

## Today's News - Tuesday, March 11, 2014

- Russell bemoans (as do we!) Bloomberg News decision to end culture coverage and give more ink to luxury and lifestyle (what else?!?): it's "a regrettably powerful signal that culture doesn't matter," and that "the people who matter - those who hire architects, the non-specialist citizens who want their communities improved - no longer hear about the value architecture can bring."
- Meanwhile, MAS bestows NYT's Kimmelman the 2014 Brendan Gill Prize for "challenging New Yorkers and their regional neighbors to no longer settle for anything less than planning and design excellence."
- Heathcote x 2 (both excellent reads!): he takes on the "global property trend for architecture as logo": even though designed by starchitects, many new buildings "are very far from architectural masterpieces - the new generation of skyscrapers has been conceived as objects rather than engaged architecture."
- That said, he is hopeful as planners, architects and developers seem to be at least trying to get their mojo back with mixed-use projects: The WTC site is "a blend of the emerging trends in city center development...its success - or its failure - will determine the model of city center commercial architecture for years to come."
- China's circular skyscraper by an Italian architect stands out as an "urban logo": "The traditional race for the tallest building in the world will end sooner or later...the competition will be moved from the height to the iconic value" (includes a great round-up of other round buildings).
- Litman reports on a Victoria, BC, report that seems to prove cities' "economic success and livability benefit from policies that favor space-efficient modes (walking, cycling, ridesharing and public transit) over space intensive modes (low-occupant automobile travel)."
- A more depressing report says that "nearly one-fifth of the planet's 720 world heritage sites will be affected" by rising tides (even more depressing is the estimated number "is likely to be underestimated").
- A look at the uphill battle facing the planned cultural center at Ground Zero: lots of skeptics (and "Gehry's involvement in the project is now unclear").
- Corner presents his vision for a stretch of Seattle's waterfront once the Alaskan Way Viaduct is demolished (skeptics abound).
- Ban "blasts architects 'too busy' to help the needy" - he's not "against building monuments but I'm thinking we can work more for the public."
- Zeiger cheers MRY's "vibrant" affordable housing project in Santa Monica, CA: "small decisions" (and lots of color) "account for the project's success."
- A Pereira 1970s tower on L.A.'s Sunset Boulevard is getting ready for its new close-up as an upscale apartment building: "It's a gem in need of a good polish" that "will be a catalyst for the entire neighborhood."
- Eyefuls of Perrault's DC Tower 1 on the Danube in Vienna (talk about "urban logo").
- Eyefuls of Fujimoto's White Tree tower in Montpellier, France: "Whether it will serve as a cultural magnet as planned remains to be seen, but it certainly will fit in with the city's 'boldly modern' agenda wonderfully" (ditto "urban logo").
- Eyefuls of Adjaye's Colgate University Center for Art and Culture in upstate New York hopes to reinforce "connections between the village, the university and the wider population."
- An international list of 79 projects take home the 2014 Civic Trust Award.
- Sign up for the NEA's upcoming webinar series on International Design Initiatives.
- One we couldn't resist: "If 27 Famous Artists Designed Buildings" (very fun).

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[Bloomberg News Ends Culture Coverage: ...in favor of...luxury and lifestyle...a regrettably powerful signal that culture doesn't matter in our society and economy...As coverage and criticism vanish from outlets that reach broad audiences...The people who matter - those who hire architects, the non-specialist citizens who want their communities improved - no longer hear about the value architecture can bring.](#) By James S. Russell- Sticks & Stones

[New York Times Architecture Critic Michael Kimmelman to Receive the 2014 Brendan Gill Prize: The jury singled out Kimmelman's exceptional coverage of the challenges posed by an overstressed Penn Station, challenging New Yorkers and their regional neighbors to no longer settle for anything less than planning and design excellence...- Municipal Art Society of New York \(MAS\)](#)

[A global property trend for architecture as logo: ...big name architects are being brought in to flatter planners and local authorities...yet the results are very far from architectural masterpieces. Instead they reflect a globalising trend of architecture as logo; simplistic shapes that exist to draw attention to themselves rather than as constituents in an urban landscape...new generation of skyscrapers has been conceived as objects rather than engaged architecture.](#) By Edwin Heathcote- Financial Times (UK)

[Planners, architects and developers promote mixed-use property projects: ...sometime in the 1960s...Commercial architecture became banal...can commercial developers and architects regain the prestige they once had? There are signs they are trying...turning to big-name architects and dramatic designs...The WTC site...a blend of the emerging trends in city centre development...its success - or its failure - will determine the model of city centre commercial architecture for years to come.](#) By Edwin Heathcote -- Zaha Hadid; Norman Foster; Frank Gehry; Jean Nouvel; Michel Mossessian; Renzo Piano; Fernando Romero/FREE; David Chipperfield; Terry Farrell; Herzog & de Meuron; Richard Rogers; Fumihiko Maki- Financial Times (UK)

