

Today's News - Friday, November 21, 2014

EDITOR'S NOTE: With the Thanksgiving Day holiday coming up next Thursday and Friday, and many heading into a 2 ½-day work week, we've decided to take a much needed break...we'll be back Monday, December 1. Happy Turkey Day!

- Bernstein is none too happy about supertalls edging ever closer to NYC's GPS: the Empire State Building (perhaps a "no supertall zone" is in order?).
- Capps x 2: Why New Yorkers shouldn't fear the skyscraper boom (unless you're afraid of heights).
- He parses the spate of plans for the Garden Bridge over London's Thames River, Pier 55 on NYC's Hudson River, and the 11th Street Bridge Park over DC's Anacostia River: "are these parks a flashy design fad or a real urban solution?"
- Davidson says Heatherwick's Pier 55 proposal "would add something genuinely public, astonishing, and useful to the public realm," but has concerns as "a private citizen sets the agenda."
- As long as we're talking Manhattan, the South Street Seaport development plan has been revised to address its critics: the tower is shorter, and there will be some affordable housing, but it is "likely to undergo more revisions given the initial negative reaction."
- Urist offers a most thoughtful take on how "architects are branching out beyond the realm of planning and design and entering national discussions about school safety" - and community healing - in light of Columbine and Sandy Hook (posted shortly before the shooting at Florida State University yesterday).
- Moonan, on a brighter note, finds the newly reopened Musée Picasso in Paris to be "a quiet triumph of a project - a minimalist, glowing modern interior inside a stunning historic shell - is ravishingly beautiful," designed by Bodin, "probably the most talented architect you have never heard of."
- Russell, on the other hand, finds Piano's makeover of the Harvard Art Museums to be "variously elusive, alluring, and insistent - the difficulties of the project are most evident on the museum's disjunctive exterior," but inside, it extends "a long-overdue welcome to the public."
- Meanwhile, Piano wins big in Des Moines, beating out a stellar shortlist to design convenience store chain Kum & Go's HQ (no design - yet).
- Godsell's MPavilion in Melbourne "has been called a treasure box, a flower and a butterfly. Yet at first glance it looks like a small sheep-shearing shed. The pavilion's beauty lies in its movement."
- Eyefuls of the designs by 10 firms from the U.K. and Czech Republic who won the €400 million The Oaks Prague development competition.
- McGuigan makes the case that "if architects are seeking a bigger role on the world stage, the profession needs to better reflect the world - and diversity should begin in the schools."
- 3XN's Nielsen, on a team "advising the Danish government on how it can improve design education, draws parallels with the situation in the UK."
- "Does motherhood + architecture = no career?" (the "proverbial elephant in the room").
- Now the site is in a new developer's hands, it looks like Calatrava won't be seeing the \$11.3 million he's owed for design work on the Chicago Spire.
- A good reason to head to the Sunshine State: Design Miami/ 2014, where Marino will receive the inaugural Design Visionary Award, and Muecke is creating the annual pavilion.
- Weekend diversions:
 - Davidson finds disappointment in MoMA's "Uneven Growth": "pragmatic microremedies, utopian ambitions, and razzle-dazzle renderings tinge the project with condensation rather than optimism. If this is the best a research institution can come up with, then the future of cities is dark."
 - Paletta cheers CCNY's "Sagrada Família - Gaudí's Unfinished Masterpiece" that offers "the best argument for continued work" - it may not "settle the debate" or "convince you of its argument, but it's well worth a look."
 - Dixon, Brown, and Gillham's "Urban Design for an Urban Century" offers much that is "worth mulling over."
 - Davies' novel of the year for urbanists: Campbell's "The Planner" is a "witty and insightful" tome "overflows with insight and acute observation about cities, urban economics, bureaucracy and, the pretensions and travails of town planning. Urbanists will love this book."
 - A (luscious!) excerpt from Locktov and Christopher's "Dream of Venice" (short of being there, we can't wait to thumb through the pages...).

