

Today's News - Tuesday, September 30, 2014

- ArcSpace brings us Kiser's take on Foster + Partners' Vieux Port Pavilion in Marseille; and an exhibition at the Danish Architecture Center that "investigates a new wave of urban creativity."
- Betsky banter with the "artwashing" of Brutalist affordable housing in London: "It's nothing new, of course. The older term was gentrification - all you have to do is clean them up, and present them as beautiful building blocks for yuppie living."
- In Buenos Aires, "tensions are rising" as citizens take to the courts to save the city's architectural heritage from bulldozers (and becoming "a major headache" for developers and city authorities - poor dears).
- In Denver, a movement is afoot to save HHPA's 1978 Boettcher Concert Hall from the wrecking ball.
- AIA Queensland Chapter raises a rallying cry to save Gibson's "iconic Brutalist" Queensland Performing Arts Centre in Brisbane from disappearing to make way for two 30-story towers.
- Architects also rally behind a bid to halt plans to turn Moscow's iconic Melnikov House into a museum: "the entire architecture community is now watching the situation with worry and astonishment."
- Perez lays out the Top 10 misconceptions about form-based codes (no, they don't always dictate architecture or mandate high-density residential or, or, or...).
- Moscow adopted a design code only recently - but much could be learned by looking at "how rules work on European streets" to create "a comfortable and non-aggressive environment on the streets" that "does not prohibit and force, but rather directs and guides."
- Hawthorne has high hopes for L.A.'s Union Station master plan that goes well beyond the station itself: "we're getting a glimpse - encouraging if opaque - of what its next 75 years might look - a literal and symbolic place in the middle of something new."
- Litt cheers the end of "a bitter, slow-motion war over land use" on Cleveland's waterfront: "a shared vision identifies how industry, nightclubs, residents and visitors can coexist peacefully in the city's historic and visually striking riverfront neighborhood."
- King gives thumbs-up to San Francisco's new cruise ship terminal, "a crisply detailed shed of corrugated aluminum" that is "deferential to its surroundings, understated in its efficiency," and "an invitation to linger, to savor the fusion of city and bay."
- Broome offers a thoughtful (and sometimes amusing) take on Gehry's "dazzling" Biomuseo in otherwise "culturally bereft" Panama City: the "tumult of color" of its own Bilbao "is a rather simplistic and garish interpretation. But the building, festooned in its fantastical plumage, is a grand gesture" (pix by Baan to boot).
- It seems Gehry is stepping up to the plate when it comes to doing something about labor conditions at his Guggenheim Abu Dhabi that "could serve as a model for doing things right" for workers on other sites.
- Meanwhile, the Guggenheim in New York has expansion plans for a Collection Center, and "considering whether to hold a competition to find an architect."
- Saffron goes into full poetic mode strolling the new segment of the Schuylkill Banks Boardwalk: "Let New York gloat about completing the High Line" - Philly's linear park over the water "might be even more impressive...a joyous journey more than 2,000 feet long...without even the involvement of an architect!" (but do expect some overcrowding).
- An Australian/New Zealand team "pips NY's High Line" to win the inaugural Rosa Barba International Landscape Prize for its Auckland Waterfront project - the "transformation of a decrepit industrial maritime site into a vibrant and diverse public precinct."
- Jacobs offers a lively profile of "the most famous architect you've never heard of": the woman overseeing 1 WTC is "not the kind of architect you'll find spouting metaphors."
- A lively conversation between Blumenfeld and Willis re: the new BWAf project, Built By Women.
- One we couldn't resist (and from the U.K. Government Office for Science, no less): a visual history of the "the ways future cities have been depicted in print and on film over the last 100 years" (images are amazing!).
- Eye-fuls of the winners of the ASLA 2014 Professional and Student Awards (great presentation!).

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-- Foster + Partners: Vieux Port Pavilion, Marseille, France: The transformation was one of a series of projects completed in time for the city's inauguration as European Capital of Culture in 2013. By Kirsten Kiser
-- "Reprogramming The City - Opportunities for Urban Infrastructure," Danish Architecture Centre (DAC), Copenhagen, Denmark: ...investigates a new wave of urban creativity...

Artwashing: Modernism's Revenge: the grit of Brutalist affordable housing units being "artwashed" into appealing nouveau-chic condos in London...It's nothing new, of course. The older term was gentrification...Balfron Tower and Barbican are so heroic in form that all you have to do is...clean them up, and present them as beautiful building blocks for yuppie living...They are washed both literally and perceptually...at least all is being washed by art. By Aaron Betsky- Architect Magazine

Buenos Aires's citizens take to the courts to save the 'Paris of South America' from bulldozers: The city's historic architecture is poorly protected. But as activists succeed in blocking demolitions, tensions are rising...alarmed at the rapid pace of destruction have become a major headache for developers, as well as for the city's authorities...The issue of the city's architectural heritage, long neglected by both the public and authorities, has arrived in Buenos Aires to stay.- Observer (UK)

Future of Denver's Boettcher Concert Hall Uncertain: ...time has not been kind to Boettcher's once-lofty reputation... "Build a Better Boettcher" campaign to save the concert venue from the wrecking ball...enlisted Semple Brown Design, working pro bono, to completely redesign the concert hall's interior...city officials aren't commenting on the Colorado Symphony Orchestra's proposal. -- Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates (1978) [images]- Architectural Record

Architects fight to protect Robin Gibson's iconic brutalist architecture in Brisbane: ...lodged an application for the Queensland Cultural Precinct at Southbank to be heritage-listed before...two 30-storey towers...proposed to be built above the Queensland Performing Arts Centre (1985) and over the Queensland Museum expansion...part of a 20-year cultural precinct masterplan... -- Australian Institute of Architects Queensland Chapter; Cox Rayner, Urbis and Lord Cultural Resources [images]- Architecture & Design (Australia)

