

Today's News - Monday, January 19, 2015

EDITOR'S NOTE: Due to technical difficulties beyond our control we were unable to post on Friday - sorry 'bout that. And tomorrow is this week's "floating" no-newsletter day - we'll be back Wednesday, January 21.

- We are so, so saddened by the news that Architecture for Humanity HQ, which "put humanitarian design on the map," has closed its doors. Pogrebin, King, and Stott weigh in with why's, wherefore's, and reactions.
- Bernstein broils (again) about the "supersizing" of Manhattan with "supertall" towers "sprouting like beanstalks, costing its citizens precious sunshine and air," and "making the revised skyline the physical manifestation of New York's income disparities."
- Buntin lays bare "the myth of gentrification: It's extremely rare and not as bad for the poor as you think."
- Moore minces no words about what he thinks of support by London's mayor for a luxury high-rise development that "illustrates his contempt for localism," and "puts to an end the patient dialogue taking place until now."
- Wainwright is not so wow'd by Nouvel's new Paris concert hall: it's "a tyrannical new mothership" that's landed "among a zoo of other architectural misfits," and "effectively channels the last two decades of architecture's more extravagant tendencies into one great lump" (ouch!).
- Altabe isn't at all impressed with Libeskind's International Congress Xperience in Mons, Belgium: his "statement about 'contrasting geometric forms' is an understatement. This thing is a poke in the eye."
- The cost for Kuma's V&A Dundee museum almost double - but hopes are high that the Scottish government and private donors will come to its rescue.
- Heathcote is heartened by efforts to rescue "London's best architectural joke" from the wrecking ball. "The fight is on to save a rare reminder of hubris and humor expressed in architecture."
- Hawthorne is disheartened by the demolition of Ray Bradbury's house (by Mayne, no less): "it was not a distinguished work of architecture. But there's no doubt that it was a cultural site of real importance in Los Angeles" (hopeful news for a Google diner, though).
- Lydon tackles tactical urbanism by way of MoMA's "Uneven Growth" (a big-picture take, not a review).
- Welton cheers Davis Brody Bond's 9/11 museum: despite the difficult design process, "the architects seized a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to design a museum that channels the site's sadness and loss into something more positive."
- Iovine (mostly) cheers the Cooper Hewitt's makeover that makes the museum "more engrossing than ever."
- Five finalists vie to design the Sydney Modern (no local talent in the running).
- Brussat congratulates Schwarz for winning the Driehaus Prize (and, unsurprisingly, berates Kennicott and Lamster's takes).
- One we couldn't resist: a makeover of the game Monopoly called "Austerity," with "rules duly bent to favor those of privileged descent."

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A Leader in Socially Conscious Architecture Is Closing Amid Financial Woes: "I don't think Architecture for Humanity going out of business is going to stop the people dedicated to this work from doing this work"...there is no question that they put humanitarian design on the map"...details of what hastened the group's end were unclear. By Robin Pogrebin -- Cameron Sinclair; Kate Stohr; Matt Charney; John Cary; Public Architecture - New York Times

Architecture for Humanity shut; nonprofit helped disaster victims: The abrupt demise followed a year of retooling by the organization... By John King -- Margie O'Driscoll; Clark Manus/Heller Manus Architects; Cameron Sinclair; Kate Stohr; John Peterson/Public Architecture - San Francisco Chronicle

Architecture For Humanity Closes San Francisco Headquarters: ...a number of chapters have made it clear that they intend to continue operations... By Rory Stott -- Cameron Sinclair; Kate Stohr - ArchDaily

Supersizing Manhattan: New Yorkers rage against the dying of the light: 'Supertall' buildings are sprouting like beanstalks, costing its citizens precious sunshine and air...The real generator of form now is the winner-take-all economy...making the revised skyline the physical manifestation of New York's income disparities...Think of it as the new Upstairs, Downstairs, but on an urban scale. By Fred A. Bernstein - Guardian (UK)

The Myth of Gentrification: It's extremely rare and not as bad for the poor as you think: ...so-called gentrifying neighborhoods appear to experience less displacement than nongentrifying neighborhoods. By John Buntin - Slate

The last thing east London needs is another seven towers: Boris Johnson's support for a luxury high-rise development on Bishopsgate Goodsyards illustrates his contempt for localism...puts to an end the patient dialogue taking place until now. By Rowan Moore - Observer (UK)

