

Today's News - Wednesday, June 18, 2014

- Bevan visits the 9/11 Memorial Museum (and actually talks about the architecture): "an artificial ruin...suitably somber architecture...the choreographed Wagnerian staging does draw an emotional response...evokes emotion skillfully but synthetically" (there's also Calatrava's "\$4 billion chicken carcass").
- Long tours "Elements" at the Venice Biennale, and ends up "unutterably sad for Koolhaas" (who has a snappish moment) and "what he thinks architecture is. The result is less than encouraging. He's either unaware or willfully ignorant of the architects engaged in the topics he says the profession ignores."
- Betsky found the Biennale an elegy "focused on the past, with Modernism in ruins. The Russians summed up best what you can do when the dreams of building a better modern world lie in ruins: sell it."
- Wise reports that a Congressman is calling into question the U.S. Department of State's Design Excellence program for embassies, and (of course) calls for a hearing.
- Toderian makes the case for "sticky streets": "those things that slow down a pedestrian's pace may be the very things that make a street great. A place is sticky if people love it, and don't want to leave."
- A new report by Smart Growth America ranks the "30 largest U.S. cities by how walkable they are - a key figure that demonstrates how cities are shifting from the suburban sprawl of the past 60 years to the urban infill of the future."
- King cheers the latest revisions in San Francisco's Moscone Center expansion plans by SOM/Cavagnero: "There's still work to be done," but at least the "latest designs use a variety of tools to soften what was shaping up to be a sleek but sterile behemoth."
- Eyefuls of SOM's competition-winning 60-story tower in Gothenburg, Sweden, that "takes its inspiration from ribbons blowing in the wind" (plus images of the 3 losing designs).
- Eyefuls of Chetwoods' "blatantly iconic" (but oh-so-green) kilometer-tall tower in Wuhan: "In China if you come up with a slightly mad idea, it's almost not mad enough."
- Fab photos of Piano's "alien snail or metallic armadillo" for the Pathé Foundation in Paris; it is a "sinuous creature" and "an intense juxtaposition of old and new."
- Makovsky takes an in-depth look at Lonberg-Holm, "the invisible architect of invisible architecture" and "an overlooked but highly influential Modernist" who Bucky called the "unsung Leonardo of the building industry" (great read!).
- For all you fans of "Enigma" and "The Bletchley Circle" (we are!), Bletchley Park, home of the World War II code-breakers, re-opens following a year-long restoration.
- Three win the crowdsourced design competition for NYC's Cotel.
- Kamin explains why "the title 'architecture critic' is entirely too limiting": it's not all about "glamorous structures designed by globe-trotting 'starchitects.' In reality, my job is much broader and much grittier - cities that ignore the quality of their built environment do so at their peril."
- Design Corps/SEED Public Interest Design Awards: Mexico winners selected.
- The Enterprise Rose Fellowship "has been a quiet but powerful force" in proving that social impact design can be a career.
- Call for entries: Enterprise Rose Architectural Fellowships for 2015-2017 + 1st Blueprint Awards in architecture and design projects, products, and critical thinking + 2014 FX International Interior Design Awards for projects and products.

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Memories of Ruin: 9/11 Memorial Museum by Snøhetta and Davis Brody Bond: "...in such a highly charged context, how can architecture sift the powerful currents of memory, myth and meaning to make sense of events? The result is, in some senses, an artificial ruin, a curated aftermath...This is in no way accidental...The vast cathedral scale...is suitably sombre architecture. It may not have the raw power of the original unadorned demolition site but the choreographed Wagnerian staging does draw an emotional response...evokes emotion skillfully but synthetically. By Robert Bevan -- Michael Arad- Architectural Review (UK)

"Elements" makes you unutterably sad for Koolhaas and what he thinks architecture is: "...by excluding architects and focusing on research for this year's Venice Architecture Biennale, Rem Koolhaas has given the world an insight into what he thinks about architecture. The result is less than encouraging...He's either unaware or willfully ignorant of the architects engaged in the topics he says the profession ignores. By Kieran Long - Dezeen

I Went to the Venice Architecture Biennale and All I Got Was This Elegy: The national pavilions focused on the past, with Modernism in ruins: "...technology and standardization are threatening to make what some say is the second oldest (and second most ethically and morally suspect) profession extinct...Rem Koolhaas's "Fundamentals," was not merely one more dirge...The Russians summed up best what you can do when the dreams of building a better modern world lie in ruins: sell it. By Aaron Betsky - Architect Magazine

Renewed Criticism for State Department's Embassy Design Program: A member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform has pushed for a hearing...U.S. Department of State's effort to elevate design standards...critics allege that architectural excellence comes at the expense of high security and fiscal restraint...State Department...denied there had been any change in the cost and completion time requirements under the new design program. By Michael Z. Wise - Architect Magazine

Let's Make Sticky Streets for People! ...if your priority is to move people along sidewalks...patios can be seen as a hindrance. But when you see streets as people-places, those things that slow down a pedestrian's pace may be the very things that make a street great...A place is sticky if people love it, and don't want to leave...great streets should be both walkable AND sticky. By Brent Toderian/Toderian UrbanWORKS- PLANetizen

