinman begs to differ.
- Birnbaum begs MoMA leaders to re-think the idea of opening the sculpture garden to the public: "Can success be measured by valuing the quality of an experience that honors a site's design intent rather than the greatest number of visitors? Is less more?"
- Martty mulls the "distinction between architecture and sculpture": these days it can be "hard to know whether architects are prioritizing the function or the form."
- Glancey goes off on a new sculpture at Cambridge that is so bad "even the artist has denied responsibility for it," and calls for this to "be the place where we purge ourselves of this obsession with detritus masquerading as public art."
- Brighter news notes: Volner cheers a long-problematic, Brutalist distribution center on Manhattan's West Side to be transformed into "an engaging modern office building" with "verdant public spaces" by REX and James Corner Field Operations (Prince-Ramus is "not a nostalgist").
- Stephens cheers the Queens Museum makeover that "has proved to be flexible for reinvention - without resorting to pumped-up architectural effects" by "quietly revealing traces of the building's past architectural lives."
- Wainwright and Sharma parse London-based architect Asif Khan's "selfie building" at the Sochi Olympic Park: "it could have rich potential as a wall of protest - perhaps we can look forward to the first eight meter-high gay kiss" + it "calls up the grandeur of Mount Rushmore or Stalinist propaganda."
- Moore has high hopes for a new BBC series and RIBA exhibition that debut tomorrow: the architects in "The Brits Who Built the Modern World" were all "moved by the romance of technology, joined to a belief that architecture should enable, emancipate and engage."
- Eliasson receives the 2014 Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts at MT that includes \$100,000 purse, a campus residency, and a March gala.
- Call for entries: 2014 BIA Brick in Architecture Awards; projects (not necessarily their designers) must be in the U.S., its territories, or Canada.

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Our Fragile Emerging Megacities: A Focus on Resilience: ...many of these growing cities are far from resilient. The solution: frugal engineering and local knowledge: ...frugal innovation...adapts to the realities of society and the market...developed with the local consumer in mind...By Kevin C. Desouza - PLANetizen

Women Leading Sustainable Design: In my world, women in sustainable design are the true believers, the mentors, and the change agents...How is it that the practice of architecture in America has 32% less women than in the general population, yet among professionals who specialize in sustainable design, women are the stars? By Michael Davis/Bergmeyer Associates -- Sarah Slaughter/Built Environment Coalition; Fiona Cousins/Arup; Mary Ann Lazarus; Paula McEvoy/Perkins+Will; Martine Dion/SMMA; Andrea Love/Payette; etc. - Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation (BAAF)

Green Schoolyard Movement: Gaining Momentum + Trends That Give Us Hope: Incorporating natural elements into new or existing play spaces can give an extra boost to children's physical health, psychological well-being, and their ability to learn...environmental planner Sharon Gamson Dank shares her views on how to do that. [images, links]- Children & Nature Network

OMA Gosh, What a Disaster! Cornell Professor Pokes Koolhaas: Jonathan Ochshorn has taken Rem Koolhaas' Milstein Hall...to task in a critique, calling it "by virtually any conceivable objective criterion, a disaster"...takes the LEED system to task, wondering how in the world a building that makes nearly every no-no conceivable in terms of sustainability...could be awarded a Gold rating. [links, video]- The Architect's Newspaper

Letter to the Editor> Cornell Responds to Milstein Hall Rumors: Readers of AN are no doubt wondering just how Cornell University managed to receive a building permit and a certificate of occupancy for Milstein Hall, what with its alleged monstrous conditions...The opinion of one individual notwithstanding, we are exceedingly proud of the exemplary architectural work that Rem Koolhaas and OMA have created for our students and faculty. By Kent Kleinman - The Architect's Newspaper

Is the MoMA Sculpture Garden Doomed? Leaders at the Museum of Modern Art plan to make the museum's beloved sculpture garden open to the public — a move that could ruin the experience. They need to think it over...Can success be measured by valuing the quality of an experience that honors a site's design intent rather than the greatest number of visitors? Is less more? By Charles A. Birnbaum/The Cultural Landscape Foundation [images]- Architect Magazine