Architects unite in open letter to protect Melnikov House: ...a bid to halt plans to turn Moscow's iconic Melnikov House into a museum... "Without restoration the house could be lost within a short time...it is a world heritage site; the entire architecture community are now watching the situation with worry and astonishment..." -- Konstantin Melnikov (1929)- The Calvert Journal (UK)

Top 10 Misconceptions about form-based codes: Several common assumptions about new urban codes fail to

stand up to scrutiny: Form-based coding began in response to the aspirations of a few visionary architects and developers who wanted to build genuine, lasting places...exposed the inabilities of conventional zoning to efficiently address the needs of today's communities. By Tony Perez/Opticos Design Inc. - Better! Cities & Towns (formerly New Urban News)

Foreign design code: how rules work on European streets: ...consists of rules that are clear and at the same time "invisible" to people, which creates a comfortable and non-aggressive environment on the streets. Such an environment does not prohibit and force, but rather directs and guides. Moscow adopted a design code relatively recently... [images]- Architectural Council of Moscow / Archcouncil of Moscow

Metro's Union Station master plan a significant shift: ...we're getting a glimpse - encouraging if opaque - of what its next 75 years might look like...remaking not just the guts of the station...but a swath of downtown surrounding it...promises, in the short term, to bring significant and long-awaited changes...ready to take up a literal and symbolic place in the middle of something new. By Christopher Hawthorne -- John and Donald Parkinson (1939); Gruen Associates; Grimshaw Architects; Mia Lehrer [images]- Los Angeles Times

New Flats Forward plan promotes a shared vision for the long-divided riverfront district: ...intended to show that a bitter, slow-motion war over land use has ended in the waterfront zone along the Cuyahoga River...identifies how industry, nightclubs, residents and visitors can coexist peacefully in the city's historic and visually striking riverfront neighborhood. By Steven Litt- Cleveland Plain Dealer

Monochromatic terminal sheds any pretense about Pier 27 role: James R. Herman Cruise Terminal...a crisply detailed shed of corrugated aluminum...deferential to its surroundings, understated in its efficiency... grassy triangular plaza is the 21st century equivalent of the pier bulkheads...An invitation to linger, to savor the fusion of city and bay. By John King -- KMD Architects; Pfau Long Architecture [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

Panamania: A museum becomes an instant icon for a developing nation while upping the ante for design excellence...dazzling Biomuseo...a collision of riotously colored folded metal canopies...In a culturally bereft city...hopes were high for creating Panama City's own Bilbao...the tumult of color is a rather simplistic and garish interpretation. But there is another way of looking at it...the building, festooned in its fantastical plumage, is a grand gesture. But it has many subtleties too... By Beth Broome -- Frank Gehry; Bruce Mau Design; Ensitu [images - by Iwan Baan]- Architectural Record

What Is Frank Gehry Doing About Labor Conditions in Abu Dhabi? ...behind the scenes, Gehry has been working with a human rights lawyer and the country's state-run development authority...the Guggenheim project has the potential to influence the treatment of workers on other sites: "This could serve as a model for doing things right."- Architectural Record

Guggenheim plans New York expansion ... again: The Collection Center will have a "dynamic public-programming component": ...plans to research "productive and hospitable office space designs", staff will be glad to hear, and it is also considering whether to hold a competition to find an architect. - The Art Newspaper (UK)

Phila.'s new gem: A stroll on the Schuylkill: A new segment of the Schuylkill Banks Boardwalk...right on the water, is set to open: Let New York gloat about completing the High Line. Philadelphia is about to debut a linear park that might be even more impressive...a joyous journey more than 2,000 feet long...without even the involvement of an architect! - the boardwalk owes its existence entirely to necessity. By Inga Saffron [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Australasian project pips NY's High Line to win major landscape award: Australian landscape architecture firm Taylor Cullity Lethlean and New Zealand firm Wraight + Associates have won the inaugural Rosa Barba International Landscape Prize...Auckland Waterfront project...involved the transformation of a decrepit industrial maritime site into a vibrant and diverse public precinct. [images]- ArchitectureAU (Australia)

The Tallest Tower In The U.S. Is Being Built By A Woman: As technical director of 1 World Trade Center, SOM's Nicole Dosso is the most famous architect you've never heard of...not the kind of architect you'll find spouting metaphors. By Karrie Jacobs -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill- Fast Company

NYC, A City Built By Women: Joan Blumenfeld/Perkins+Will and Beverly Willis/Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation discuss the new BWAf project, Built By Women. The first of its kind, the project is accepting nominations to compile a list of 100 NYC structures and built environments designed and/or constructed by women. - WNYC.org

Future cities: a visual history of the future: Report exploring the ways future cities have been depicted in print and on film over the last 100 years. [images]- U.K. Government Office for Science

ASLA 2014 Professional and Student Awards: honor the best in landscape architecture from around the globe. -- Gustafson Guthrie Nichol; Turenscape; Vladimir Djurovic Landscape Architecture; Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates; WagnerHodgson Landscape Architecture; D.I.R.T. Studio; Hershberger Design; Thomas Balsley Associates and Weiss/Manfredi; Z+T Studio; Andropogon Associates; Sasaki Associates; Design Workshop Inc.; GreenWorks; CMG Landscape Architecture; The Cultural Landscape Foundation; etc. [images]- American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

ANN Feature: What Does Recovery Look Like? The current recovery efforts in Japan following the 2011 earthquake and tsunami draw many parallels to our post-Sandy conditions in the Northeast U.S., and should temper our expectations and help illuminate realities of our road ahead. Do they have the answers we seek? By Ilya Azaroff, AIA- ArchNewsNow.com

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