

Today's News - Monday, June 23, 2014

- ArcSpace brings us Meyer's take on the Venice Biennale: "The overall effect is impressive, but it is also bordering on the banal - or even depressing - as it seems to illustrate the diminishing influence of the architect."
- Bevan cheers - and jeers - RSH+P's Cheesegrater: "Such daring, graceful simplicity - a thing of beauty in the wrong place."
- Bloomberg explains "what states should learn from cities and how the mayor of even a small rural town could save the world" ("People care about services, not ideologies").
- Planners take over two blocks in Atlanta to show what a senior-friendly neighborhood looks like - but it only lasted two days.
- Snell calls for more focus on ecology studies when it comes to urban planning: "As research advances in how cities might evolve, is planning and developing keeping apace?"
- Bergren Miller sits down with a small-firm architect to discuss strategies small firms can use to gain entry into large-scale design.
- Flint parses the Olmsted vs. Moses debate sparked at the recent CNU conference in Buffalo: with Olmsted, "it's a lovefest"; meanwhile, "Moses can't catch much of a break...it would be a shame if Moses's excesses have permanently given large-scale planning a bad name" (great read!).
- Hume gives Regent Park's new park in Toronto two thumbs-ups: "It's not fancy, but people will want to spend time here - already the neighborhood feels connected to the city in ways that would have been unimaginable."
- Yale's Urban Design Workshop teams up with Jerusalem's Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design to work on the first peace park in the Middle East.
- Dittmar sees Detroit as "a crucible for testing new ideas about revitalization" and a model the U.K. could learn from.
- Make It Right heads to a Montana Indian reservation with plans to build 20 LEED Platinum, solar-powered homes - unlike its "New Orleans template, no star architects were called in for the new venture."
- Russell cheers Braverman's "deceptively simple and sensitive dormitory for health-care staff" in a remote Burundi village with the goal to create "architecture of conscience."
- It looks like plans for St. Petersburg's New Holland Island are heading in a different direction - via West 8, not the competition-winning WORKac.
- A more in-depth look at the 5 projects shortlisted for Sydney's Green Square Aquatic Centre and Gunyama Park redevelopment (a moonlight cinema included).
- Berlin could be making religious history with a competition-winning design for the House of One, the first church-mosque-synagogue.
- Pelli parses his new, "sexy" Dallas tower, though "he's a bit surprised it's taken so long for his designs to be sketched on the city's skyline."
- Moore has a most interesting conversation with Radic re: the Chilean architect's 2014 Serpentine pavilion, stones, and poetry: "his world has space for incompleteness and melancholy. He likes ruins" (and looks like a Jedi knight).
- RIBA drops the motion to sanction Israel's IAJA, opting to set up a "global ethics group."
- AEC Cares projectChicago is gearing up for its one-day "build blitz" on Wednesday to renovate "a tired, worn, 30-year-old former public school building" now housing subsidized daycare "into a bright, cheerful, fun place for the children to learn and play" (we look forward to celebrating with them at the AIA convention!).
- We're sorry to have miss bidding on surfboards, boogie boards, and skateboards designed by some very notable names at the A+D Architecture and Design Museum > Los Angeles annual gala fundraiser next Saturday.
- Call for entries: Healthcare Environment Awards 2014 to recognize innovative, life-enhancing interior design.

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2014 Venice Architecture Biennale: To move away from the notion of 'starchitects' was one of the primary goals of Rem Koolhaas...And the concept works very well...The overall effect is impressive, but it is also bordering on the banal - or even depressing - as it seems to illustrate the diminishing influence of the architect. By Ulf Meyer [images]- ArcSpace

The new Cheesegrater building is ready for use: ...Leadenhall Building rivals Gherkin and Shard...has turned out to be one of the world's best skyscrapers — the only thing is, it's in the wrong place...Such daring, graceful simplicity has been hard-won...Whatever its architectural merit, one can't help think that a Faustian bargain has taken place...a thing of beauty in the wrong place. By Robert Bevan -- Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners [images]- Evening Standard (UK)

"People care about services, not ideologies": As a former mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg knows what challenges cities have to face today and how to respond to them. He told Max Tholl what states should learn from cities and how the mayor of even a small rural town could save the world.- The European magazine

Atlanta Shows What a Senior-Friendly Neighborhood Looks Like: Regional planners showcased a neighborhood with easy access to transportation, health services and entertainment. But it only lasted two days...The Atlanta Regional Commission...teamed up with Mike Lydon, a leader in the "tactical urbanism" movement.- Governing Magazine

Destabilizing Urban Planning: How can the contemporary concepts in ecology studies—adaptability, resiliency, and flexibility —advance urban planning practices? ...the modern notions of stability and certainty are a fallacy...As research advances in how cities might evolve, is planning and developing keeping apace? By Steven Snell- PLANetizen

Self-Starter Urbanism: Small Firms Tackle Big Projects on Their Own Terms: Development and research projects allow small firms entry into large-scale design...as design-builders, developers, or independent researchers. By Anna Bergren Miller -- Peter Tolkin Architecture [images]- PLANetizen