Philharmonie de Paris: Jean Nouvel's €390m spaceship crash-lands in France: ...gargantuan new concert hall is two years late, cost three times what it should, and its architect even snubbed its opening...a tyrannical new mothership...it finds solace here among a zoo of other architectural misfits...effectively channels the last two decades of architecture's more extravagant tendencies into one great lump. By Oliver Wainwright - Guardian (UK)

When an architectural style disserves a building: There's a place for deconstructivism...Daniel Libeskind's deconstructivist style seems out of place at Belgium's new convention center - the International Congress Xperience building. A convention center doesn't seem the place for rebellion... [his] statement about "contrasting geometric forms" is an understatement. This thing is a poke in the eye. By Joan Altabe - Examiner

Costs balloon on Kengo Kuma's V&A Dundee outpost: ...budget for the competition-winning waterfront scheme has risen from £49 million to £80.1million and the ambitious museum project is not expected to open its doors to the public until 2018. -- cre8architecture; Arup [images] - The Architects' Journal (UK)

Demolition ball threatens quirky survivor of London's East End: Battle begins to save London's best architectural joke: ...symbol of plucky resistance - the two-storey house that survives in the middle of a pompous classical façade - is under threat. The fight is on to save a rare reminder of hubris and humour expressed in architecture. Edwin Heathcote -- Thomas Jay Evans (1927); BuckleyGrayYeoman - Financial Times (UK)

Bulldoze first, apologize later: a true L.A. landmark: ...canary-yellow 1937 house...where the writer Ray Bradbury lived for more than 50 years was being knocked down...it was not a distinguished work of architecture. But there's no doubt that it was a cultural site of real importance in Los Angeles... By Christopher Hawthorne -- Thom Mayne/Morphosis; Armet & Davis (1957); Hodgetts & Fung [images] - Los Angeles Times

Part One: Should MoMA Tout Tactical Urbanism(s) as a Solution to Uneven Growth? How do art institutions and designers take academic exercises and put them into action? Can they? Should they? Have they? ...a definition of Tactical Urbanism. ["Uneven Growth: Tactical Urbanisms For Expanding Megacities"] By Mike Lydon/Street Plans Collaborative - PLANetizen

[Finding Good Below Ground Zero: September 11 Memorial Museum: ...design process - with its unending public hearings, conflicting opinions and countless agendas - was anything but easy...Admirably, the architects refused to lose sight of their purpose...\[they\] seized a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to design a museum that channels the site's sadness and loss into something more positive. By J. Michael Welton -- Davis Brody Bond \[images\]- Huffington Post](#)

[Designing for Past and Future: The updated Cooper Hewitt museum makes 21st-century technology mesh with a Neo-Georgian building...more engrossing than ever... By Julie V. Iovine -- Gluckman Mayner Architects; Beyer Blinder Belle; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Local Projects - Wall Street Journal](#)

[Art Gallery of New South Wales narrows architecture firms down to five finalists for Sydney Modern: No Sydney firms in the running... -- Kerry Hill Architects; Sean Goodsell Architects; Kengo Kuma and Associates; RMA Architects; SANAA- WA Today \(Australia\)](#)

[Driehaus Prize for David M. Schwarz: Congratulations to the classical architect...Philip Kennicott, probably would have been tooting Schwarz's horn for years if his work had been modernist...Mark Lamster...had a few lame remarks to celebrate Schwarz's prize... By David Brussat- Architecture Here and There](#)

[Gaming the System: Monopoly Gets Updated for 2015 in "Austerity": ...an update of Monopoly, but instead of robber barons and railroads, there are global financiers and the Shard...with rules duly bent to favor those of privileged descent. \[images\]- Architizer](#)



[-- "Friedensreich Hundertwasser - 1928-2000" by Wieland Schmied: an inspirational portrait of one of the most prolific artists of the 20th century...his sustainable principles are highly compelling and should warrant consideration by architects today.](#)

[-- What's On? Architectural Exhibitions, January 2015 edition: Russian avant-garde, Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin; Studio Mumbai, Bordeaux; Highrise City Frankfurt, DAM; "Architecture in Uniform," MAXXI, Rome; National Building Museum, Washington, DC; "After Hurricane Sandy - Rebuild by Design," Aedes am Pfefferberg, Berlin](#)

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