

Today's News - Friday, February 27, 2015

- ANN feature: Architectural Resources Group's Farneth explains why the firm took an "anti-object design approach" for the Huntington Library's new education and visitor center that "fit gracefully and quietly" into the historic estate and landscape.
- Ottawans seem none too pleased with the winning design for an "immense" National Memorial to the Victims of Communism that is "bleak and oppressive" (and little to do with Canada's own history).
- Lamster lays out lessons to be learned from Houston's Buffalo Bayou for Dallas's stagnating Trinity River project: "The explanation begins with accountability. Who, exactly, is in charge of the Trinity Corridor project? There is no ready answer."
- Stott looks beyond the "jovial name-calling" of the Nine Elms Bridge competition, and sees something darker: the "designs are symptomatic of an unhealthy approach to wealth that London seems unable (or perhaps unwilling) to address," and hopes the judges "have the good sense to select one of the more demure entries in the contest - so that at the very least this inequality is not quite so in your face."
- Anderton tackles "zombie urbanism" and "what happens when residential real estate is treated like a safe deposit box" with a slew of notables, including Zellner, Sudjic, and Kwartler.
- Martin offers a biting, scathing (and hilarious) take on London "privatizing itself to death" with "a set of improbable sex toys poking gormlessly into the air," built by "pinstriped investors reeking of lunch" (and architecture is "drunk, as usual, on one gin and tonic").
- Meanwhile, grand plans for a new Crystal Palace in south London just bit the dust (to the relief of many).
- Lamenting the demise of the Birmingham Central Library just as Brutalist public buildings "come back into fashion": it could have become a symbol of the city's "post-war prosperity, as it blends into another brighter period."
- Goodwin gives us a great look at "7 pioneers of Africa's architectural awakening."
- Hume cheers Ryerson University's "spectacular" new student center by Snøhetta and Zeidler that "lets users reshape the space."
- An in-depth look at Attia's claim that Google stole his Engineered Architecture: "as Flux Factory looks to change the construction industry, are they building on someone else's ideas?"
- Call for entries: ULI 2015 Global Awards for Excellence for outstanding development projects.
- Weekend diversions:
 - Lubell x 2: he lauds "Sink or Swim" at the Annenberg Space for Photography that uses "the visceral power of photography to pull our emotions into the conversation."
 - He has a lively Q&A with Heatherwick re: his Hammer show, his outsider approach, and where he's heading now.
 - Speaking of which, the Hammer Museum unveils Maltzan's "sweeping concrete pedestrian bridge" that "forms a dramatic backdrop to an equally thrilling 'Provocations: The Architecture and Design of Heatherwick Studio.'"
 - "Shigeru Ban: Humanitarian Architecture" continues its road trip at the Dallas Center for Architecture.
 - Eye-fuls from "Hélène Binet: Fragments of Light" at the Woodbury University Hollywood Gallery (WUHO), Los Angeles.
- Brussat gives two thumbs-ups to Mehaffy and Salingaros's "Design for a Living Planet": the "slender yet profound volume" doesn't "mince words when it comes to pointing the fickle finger of blame at modernism - especially its architectural and planning establishments."
- "Me and My Moulton" is an Oscar-nominated animated short that shows what it's like to be a 7-year-old with modernist architect parents."

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INSIGHT: Speaking with a Quiet Voice: Some notes on designing the Huntington Education and Visitor Center, San Marino, California. By Stephen J. Farneth, FAIA, LEED AP [images]- ArchNewsNow

An Immodest Proposal Rankles a Capital Known for Modesty: A proposal to build an immense memorial in Ottawa to the global victims of Communism has prompted protests from architects, the mayor and the country's chief justice..."bleak and oppressive"... -- ABSTRAKT Studio Architecture [image]- New York Times

What Dallas can learn from Houston's Buffalo Bayou for the Trinity River project: Dallasites may rightly wonder how their neighbor to the south has managed to achieve so much, so quickly, while plans in their own city have stagnated. The explanation begins with accountability...Who, exactly, is in charge of the Trinity Corridor project? There is no ready answer. By Mark Lamster -- Jane Thompson; Guy Hagstette; Kevin Shanley/SWA Group; Reed Hilderbrand; Larry Speck/Page; Lake|Flato [images]- Dallas Morning News