[Behind China's Circular Skyscraper: An Italian architect has challenged the conventional vertical rectangular form of skyscrapers with the creation of a circular high-rise building...it stands out...as an "urban logo"..."The traditional race for the tallest building in the world will end sooner or later...the competition will be moved from the height to the iconic value."](#) -- Joseph di Pasquale/AM Progetti; MZ Architects; C. Y. Lee & Partners Architects/Planners; John Seiffert [images]- Sourceable

[Economically Successful Cities Favor Space-Efficient Modes: Their economic success and livability benefit from policies that favor space-efficient modes \(walking, cycling, ridesharing and public transit\) over space intensive modes \(low-occupant automobile travel\). This was illustrated by a new study, Bikes Mean Business, just released by...the Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition.](#) By Todd Litman/Victoria Transport Policy Institute- PLANetizen

[Sydney Opera House and Statue of Liberty 'will be lost to sea level rise': Nearly one-fifth of world cultural heritage sites would be affected by global warming of a further 3C, scientists warn: ...nearly one-fifth of the planet's 720 world heritage sites will be affected...The threat to cultural sites from the sea is likely to be underestimated, the study admits... \[link to report\]-](#) Guardian (UK)

[WTC Arts Center Snagged: Young Nonprofit Must Raise Hundreds of Millions for Project: To succeed, it will need to assemble a high-octane board, win over a thusfar noncommittal mayor and explain why the project is vital to New York at a time when a handful of similar theater spaces have opened in recent years...Frank Gehry's involvement in the project is now unclear...- Wall Street Journal](#)

[Seattle's waterfront: Visions of hottubs & gardens, but where's the cash? A designer reveals his latest update for a massive waterfront park that would stretch 26 blocks along Elliott Bay once the Alaskan Way Viaduct is demolished..."There's a lot that needs to be tested going forward."](#) -- James Corner Field Operations [images]- Crosscut (Seattle)

[Shigeru Ban blasts architects 'too busy' to help the needy: ...accuses profession of building monuments to money and power..."I'm not saying I'm against building monuments but I'm thinking we can work more for the public."](#)- BD/Building Design

(UK)

[Reasonable Dream: A vibrant housing development in Santa Monica offers the good life at a surprising price...2802 Pico Housing—a recently opened 100% affordable housing project...small decisions account for the project's success.](#) By Mimi Zeiger -- Moore Ruble Yudell Architects [images]- Metropolis Magazine

[Vacant offices designed by William Pereira to become apartments: ...a complex on Sunset Boulevard designed decades ago...is being transformed into an upscale 96-unit apartment building...the Elysian..."It's a gem in need of a good polish....will be a catalyst for the entire neighborhood."](#) -- David Lawrence Gray Architects - Los Angeles Times

[First Look: Dominique Perrault's DC Tower 1 in Vienna: The newly completed tower along the Danube is the tallest in Austria...the final section of the new district, overlooking the river...the first of two towers Perrault has designed for the site.](#) [slide show]- Architectural Record

[A Tower Inspired By Trees, Complete With Balconies For Leaves: Called White Tree, the new building will add a modern twist to the skyline of Montpellier, France...an ongoing architectural initiative called the 21st-Century Folies...Whether it will serve as a cultural magnet as planned remains to be seen, but it certainly will fit in with the city's "boldly modern" agenda wonderfully.](#) -- Sou Fujimoto; Nicholas Laisne Associes; Manal Rachdi Oxo Architects [images]- Fast Company / Co. Design

[Colgate University Center for Art and Culture by David Adjaye: ...in Hamilton, NY...the scheme brings together the region's anthropological and fine art collections...the cultural complex sits in the region's growing commercial district reinforcing connections between the village, the university and the wider population.](#) [images]- designboom

[2014 Civic Trust Award winners revealed: ...79 national and international projects were rewarded... -- Hopkins Architects; Stanton Williams; Heneghan Peng; Duggan Morris; Niall McLaughlin; etc.](#) [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

[NEA to Host Webinar Series on International Design Initiatives: Learning from Abroad: Jason Schupbach will convene panels of leading practitioners to present case studies and provide insights on successful design models and an opportunity for Q&A; March 19, May 7, and June 18-](#) National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

[If 27 Famous Artists Designed Buildings: What if Picasso had designed a jagged cubist fortress? Federico Babina explores this and more artist-architecture mashups in a new illustration series.](#) [images]- Fast Company



-- [Travel guide: Helsinki: ...known as a 'city of architecture.'](#) By Ulf Meyer

-- [Morphosis: Emerson College, Los Angeles: sustainable facility features a host of innovative amenities...defines the College's identity in the center of the entertainment industry.](#) By Kirsten Kiser

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