Top 10 most walkable cities now and in the future: "Foot Traffic Ahead: Ranking Walkable Urbanism in America's Largest Metros" ranked the 30 largest U.S. cities by how walkable they are - a key figure that demonstrates how cities are shifting from the suburban sprawl of the past 60 years to the urban infill of the future. [link to report]- CBS News

Latest changes will help expanded Moscone Center fit in: "...and not do major harm...feel more like part of the city and less like a zone for special events. There's still work to be done...latest designs use a variety of tools to soften what was shaping up to be a sleek but sterile behemoth..."We want to make a non-convention convention building, a truly urban building." By John King -- Craig Hartman/Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM); Mark Cavagnero Associates [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

SOM wins contest for 60-storey Swedish skyscraper: "...a 230m-tall, mixed-use tower in Gothenburg...Dubbed the Polestar..."takes its inspiration from ribbons blowing in the wind"...also drawn up a masterplan for a "highly animated 143,000m² mixed-use district' around the centrepiece tower. -- Entasis; Manuelle Gautrand Architecture; Wingårdh arkitektkontor; Zaha Hadid Architects [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Chetwoods creates "blatantly iconic" kilometre-tall tower to act as environmental filter for Wuhan: "...with a host of environmental functions that will attempt to purify the city's polluted air and lakes..."In China if you come up with a slightly mad idea, its almost not mad enough...This is meant to be embracing the culture with the phoenix/dragons idea but it's also doing a really top environmental job" [images]- Dezeen

Renzo Piano Squeezes A Giant Bulbous Structure Into A Historic Paris City Block: As much as it may look like an alien snail or metallic armadillo, the unorthodox form is in fact the new headquarters of the Pathé Foundation...sinuous creature...is an intense juxtaposition of old and new. [images]- Huffington Post

[The Invisible Architect of Invisible Architecture: An exclusive look at Knud Lonberg-Holm \(1895-1972\), the father of information design and one of Buckminster Fuller's greatest influences...an overlooked but highly influential Modernist architect, photographer, and pioneer of information design..."unsung Leonardo of the building industry" ... By Paul Makovsky \[images\]](#)- Metropolis Magazine

[Bletchley Park opens after £8m revamp: Home of the World War 2 code-breakers re-opens following a year-long restoration...The key challenge for the project team was to restore the site, while retaining as much as possible of the buildings' wartime materials and atmosphere. -- Kennedy O'Callaghan Architects \[images\]](#)- Building (UK)

[3 Winning Crowdsourced Designs Unveiled for New York City Hotel: For its new, extended-stay hotel at 17 John Street, developer Prodigy Network \[and\] PSFK, launched the Prodigy Design Lab, which allowed designers from around the world to submit plans...Cotel will transform an existing 1920's apartment building with a multi-story glass addition designed by Winka DubbeldamArchi-Tectonics... -- Pierre Levesque; Vianney Lacotte; Anton, Gley & Marivia \[images\]](#)- The Architect's Newspaper

[Blair Kamin on being an architecture critic: The title "architecture critic" is entirely too limiting. It suggests a narrow focus on buildings and a privileged subset of glamorous structures designed by globe-trotting "starchitects." In reality, my job is much broader and much grittier... cities that ignore the quality of their built environment do so at their peril...What matters, in the end, is raising the level of architectural dialogue...- Chicago Tribune](#)

[Public Interest Design Awards: Mexico winners selected: Projects are being created all over Mexico which are addressing the many issues faced by communities and individuals. These projects are taking on the challenging issues of democratic decision making, empowerment and engagement. - Design Corps / Social, Economic, Environmental Design Network \(SEED\)](#)

[Social Impact Design IS a Career: The notion that design can be a tool towards social change is not new...but how to actually have a career practicing social impact design is a much larger question...Enterprise Rose Fellowship has been a quiet but powerful force in helping build career pathways in social impact design. - Next City \(formerly Next American City\)](#)

[Call for entries: Enterprise Rose Architectural Fellowships for 2015-2017: develops the next generation of leaders in community-based design; deadline: July 10- Enterprise Community Partners](#)

[Call for entries: 1st Blueprint Awards celebrating the very best in architecture and design projects, products, and critical thinking; deadline: July 25- Blueprint Magazine \(UK\)](#)

[Call for entries: 2014 FX International Interior Design Awards honoring the very best of interior projects and products; deadline: July 25- FX Magazine](#)



[7 Architecture Books to Fill Up Your Suitcase: Bike Town Tokyo by Yoshiharu Tsukamoto & René Kural; The Images of Architects by Valerio Olgiati; Atmosphere by Peter Zumthor; A Topology of Everyday Constellations by Georges Teyssot; Vitruvius: Writing the Body of Architecture by Indra Kagis McEwen; Content by OMA/Rem Koolhaas; Behind the Green Door by Rotor](#)

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