Olmsted the Hero, Moses the Villain: History views master planners Frederick Law Olmsted and Robert Moses very differently: No one would ever talk about dismantling any aspect of Olmsted's work. With Moses, it's all about undoing a legacy...When it comes to Olmsted, it's a lovefest. Moses, meanwhile, can't catch much of a break. His reputation had begun to be rehabilitated...But a trope dies hard. By Anthony Flint- CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

Regent Park's new park destined for success: Opening of new multi-use facility reveals it to be a practical, flexible space for daily use by complex urban community...It's not fancy, but it looks as though it will get the job done. In other words, people will want to spend time here...already the neighbourhood feels connected to the city in ways that would have been unimaginable. By Christopher Hume -- PMA Landscape Architects- Toronto Star

Yale's Urban Design Workshop building bridges to the first peace park in the Middle East: A team of architects from the YUDW and Jerusalem's Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design is set to move forward on part of the proposed Israeli-Jordanian Jordan River Peace Park...ooking to develop the Old Gesher bridge compound... -- Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME); Alan Plattus; Andrei Harwell [images]- Yale News

Seeing empty homes as an asset, not a liability: The UK can learn some lessons from Detroit's struggle to recover from bankruptcy: From being an unalloyed tragedy, Detroit is becoming a crucible for testing new ideas about revitalisation...programmes which seek to encourage sweat equity, self-rebuilding and regeneration through business start-up should be preferred to top-down schemes. By Hank Dittmar- BD/Building Design (UK)

Make It Right's Next Move: The non-profit plans to set up 20 LEED-Platinum homes on Fort Peck Indian Reservation in

Montana.: ...solar-powered homes for members of the Sioux and Assiniboine tribes...Unlike MIR's New Orleans template, no star architects were called in for the new venture. -- Graft; Architecture for Humanity; Joseph Kunkel/Sustainable Native Communities Collaborative; Living Homes; Method Homes [images]- Metropolis Magazine

Cross-Border Collaboration: In Kigutu, a remote village in southern Burundi, an American architect joins forces with the local community to build a simple and sensitive dormitory for health-care staff...Village Health Works Staff Housing...deceptively simple...in one of the most impoverished places on earth...Her goal was to create "architecture of conscience." By James S. Russell -- Louise Braverman, Architect [slide show]- Architectural Record

New Holland Island To Update Renovation Plan: ...to shelve the development plan drafted by WORKac, who were chosen for the project as a result of a public contest held in 2011...The new general plan for the island is being developed by West 8...- St. Petersburg Times (Russia)

Five projects shortlisted for Green Square Aquatic Centre and Gunyama Park redevelopment: ...include a moonlight cinema, an urban beach and artificial and natural wetlands... -- Andrew Burns Architect; Cullinan Ivanov Partnership; CHROFI & McGregor Coxall; Andrew Burges Architects; TYP-TOP Studio (Andrew Daly and Kevin Liu) [links to images, info]- Architecture & Design (Australia)

Berlin House of One: The first church-mosque-synagogue? Berlin thinks it is making religious history as Muslims, Jews and Christians join hands to build a place where they can all worship: An architecture competition has been held and the winner chosen...Can they get on? "We can." -- Wilfried Kuehn/Kuehn Malvezzi [images]- BBC Magazine

Cesar Pelli: The man behind the design of Crescent's new Uptown tower : With Dallas' business-centric nature, Pelli says he's a bit surprised it's taken so long for his designs to be sketched on the city's skyline...The 87-year-old architect won't have to wait much longer..."This is a very sexy" addition to the Uptown neighborhood that will give the community a new feature anchored deeply in the Dallas Arts District... -- Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects [video]- Dallas Business Journal

"The shape is not important": As the 2014 Serpentine pavilion prepares to open, its architect, the Chilean Smiljan Radic, talks stones and stories: His architecture does not aim to be instantly likable, graspable or accessible...He is fond of the concept of refuge and his world has space for incompleteness and melancholy. He likes ruins. By Rowan Moore [slide show]- Observer (UK)

RIBA Drops Israel Motion, Sets Up Global Ethics Group in Response to Controversy: ...a new working group will "consider the institute's role in engaging with communities facing civil conflict and natural disaster." -- Royal Institute of British Architects; Israeli Association of United Architects (IAUA); International Union of Architects (UIA)- ArchDaily

AEC Cares projectChicago is underway! ...renovating a tired, worn, 30-year-old former public school building that offers heavily subsidized daycare and early learning to children...On June 25...we are bringing together as many as 150 volunteers from the AEC community for a one-day "blitz build"...to turn the facility into a bright, cheerful, fun place for the children to learn and play. - AEC Cares / Reed Construction Data / AIA / Hanley Wood

A+D Architecture and Design Museum > Los Angeles Annual Gala Fundraiser 'CELEBRATE: GROUNDSWELL' embraces surf-inspired design...will feature custom surfboards, boogie boards, and skateboards created by local and international architects...June 28. -- Karim Rashid; Richard Meier & Partners; Steven Ehrlich; David Hertz; Neil Denari; KMNelson Design; Minarc; Gensler; Arquitectonica; SPF:a; Michael Maltzan; Sorensen Architects; Rios Clementi Hale Studios; etc. - A+D Architecture and Design Museum (Los Angeles)

Call for entries: Healthcare Environment Awards 2014: to recognize innovative, life-enhancing interior design that contributes to the quality of healthcare; deadline: July 3- Contract / The Center for Health Design / Vendome Group

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