

Today's News - Thursday, April 24, 2014

- ArcSpace offers Meyer's take (and lots of pix) on Hadid's design plaza in Seoul, and whether it is "an architectural marvel or an 'urban pimple' - it is political envy that blurs its appreciation now." + Q&A with structural engineer Takaue re: his fine art architectural photography.
- Urban planner McDonnell calls for planners to "stop being boring": the field needs to start "rocking it out" instead of being "curmudgeons who default to 'no' and 'how much is that going to cost?' instead of 'it's possible' and 'let's see where this can go?'"
- Capps ponders the significance of Saffron's Pulitzer and what it means for architectural criticism.
- Adler explains "how the media is getting the story on cities and millennials wrong."
- A great look at how urban alleys, once considered "dirty and dangerous, are moving beyond garbage and garages" to become "pathways to revitalization."
- Baumgart cheers a subdivision outside of Melbourne using "sound landscape design principles as a starting point for the layout," but too bad about the "rather drab" housing design - "we can hope that a maturing landscape will cover a great many sins."
- Heathcote and Bevan weigh in on Heathrow's new Terminal 2: "cost-cutting slipstreams into terminal disappointment" + it's "not an especially bad building, it is just £2.5 billion worth of ordinariness."
- Bozikovic cheers this year's Canadian Governor-General's Medals in architecture winners: they "are far more than visual one-liners - notable for their careful urban design and public spirit" that "animate and enliven public spaces."
- Rosenbaum ruminates on the demise of AFAM: "many of MoMA's spaces designed by big-name architects have been razed or significantly altered to make way for the next architect's vision," so "why should anyone be shocked?"
- Goldberger waxes positively poetic about "New York's most beautiful ruin," the New York State Pavilion: it "does make a rather cool ruin. But it could also be something else...and it is one of the best reminders we have that the architectural legacy of the 1960s is more than just glass boxes."
- Novak takes another tack entirely re: all the attention to Johnson's pavilion: "The architecture community has a bit of soul searching to do. Why do so few people want to discuss the fact that he was a despicable fascist? And should we consider his history of hate during debates about what to do with his buildings?"
- Bernstein cheers FLW's "masterpiece, with shortcomings" in Racine, WI, being open for tours: Some will see it "as proof that he cared more about form than function; others will recognize a triumph of architectural experimentation. Neither group will be disappointed."
- ARM Architecture wins competition for the Joondalup Performing Arts and Cultural Center near Perth with a design "centered around a limestone scheme that was intentionally reflective of the region."
- Diamond Schmitt's living wall in Toronto turns 10 and is still growing strong: "we now we have a very good library of data demonstrating how well the technology works."
- A Chinese company claims it made 10 3D printed houses costing \$4,800 each in less than 24 hours, but are they genuinely 3D creations, or will the DUS project in Amsterdam still hold the title as the "world's first."
- Wainwright parses the seven category winners in London's Design Museum's Designs of the Year, from "chairs that make you fidget" (on purpose), to Hadid's "billowing monument to the Azerbaijan's former president - who presided over a tyrannical regime."
- Warren-Hicks weighs in, wondering how one can determine "the superior merits of a curvy Zaha Hadid building over an app that works to reduce blindness worldwide."
- From Milan's Salone del Mobile, Haldane found an "emboldened design industry" with the prevalent trend being "the playful exploration of material imitation."
- Zara, on the other hand, found it appeared "to be better to do so with well-worn, proven classics than a proliferation of wares that may come and go."

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-- Zaha Hadid Architects: Dongdaemun Design Plaza, Seoul, South Korea: Critics and the general public are currently discussing whether [it] is an architectural marvel or an "urban pimple"...As much as it was political ambition that caused the DDP to come into existence rather than actual need, it is political envy that blurs its appreciation now. By Ulf Meyer
-- Akira Takaue: ...a structural & consulting engineer from Japan...travels around the world producing fine art architectural images rooted in his approach of structural mechanics and material engineering.- ArcSpace

Why We Need A 'Neil deGrasse Tyson' of Urban Planning: Ship of the Imagination for Cities: ...we have entire cities to play in...They are full of wonder and just as epic as the cosmos. We need to be rocking it out...we're curmudgeons who default to 'no' and 'how much is that going to cost?' instead of 'it's possible' and 'let's see where this can go?' ...stop being boring! By Patrick McDonnell -- Amanda Burden- Medium

What Inga Saffron's Pulitzer Prize Means for Criticism: Her work for the Philadelphia Inquirer took the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for criticism, but is architecture criticism winning in general? This significance for the field of architecture criticism at large shouldn't be lost...is only the sixth architecture critic to receive the prize since it was introduced in 1970... By Kriston Capps - Blair Kamin; Ada Louise Huxtable; Robert Campbell, Allan Temko; Paul Goldberger; Matthew Yglesias; James S. Russell- Architect Magazine

Here's how the media is getting the story on cities & millennials wrong: Another day, another article about millennials supposedly flocking to cities, leaving their native suburbs bereft...there are two problems with the New York Times story: It overstates the suburbs' problems, and it misses one of the main causes of the shift toward cities...Young people (along with retirees) are more likely than previous generations to want to live in walkable, transit-accessible environments. By Ben Adler- Grist Magazine

Urban alleys become pathways to revitalization: From Seattle to Washington D.C., forgotten alleys are being reinvented as people-friendly spaces. Often perceived as dirty and dangerous, alleys are moving beyond garbage and garages, and becoming havens for pedestrians, public art and small businesses. [images, links]- Model D (Detroit)

