

Today's News - Tuesday, September 9, 2014

- Bernstein lays out exactly why the architectural world is feeling such a loss with the passing of Mildred Friedman (with input from some very notable notables).
- ArcSpace brings us Meyer's take on Hadid's Vienna University of Economics Library and Learning Centre, "with bundles of flowing curves around every corner."
- Willis defends Hadid in her defamation lawsuit: "What are the real issues at play with this case?"
- Farago delves deep into why New Yorkers (and the world) have "been so badly let down" by "the privatization and oligarchy" that has hold on Ground Zero when they "trusted that thoughtful, ambitious urban design could make the city whole again" (a fascinating read!).
- Deutsche has some issues with the 9/11 Memorial Museum that begins with "its prehistory - the memorial proposals that were never considered, the museums that were censored. The memory the museum constructs conceals a massive forgetting."
- Lamster has his own issues with the memorial that "has mutated into something more gracious, a verdant space" for "mass tourism and the effective front lawn of a multibillion-dollar real-estate development," leaving the 9/11 Memorial Museum "to answer the functions that the memorial itself does not - it manages this task with reasonable dignity."
- Heathcote hails Ando's Clark Art Institute, where he "has managed to draw out enough from two mismatched and inelegant neighbors to create a fine new museum from broken-down parts."
- McCown cheers the Clark as "a brilliant stroke of architecture that is classically Ando - it seems not so much to occupy the site as to seduce it."
- Betsy ponders BIG's Kimball Art Center double defeat in Park City, Utah: the first proposal was "rather beautiful"; the second "was so watered down as to being close to boring," which "points to an important fact: the Bilbao Effect is as much a myth as that of 'starchitecture.'"
- Saffron x 2: she finds "many irresistible features" in Philly's new Dilworth Park, but the "designers' emphasis on perfection is suffocating. They bludgeon you with 'high quality' materials that evoke the atmosphere of a slick corporate lobby."
- She cheers the "funky, low-cost, DIY-style efforts" that "have populated the once-deserted Delaware waterfront cheaply and quickly," though "they are not an end in themselves."
- An in-depth look at the winning design for a new urban village in central Christchurch to lure residents back to what has otherwise "been an eerie ghost town" since 2011 - and the entirely new technology to build it "that has safety and sustainability at its heart."
- Davies questions the popular notion that the failure of St. Louis's infamous Pruitt-Igoe public housing project was "due in large part to the failures of modernist architecture; is that narrative right?"
- A "poor door" conundrum for affordable housing advocates: "Opposing integration at public-housing projects while demanding it at private ones is not just contradictory. It's counterproductive."
- New York-style "poor doors" in Toronto "don't have the same poor-door stigma": "New York is New York - they're much more used to separating people in terms of economics."
- As Foster basks in his Mexico City airport win, he blasts Britain for "resorting to 'quick fix' infrastructure solutions - he cannot understand why a country that once led the world has lost its courage."
- Civitas's Johnson "sees need for a young hub in Prague," and offers ideas for two very different neighborhoods.
- Paul minces no words about what he thinks of the arguments for replacing Kansas City's Jahn-designed Kemper Arena: the "first branch of the argument is specious. The second branch is obviously arrogant and unconvincing."
- Diamond Schmitt is leading the way in teaching universities that they can expand up, not out: the concept that a campus building can't be taller than 3 stories "is now as outdated as the abacus."

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Obituary: Mildred Friedman, 1929-2014: When this magazine declared the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis "America's leading museum of design" in 1990, it was paying tribute to Friedman...who went by Mickey..."She was in the vanguard of curators who saw themselves not just as conservators, but as people who made things happen—as impressarios," said Terence Riley... By Fred A. Bernstein- Architectural Record

Zaha Hadid Architects: Vienna University of Economics Library and Learning Centre: With bundles of flowing curves around every corner...resembles a fancy stream-lined car rather than a traditional building. Situated at the center of a new university campus in Austria's capital, it is the biggest, tallest and most striking piece of architecture of the entire campus area. By Ulf Meyer [images]- ArcSpace

In Defense of Zaha Hadid in the Defamation Lawsuit: What are the real issues at play with this case? Admittedly, her comments were insensitive when taken out of their context...it is time for women to stand up and defend themselves, when a fallacious story defames their integrity, humanity, and soul, negatively reflecting on who they are. By Beverly Willis, FAIA/Beverly Willis Foundation -- Martin Filler; New York Review of Books- Architect Magazine

One World Trade Center: how New York tried to rebuild its soul: When Ground Zero was finally cleared after the fall of the twin towers, New Yorkers trusted that thoughtful, ambitious urban design could make the city whole again. Why have they been so badly let down? ...community, solidarity and civic virtue...disappeared...replaced by the privatisation and oligarchy that are the hallmarks of the 21st century. By Jason Farago & Vivienne Gucwa (photos) -- Daniel Libeskind; Think/Rafael Viñoly/Shigeru Ban/Frederic Schwartz; David Childs/Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Fumihiko Maki; Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners; Foster + Partners; Santiago Calatrava; Michael Arad- Guardian (UK)

The Whole Truth: National September 11 Memorial Museum: Before analyzing the Museum, let us remember its prehistory—the memorial proposals that were never considered, the museums that were censored...The memory the museum constructs conceals a massive forgetting...reidealizing the buildings as pure victims explains the enormous amount of attention focused on their anatomy. It is surely responsible for the astonishing omissions in the museum's history of the WTC. By Rosalyn Deutsche -- Michael Arad; Peter Walker and Partners/PWP; Snøhetta; Davis Brody Bond- Artforum

