

Today's News - Friday, October 3, 2014

EDITOR'S NOTE: Monday is next week's "floating" no-newsletter day. We'll be back Tuesday, October 7.

- Brook takes an in-depth look at what the future may hold for Yangon, Myanmar: "Emerging from a half century of dictatorship, can it be a model of sustainable, democratic development?" (a totally fascinating read - and cheers to Places Journal's great new look!)
- Arbes and Bethea head to Songdo, South Korea, to explore "the thrills and disappointments of Asia's half-finished 'high-tech utopia' evoking a movie set...a massive blank slate, still able to become whatever the dreamers can convince the realists and the financiers to make it" - and you can hear birds (also a totally fascinating read!).
- Wainwright has a wild time at MVRDV's market hall in Rotterdam: "you'd be forgiven for thinking you'd slipped down a rabbit hole - a hallucinogenic wonder...as though it's wearing bell-bottom trousers," but "it feels like it's trying a bit too hard to be fun."
- Kamin is (mostly) wow'd by the "visually arresting zebra of a building" that is Northeastern Illinois University's El Centro: "I'm glad NIU's leaders didn't hew to the view that such attention-getting architecture is no longer worth building" (though "the lack of refinement is disappointing").
- Gehry's Eisenhower Memorial "clears key hurdle" that represents "a significant milestone" for the project that's been stalled since 2011.
- Zaera Polo, whose appointment in 2012 "caused controversy among graduate students," resigns as dean of Princeton's School of Architecture.
- The San Francisco Institute of Architecture releases a survey report of online architectural education: "enrollments are rapidly increasing. Here are the primary reasons."
- Weekend diversions:
 - Cooper Hewitt announces the lineup of 2014 National Design Week events in NYC and across the U.S.
 - Sokol has a lively Q&A with Dameron re: next week's "must-see show": Dwell on Design, New York (we can't wait!).
 - In Melbourne, Godsell's temporary MPavilion, "inspired by London's Serpentine project," kicks off with a four-moth public program featuring 118 free art, architecture and design events.
 - Tokyo plays host to the Innovative City Forum 2014, an international conference to explore "How will we be living in 20 years?"
 - "SarasotaMOD Week[en]d" will celebrate the Florida region's iconic mid-20th-century architecture (expect lots of Rudolph).
 - Calys explores "@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz" that offers "thought-provoking and compelling commentaries on political dissent and restrictions on freedoms" (link to lotsa pix).
 - In Brisbane, "Hot Modernism: Building Modern Queensland 1945-75" is "both a celebration and eulogy" that "raises much-needed awareness of Queensland's rapidly disappearing postwar buildings."
 - Moore and McEwen each offer very thoughtful takes on "Constructing Worlds: Photography and Architecture in the Modern Age" at London's Barbican ("The battered, beautiful and barely credible" + "Lies, damned lies and photography").
 - Kennicott climbs to the top of the Washington Monument to see a six-acre portrait of an attractive young man staring back at him: "Out of Many, One" looks like "an eccentric landscaping project."

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History of the Present: Yangon: Emerging from a half century of dictatorship, can Myanmar's principal city be a model of sustainable, democratic development? This is a tremendous challenge for a city that has had no experience with comprehensive urban planning in close to a century..."In this region, it's all bad models"...politically connected developers will still try to roll back planning reforms. By Daniel Brook -- Association of Myanmar Architects; François Tainturier; Sithu U Tin [images]- Places Journal

Songdo, South Korea: City of the Future? The thrills and disappointments of Asia's half-finished "high-tech utopia"...The city was built for a future that hasn't yet arrived...wide sidewalks and roads - evoking a movie set - are still waiting for pedestrians and cars...a massive blank slate, still able to become whatever the dreamers can convince the realists and the financiers to make it. By Ross Arbes and Charles Bethea [images]- The Atlantic

Rotterdam's Markthal: Superdutch goes supersized in psychedelic marketplace: ...comes complete with apartments looping over it - some peeping out of giant avocado stones. It's proudly pop, but is it just the Comic Sans of architecture? A four-storey high raspberry tumbles past a tree-sized floret of broccoli...you'd be forgiven for thinking you'd slipped down a rabbit hole...hallucinogenic wonder...as though it's wearing bell-bottom trousers...it feels like it's trying a bit too hard to be fun. By Oliver Wainwright -- MVRDV [images]- Guardian (UK)