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ANN Feature: Op-Ed: Top of the Heap: Since 1931, the Empire State Building has been New York City's GPS, but with a spate of supertalls obscuring the building, it could become hard to tell Manhattan from Kowloon or Pudong or Shinjuku or Canary Wharf. By Fred A. Bernstein - ArchNewsNow

There's Nothing to Fear From New York's Next Skyscraper Boom: Except for people afraid of heights, no one has any reason to worry about the coming wave of new towers...acknowledging that increasing the supply - even high in the sky - can boost fortunes for everyone is crucial to the debate. By Kriston Capps -- Jean Nouvel; Christian de Portzamparc; Rafael Viñoly Architects; Herzog & de Meuron [images] - CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

Why You Keep Seeing Plans for Off-Shore Parks: Building over-water park infrastructure is one approach for dense cities. But are these parks a flashy design fad or a real urban solution? ...these three proposals don't all entirely convey the egalitarian good will of free and equitable civic infrastructure...11th Street Bridge Park in Washington, D.C., faces the most obstacles up front; it's also the bridge park least geared toward the wealthy. By Kriston Capps - - Thomas Heatherwick/Heatherwick Studio; OMA+OLIN [images] - CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

Barry Diller's Plan for a Floating Park Has de Blasio Channeling His Inner Bloomberg: ...proposal would add something genuinely public, astonishing, and useful to the public realm...But the plan also dramatizes how difficult it is to create a city where such urban bonbons aren't all clustered in one zip code...now the mayor can only sit back and applaud while a private citizen sets the agenda...debate will be heated, tortured, technical, and long. By Justin Davidson -- Thomas Heatherwick - New York Magazine

Hughes Corp. responds to South Street Seaport tower criticisms: ...revealed that its long-awaited revisions to the firm's Seaport development plan still includes a tower, and now meets another administration goal: affordable housing...The tower was originally 650 feet and it has been reduced to 494...likely to undergo more revisions given the initial negative reaction... -- SHoP Architects - Downtown Express (NYC)

The Architecture of Loss: How to Redesign After a School Shooting: ...architects are branching out beyond the realm of planning and design and are entering national discussions about school safety...Columbine and Sandy Hook communities have taken different approaches to rebuilding their schools and commemorating those who were lost...Yet both schools illustrate how architecture and design can begin the process of healing. By Jacoba Urist -- Svigals + Partners; Davis Partnership - The Atlantic

The Musée Picasso Reopens in Paris: Jean-Francois Bodin's unassuming but arduous renovation of the beloved museum finally reaches completion...a quiet triumph of a project...a minimalist, glowing modern interior inside a stunning historic shell - is ravishingly beautiful. By Wendy Moonan -- bodin & associés architectes [images] - Architectural Record

After 17 Years, Renzo Piano's Overhauled Harvard Art Museums Open: To accommodate a daunting array of competing programmatic agendas on a too-small site and survive a tortured history...a design that is variously elusive, alluring, and insistent...the difficulties of the project are most evident on the museum's disjunctive exterior...But step into the interior Calderwood court...and see Piano delicately blur the line between old and

new...extend a long-overdue welcome to the public. By James S. Russell -- Payette; Kulapat Yantrasast/wHY Architects [images]- Architectural Record

Innovative architect picked for Kum & Go HQ: ...Renzo Piano Building Workshop to design its new downtown Des Moines headquarters...because of the firm's ability to emphasize collaboration, transparency and light...was one of six internationally-known architecture firms considered...Experts said the list shows Krause is aiming to create a landmark building.- Des Moines Register (Iowa)

MPavilion Finds a Home in Australia: Melbourne Stakes Its Claim as the City of Architecture and Design: It has been called a treasure box, a flower and a butterfly. Yet at first glance [it] looks like a small sheep-shearing shed...follows the lead of the Serpentine Gallery...The pavilion's beauty lies in its movement. By Clarissa Sebag-Montefiore -- Sean Godsell [images]- Wall Street Journal