The Distinction Between Architecture and Sculpture: ...contemporary buildings and ultra-modern architectural designs might be blurring the limits between these two art forms...it is hard to know whether architects are prioritizing the function or the form. By Mercedes Martty -- Frank Gehry; Bruno Zevi [images]- Sourceable

Keep kitsch like 'The Don' sculpture off the streets: Cambridge could well be the place where we purge ourselves of this obsession with detritus masquerading as public art...13ft, £150,000 bronze...is such a bad sculpture that even the artist...Uruguay's Pablo Atchugarry, has denied responsibility for it...When public art matters...we find a place for it in our hearts, our eyes and city centres. By Jonathan Glancey [images]- Telegraph (UK)

REX Announces \$200 Million Renovation for Manhattan West: Glass curtainwalls and verdant public spaces will turn a former distribution center into an engaging modern office building...450 West 33rd St...James Corner Field Operations...will be planking over the existing train tracks...meaning the end of 450's most distinguishing, extant visual trait: its trains-running-under-the-building, early-20th-century-Futurist aspect...Joshua Prince-Ramus, however, doesn't regret the loss. "I'm not a nostalgist"... By Ian Volner [images]- Architect Magazine

Queens Museum: The World of Tomorrow Today: A long-span-steel structure cloaked in modern-classical-style architecture has proved to be flexible for reinvention: ...without resorting to pumped-up architectural effects...the makeover becomes a palimpsest...quietly revealing traces of the building's past architectural lives. By Suzanne Stephens -- Aymar Embury II (1939); Daniel Chait (1964); Rafael Viñoly Architects (1994); Grimshaw and Ammann; Whitney [slide show]- Architectural Record

Sochi unveils the world's first 'selfie building': Like a digital Mount Rushmore rising from the Winter Olympic park, London architect Asif Khan has designed a pavilion that morphs into the shape of visitors' faces: ...it could have rich potential as a wall of protest...perhaps we can look forward to the first eight metre-high gay kiss. Let's just hope the face of MegaFon's founding shareholder and Russia's richest man...Alisher Usmanov, doesn't suddenly bulge out in menacing disco glory on a

dark, wintry night. By Oliver Wainwright [images, video] - Guardian (UK)

At Sochi Olympic Park, The Selfie Writ Large: Designed by London-based architect Asif Khan, the MegaFaces project calls up the grandeur of Mount Rushmore or Stalinist propaganda...architecture has always veered towards the dynamic and responsive... by Komal Sharma -- iart [images, video] - Metropolis Magazine

"The Brits Who Built the Modern World, 1950 – 2012": The outstanding generation of 1930s-born British architects...are celebrated in a new TV series and RIBA exhibition...which argues that a group of 1930s-born men have been "the most successful generation of architects Britain has ever produced"...All were moved by the romance of technology, joined to a belief that architecture should enable, emancipate and engage. By Rowan Moore -- Norman Foster; Richard Rogers; Terry Farrell; Nicholas Grimshaw; Michael and Patty Hopkins - Observer (UK)

Olafur Eliasson is the recipient of 2014 Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts at MIT: ...includes a \$100,000 cash prize, a campus residency, and "Holding hands with the sun" public lecture and gala held in his honor on March 13- Arts at MIT

Call for entries: 2014 BIA Brick in Architecture Awards; projects must be located within the United States, Canada, or one of the U.S. territories; deadline: April 30 - Brick Industry Association

ANN Feature: Nuts + Bolts #8: Best Friends Don't Make the Best Partners: For the successful partnership, it's all a matter of balance. By Michael M. Samuelian, AIA, AICP - ArchNewsNow



-- "Zaha Hadid + Suprematism" by Charlotte Douglas, Hans Ulrich Obrist, et al. portrays another side of the London-based architect...

-- "Will it Sustain?" Danish Architecture Centre, Copenhagen, Denmark: three wonderful international exhibitions, all under one roof!

-- Rudy Ricciotti Architecte: MUCEM (Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations), Marseille, France. By Kirsten Kiser

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