El Centro wows with bright colors, visual rhythms: ... a visually arresting zebra of a building...It's the rare Chicago design that engages the highway instead of turning its back on it. It's rarer still because it is a Latino landmark, a symbol of the city's burgeoning Hispanic population that's front and center...I'm glad Northeastern Illinois University's leaders didn't hew to the view...that such attention-getting architecture is no longer worth building...but the lack of refinement is disappointing. By Blair Kamin -- Juan Moreno/JGMA [slide show]- Chicago Tribune

Eisenhower Memorial clears key hurdle on Frank Gehry design: ...granted preliminary approval to a smaller version...10-to-1 vote by the National Capital Planning Commission represented a significant milestone for the tribute...which has been stalled since 2011.- Washington Post

Alejandro Zaera Polo resigns from dean of Architecture School position: He will remain a professor...former dean and professor Stanley T. Allen will serve as acting dean...Zaera-Polo was named dean in May 2012, an appointment that caused controversy among graduate students at the time. -- AZPML- Daily Princetonian

The Online Revolution: Architecture Education At A Crossroad: A Survey Report From The San Francisco Institute of Architecture: ...of architectural distance learning education reveals that approximately 2,000 students of architecture are currently studying for their degrees online...enrollments are rapidly increasing...Here are the primary reasons...- San Francisco Institute of Architecture

Cooper Hewitt Announces Lineup of 2014 National Design Week Events Oct. 4-12: 300-Plus Design-Related Events in New York City and Across the U.S.- Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum

Dwell Editor-in-Chief Amanda Dameron on This Season's Must-See Show: Dwell on Design, New York, October 9-11: This is not only the first East Coast version of the 9-year-old event, but also the culmination of Dwell's transplantation to New York. By David Sokol- Architizer

Inaugural MPavilion inspired by London's Serpentine project will feature 118 free art, architecture and design events: ...an ambitious, four-moth public program...that will activate a temporary Sean Godsell-designed pavilion in Melbourne's Queen Victoria Gardens...opening October 7- Architecture & Design (Australia)

Stacked in style for Archifest: ...back for its eighth run and promises to pack in the crowds. Coincidentally, this year's theme is "Crowd"...organised by the Singapore Institute of Architects at the Marina Bay Sands Events Plaza...until Oct. 11...Archifest Pavilion combines the two winning entries... -- Fong Hoo Cheong/HCF and

Associates; Kelvin Kan/AgFacadesign- Asia One (Singapore)

Innovative City Forum 2014 (ICF 2014): ...international conference to discuss designing the future of cities and urban lifestyles in the context of the question, "How will we be living in 20 years?" Tokyo, Oct. 8 - 10- Mori Memorial Foundation Institute for Urban Strategies

Iconic works by Paul Rudolph to be celebrated in Sarasota, Florida: From October 9–12, the Sarasota Architectural Foundation, will be staging "SarasotaMOD Week[end]"...a celebration of the region's iconic mid-20th-century architecture... [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

"@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz" speaks out on freedom: Alcatraz was selected as the venue...because the artist felt that a place of physical imprisonment was a fitting setting for art that explored political and spiritual loss of freedom...thought-provoking and compelling commentaries on political dissent and restrictions on freedoms. By George Calys [link to images]- San Francisco Examiner

Cold change: Queensland modernism at risk: Both celebration and eulogy, "Hot Modernism: Building Modern Queensland 1945–75" raises much-needed awareness of Queensland's rapidly disappearing postwar buildings...curated as a means of explaining the past, but it also emphasizes the importance of preserving that past... By Kirril Shields [images]- ArchitectureAU (Australia)

The battered, beautiful and barely credible: "Constructing Worlds: Photography and Architecture in the Modern Age": From 1930s America to Pyongyang now, the work of 18 photographers captures the extreme and humdrum nature of buildings...A common quality is a sense that structures are standing in for human life that is momentarily out of shot. Barbican Art Gallery, London. By Rowan Moore -- Office KGDVS [slide show]- Observer (UK)

Lies, damned lies and photography: "Constructing Worlds: Photography and Architecture in the Modern Age"...18 international photographers who present architecture as art, as experience and as anthropology. They are not concerned with honesty...plays on the viewer's assumption that they depict the reality of a building, when in fact each one is a carefully constructed ideal... By Hugh McEwen/Office S&M [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

In Washington, artist Jorge Rodríguez-Gerada creates a giant face on the National Mall: "Out of Many, One"...looks like an eccentric landscaping project; but from the windows of the Washington Monument, more than 500 feet above the Mall, the work reveals an attractive young man...he gives the uncanny impression of looking straight at you. By Philip Kennicott [images]- Washington Post

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 Ilyia Azaroff, AIA- ArchNewsNow.com



-- 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...

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