Ten Practices Selected to Design €400 Million "Oaks Prague" Scheme: ...will join the team of Edward Durrell Stone Jr and Associates, who masterplanned the development...and John Thompson & Partners, who developed a pattern book and style guide... -- Coffey Architects; Duggan Morris Architects; Eldridge Smerin; Hall McKnight; Haptic; John Pardey Architects; McGarry-Moon Architects; ADR; AI Design; Cigler Marani [images]- ArchDaily

Big Ideas on Campus: Architecture education must change to keep up with the evolving profession: ...if architects are seeking a bigger role on the world stage, the profession needs to better reflect the world - and diversity should begin in the schools. By Cathleen McGuigan -- Mohsen Mostafavi; Denise Scott Brown; Adèle Naudé Santos; Amale Andraos; Odile Decq- Architectural Record

Design education - suggestions from Denmark: 3XN's Kim Herforth Nielsen is part of a team of designers advising the Danish government on how it can improve design education in the country. He shares some of his thinking...and draws parallels with the situation in the UK.- Design Week (UK)

Does motherhood + architecture = no career? In the third and final response to the Parlour industry surveys, Sandra Kaji O'Grady examines the "proverbial elephant in the room": the impact of children on women's architecture careers.- ArchitectureAU (Australia)

Another Spire victim: Santiago Calatrava: ...received much praise for his twisting design of the unbuilt 2,000-foot Chicago Spire. What he won't receive is much money for his work on the failed project... owed \$11.3 million for design work...But Related Midwest, the Chicago-based developer that now controls the property, won't pay the bill...- Crain's Chicago Business

Design Miami/ 2014: December 3-7: Peter Marino named inaugural recipient of Design Visionary award. Jonathan Muecke to create the Design Miami/ 2014 Pavilion.- Design Miami/

MoMA's Schemes for Fixing Urban Problems Are Either Too Dainty or Too Sweeping: "Uneven Growth: Tactical Urbanisms for Expanding Megacities"...pragmatic microremedies, utopian ambitions, and razzle-dazzle renderings...tinge MoMA's project with condescension rather than optimism...If this is the best a research institution can come up with after more than a year of study, then the future of cities is dark. By Justin Davidson -- Pedro Gadanho; MAP Office; Network Architecture Lab, Columbia University; Superpool; Atelier d'Architecture Autogérée; Nlé; Zoohaus/Inteligencia Colectiva; URBZ; Ensemble Studio; MIT-POPlab; Situ Studio; Cohabitation Strategies; RUA Arquitectos; ETH Zurich MAS Urban Design [images]- New York Magazine

Beyond Gaudi: "Sagrada Família - Gaudi's Unfinished Masterpiece" at the City College of New York...offers the strongest link possible between his original design and subsequent work - and likely the best argument for continued work. It's unclear whether this will settle the debate, but it offers a fresh angle for its consideration...may not convince you of its argument, but it's well worth a look... By Anthony Paletta -- George Ranalli [images]- Metropolis Magazine

13 NYC People, Buildings and Events that Shaped the World: "Urban Design for an Urban Century": What David Dixon, Lance Jay Brown, and Oliver Gillham have to say about urban planning, architecture and New York City are worth mulling over..."The place that many people once considered the symbol of density's failures" - a.k.a., New York City - "now sends the message: density works"...- Commercial Observer (NYC)

My 'Novel of the year' for urbanists (and economists, and...): Anyone interested in cities or the workings of government will likely be fascinated by Tom Campbell's witty and insightful take on getting ahead in London..."The Planner"...overflows with insight and acute observation about cities, urban economics, bureaucracy and, in particular, the pretensions and travails of town planning. Urbanists will love this book. By Alan Davies- Crikey (Australia)

"Dream of Venice": ...a compilation of images and text by extraordinary writers and notables, edited by JoAnn Locktov...This large format picture book captures the mysterious allure of the ancient floating city with the evocative photography of Charles Christopher [excerpt w/images]- GoNOMAD.com

-- Atelier Peter Zumthor: Vals Thermal Baths, Vals, Switzerland: ...might be one of the most iconic buildings in Swiss contemporary architecture. By Pol Martin
-- What's On? Architectural Exhibitions, November 2014 edition

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