9/11 Memorial reconciles conflicting demands: ..."Reflecting Absence"...in the intervening years, that design has mutated into something more gracious, a verdant space animated by a pair of water features...a site of mass tourism and the effective front lawn of a multibillion-dollar real-estate development. It is left, then, for the Memorial Museum to answer the functions that the memorial itself does not...it manages this task with reasonable dignity. By Mark Lamster -- Michael Arad; Peter Walker; Snøhetta; Davis Brody Bond; Santiago Calatrava; David Childs/kidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Daniel Libeskind; Fumihiko Maki- Dallas Morning News

Clark Art Institute, Massachusetts: Tadao Ando has managed to draw out enough from two mismatched and inelegant neighbours to create a fine new museum from broken-down parts...This building is, I should make clear, not a masterpiece – but neither is it aiming to be an icon. Instead it is a place for looking at art and seeing the landscape. By Edwin Heathcote – Daniel Perry (1955); Pietro Belluschi (1973); Selldorf Architects- Financial Times (UK)

Crit> Clark Art Institute Expansion: James McCown admires Tadao Ando's latest American cultural project: ...a brilliant stroke of architecture that is classically Ando...it seems not so much to occupy the site as to seduce it...so masterfully does he unite building and landscape. -- Pietro Belluschi/The Architects Collaborative; Gensler; Selldorf Architects; Reed Hilderbrand Landscape Architecture- The Architect's Newspaper

Thoughts on Bjarke Ingels Group's Park City Defeat: Here's how the initial two BIG proposals [for Kimball Art Center] would have impacted the Utah city: It looks as if America will not get its first Bilbao Effect...What makes this all the more troubling is that the revised design was so watered down as to be close to boring, especially in comparison to the first - and in my eyes rather beautiful - proposal. By Aaron Betsky -- Bjarke Ingels Group- Architect Magazine

Dilworth Park has many irresistible features, but it's stiff, uncomfortable: There is no doubt that this important civic space...has been greatly improved...undermined by an uptight and controlling sensibility...a suit in a jeans-and-T-shirt world...designers' emphasis on perfection is suffocating. They bludgeon you with "high quality" materials that evoke the atmosphere of a slick corporate lobby. By Inga Saffron -- Olin; KieranTimberlake- Philadelphia Inquirer

A new wave on the Delaware waterfront: Rather than concoct distracting side deals with developers...Mayor Nutter has allowed planners and the Delaware River Waterfront Corp. to set the pace. We see the result in funky, low-cost, DIY-style efforts like FringeArts and Washington Avenue Green...they are not an end in themselves..."if you create infrastructure, development will follow." By Inga Saffron -- PennPraxis; WRT; David Fierabend/Groundswell Design Group/ Stokes Architecture; Bryan Hanes Studio [slide show]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Design Challenge Aims to Lure Residents Back to an Abandoned City: Since 2011, central Christchurch has been an eerie ghost town...an international design challenge...to create something new for the space. The mandate: design an urban village...winning entry "Breathe"...an entirely new technology -- one that has safety and sustainability at its heart. -- Anselmi Attiani Associated Architects; Fabio Parodi/resco Group,- Next City (formerly Next American City)

Did modernist architecture fail this public housing project? St Louis' Pruett-Igoe public housing project is infamous for being demolished after just 22 years due in large part to the failures of modernist architecture; is that narrative right? By Alan Davies -- Minoru Yamasaki- Crikey (Australia)

Editorial: The 'poor door' contradiction: Opposing integration at public-housing projects while demanding it at private ones is not just contradictory. It's counterproductive...Banning separate entrances would reduce projects' profits and thus curtail the creation of affordable units in thriving neighborhoods. - Crain's New York Business

Separate entrances: Are New York-style 'poor doors' here in Toronto already? ...separate entrances don't have the same poor door stigma in Toronto, because New York's history of segregating people by wealth is much greater. "New York is New York ... they're much more used to separating people in terms of economics"... - Metro News Toronto

Norman Foster: Britain resorting to 'quick fix' infrastructure solutions: ...says Britain is no longer thinking about the long-term while countries such as Mexico are making far braver decisions for the next generation...he cannot understand why a country that once led the world has lost its courage. -- Foster + Partners- Telegraph (UK)

Urban planner sees need for a young hub in Prague: The Dejvice area could be transformed into a new and vital gateway for the city...pointed out two very different areas in the city that were ripe for change. The first is in the core of the city and the second is more suburban. -- Mark Johnson/Civitas; Prague Institute of Planning and Development (IPR)- The Prague Post

American Royal needs to get real on Kemper Arena issue: ...arguments for replacing the city-owned arena with a smaller facility and denying a developer's proposal to reuse the historic structure make very little sense...they should not stand in the way of forging a larger vision that accomplishes both goals...first branch of the argument is specious...The second branch is obviously arrogant and unconvincing. By Steve Paul -- Helmut Jahn; C.F. Murphy Associates (1974)- Kansas City Star

Places of higher learning expand up, not out: Academic architecture isn't what it used to be: For many years...universities and colleges in this country and beyond were constrained by the notion that buildings of higher education could work only on three or fewer storeys...that concept is now as outdated as the abacus. -- Diamond Schmitt Architects; Stantec Architecture [slide show]- Globe and Mail (Canada)

ANN Feature: INSIGHT: When to Remember Not to Renovate: The story of the Berkeley South Branch Library is a case study of when a Midcentury Modern building is arguably best remembered and respected through photographic and historic archives rather than reuse. By Avery Taylor Moore, AIA, Field Paoli Architects- ArchNewsNow

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