Saltwater Coast: For the residential community of Saltwater Coast in Melbourne's south-west suburb of Point Cook...the landscape itself was taken as a starting point for the layout...it is pleasing to see a subdivision being planned and structured around sound landscape design principles...somewhat compromised...by the rather drab, conventional design of the housing...we can hope that a maturing landscape will cover a great many sins. By Marcus Baumgart/Williams Boag Architects [images]- ArchitectureAU (Australia)

Heathrow's cost-cutting slipstreams into terminal disappointment: Terminal 2 lacks any spark to lift it above the ordinary: ...Foster & Partners...elegant plans were shelved...Vidal has succeeded in creating clear, naturally lit spaces, relatively intuitive way-finding and an efficient, generously spacious building...Clumsy details are plentiful...Too much stuff has been squeezed into spaces that, at 18m high, could have soared. By Edwin Heathcote -- Luis Vidal + Architects- Financial Times (UK)

Heathrow Terminal 2's hi-tech £2.5 billion revamp: Luis Vidal's creation is a colossus that aims for grand gestures: ...while retaining the original Foster + Partners concept including its green credentials, waters it down considerably...more like the stern of a cut-price cruise-liner ploughing towards the less classy resorts of the Med...not an especially bad building, it is just £2.5 billion worth of ordinariness. By Robert Bevan [images]- Evening Standard (UK)

Winners of the Governor-General's Medals in architecture unveiled: The jury has chosen buildings that are far more than visual one-liners...notable for their careful urban design and public spirit...each designed to animate and enliven public spaces. By Alex Bozikovic -- Kongats Architects; Éric Gauthier/FABG Architects; Atelier TAG/ Jodoin Lamarre Pratte

architectes; Michael Green Architecture; 5468796 Architecture [images]- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Grand Façade: A Final Farewell to Former American Folk Art Museum: West 53rd Street is already one big procession of diverse MoMA façades, although many of the spaces designed by big-name architects...have been razed or significantly altered to make way for the next architect's vision...why should anyone be shocked by MoMA's willingness to knock down the architectural statement of a neighboring institution? By Lee Rosenbaum -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects; Daniel Libeskind; Rick Bell/AIANY; Diller Scofidio + Renfro- ArtsJournal

What Will Become of New York's Most Beautiful Ruin? ...New York State Pavilion, the leftover structure from the 1964 New York World's Fair in Flushing Meadow Park...does make a rather cool ruin. But it could also be something else...an unusual combination of bold, lively, and serene, and it is one of the best reminders we have that the architectural legacy of the 1960s is more than just glass boxes...managed to be as majestic, and as joyous... By Paul Goldberger -- Philip Johnson- Vanity Fair

One of America's Most Famous Architects Was a Nazi Propagandist: 50th anniversary of the 1964 New York World's Fair...special attention is being paid to...the New York State Pavilion...The architecture community has a bit of soul searching to do...Why do so few people want to discuss the fact that [he] was a despicable fascist? And should we consider his history of hate during debates about what to do with his buildings? By Matt Novak- Gizmodo

A Masterpiece, With Shortcomings: ...Frank Lloyd Wright's SC Johnson Research Tower in Racine, Wisconsin, opens for tours next month. Visitors will see firsthand its functional shortcomings along with its spectacular innovations...Some will see the tower's interiors as proof that he cared more about form than function; others will recognize a triumph of architectural experimentation...Neither group will be disappointed. By Fred A. Bernstein [slide show]- Architectural Record

Limestone Cliff emulation by ARM Architecture wins WA design competition: ...concept design of the Joondalup Performing Arts and Cultural Facility...centred around a limestone scheme that was intentionally reflective of the Joondalup region... -- Ashton Raggatt McDougall [images]- Architecture & Design (Australia)

Living Wall in Toronto: Large indoor plant system an icon of sustainable design...turns 10 years old this spring. The living wall biofilter..."Ten years on, we now we have a very good library of data demonstrating how well the technology works. If anything, the system has exceeded our initial ideas about its impact on the indoor space"...The first living wall at U. of Guelph Humber is growing strong today -- Diamond Schmitt Architects [images]- e-architect (UK)

Is this the world's first 3D printed house? Shanghai WinSun Decoration Design Engineering Co, says it made 10 3D printed houses costing \$4,800 each in less than 24 hours, according to 3ders.org...some debate over whether the house built is genuinely a 3D creation...A 3D house under construction in Amsterdam by DUS Architects may therefore have a chance to claim the "world's first" mantle... [images]- Financial Times (UK)

Designs of the Year: chairs that make you fidget and a piano from the future: From the Pro Chair that makes schoolkids squirm to an all-black piano, plus Prada and Zaha Hadid, here are the seven category winners from the Designs of the Year. By Oliver Wainwright [images]- Guardian (UK)

Are These the Best Designs of the Year? London's Design Museum has announced the seven winners...It's not entirely clear how the top score will be settled...determining the superior merits of a curvy Zaha Hadid building over an app that works to reduce blindness worldwide. By Colin Warren-Hicks [images]- Metropolis Magazine

Trail Blazers: What Milan Design Week Tells us About the Industry: An emboldened design industry puts creative collaboration centre stage: ...in light of our globalised and democratised creative industries, the Italian furniture business must work harder than ever to hold its own...prevalent trend was the playful exploration of material imitation. By James Haldane- Architectural Review (UK)

Milan's Safe Bet: Midcentury Reissues at Salone del Mobile: As the world's capital of design struggles financially, the show must go on, and better to do so with well-worn, proven classics than a proliferation of wares that may come and go. That's the last thing the design world needs now. By Janelle Zara [slide show]- Artinfo

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