London's Battersea Bridge Competition is a Symbol of a Divided City: ...unveiling of the 74 entries to the Nine Elms to Pimlico Bridge competition...beyond all this jovial name-calling, these designs are symptomatic of an unhealthy approach to wealth that London seems unable (or perhaps unwilling) to address...all we can hope is that...judges have the good sense to select one of the more demure entries in the contest - so that at the very least this inequality is not quite so in your face. By Rory Stott- ArchDaily

DnA/Frances Anderton: Has 'Zombie Urbanism' Gripped the Global City? What happens when residential real estate is treated like a safe deposit box? DnA explores the urban impact of global investment in high-end homes - in London, New York and L.A. -- Peter Zellner/AECOM; Deyan Sudjic/Design Museum; Matthew Lasner; Michael Kwartler; etc.- KCRW (Los Angeles)

The city that privatised itself to death: 'London is now a set of improbable sex toys poking gormlessly into the air': Bit by bit, the capital has been handed over to pinstriped investors 'reeking of lunch'. Are Londoners resigned to a grey cloud of commerce, or can they reclaim a hopeful, collective future? Architecture, you're drunk, as usual, on one gin and tonic. By Ian Martin- Guardian (UK)

Scrapped: Crystal Palace rebuild proposals ditched: Bromley Council has confirmed it has ripped up its deal with Chinese developer ZhongRong Group..."Now, we will meet with community stakeholders as we have done all the way along this process to review options going

forward" ... -- David Chipperfield; Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners; Zaha Hadid Architects/Anish Kapoor - The Architects' Journal (UK)

Birmingham is demolishing its brutalist public buildings – just as they come back into fashion: Birmingham Central Library is hard, blocky and exquisitely realised...in the 40 years since its opening...has become symbolic of a grey, concreted vision...that the city council is keen to shed...it could have become a symbol of Birmingham's post-war prosperity, as it blends into another brighter period. By Josh Allen - John Madin - CityMetric (UK)

7 Pioneers of Africa's Architectural Awakening: ...a growth in native practices and a more sensible, sensitive approach from foreign organizations has led to the rise of architectural groups creating buildings which learn from and improve Africa. By Dario Goodwin -- David Adjaye/ Adjaye Associates; Francis Kéré/Kéré Architecture; Kunlé Adeyemi/NLÉ; Mokena Makeka/Makeka Design Lab; Mphethi Morojele/MMA Architects; MASS Design Group; Urko Sanchez Architects [images]- ArchDaily

Ryerson University Student Learning Centre lets users reshape the space: ...a glimpse into a future where architecture is the start of a process that users must finish...one of those rare structures that asks not to be copied, but which will give permission to future generations to break with the past and discover their own needs - and their own architecture. By Christopher Hume -- Snohetta; Zeidler Partnership [images]- Toronto Star

The moonshot that missed: Did Google X steal this famous architect's life's work? For decades, Eli Attia has been filling notebook after notebook with ideas for a new way to think about constructing buildings...Now, he says they've stolen it. Engineered Architecture...a bold idea, a brilliant architect, and an ambitious plan to reshape one of the world's fundamental industries...as Flux Factory looks to change the construction industry, are they building on someone else's ideas?- The Verge

Call for entries: ULI 2015 Global Awards for Excellence: honoring outstanding development projects in both the private and public sectors; deadline: March 16- Urban Land Institute (ULI)

Water Water Everywhere: ...most of us are aware of the imminent, and awesome, threats of climate change. But the warnings, charts, and speeches headlining this debate rarely hit home the way "Sink or Swim: Designing For a Sea Change" at the Annenberg Space for Photography, does...employs the visceral power of photography...to pull our emotions into the conversation, painting a grim, astonishing picture of our water-dominated future while also taking us on a vivid, personal tour of both initial coping strategies and long-term solutions. By Sam Lubell -- Frances Anderton [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Q+A> Thomas Heatherwick talks about architecture, being an outsider, and his new exhibition "Provocations: The Architecture and Design of Heatherwick Studio" at the Hammer Museum. By Sam Lubell [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Hammer Museum Unveils Heatherwick Studio Retrospective and New Michael Maltzan Bridge: ...a sweeping concrete pedestrian bridge...forms a dramatic backdrop to an equally thrilling..."Provocations: The Architecture and Design of Heatherwick Studio" dares viewers to let logic guide them to creative solutions to even the most pedestrian of problems. [images]- Architectural Record

"Shigeru Ban: Humanitarian Architecture": ...organized by the Aspen Art Museum and previously seen as a part of the Prospect New Orleans project; at the Dallas Center for Architecture- Dallas Center for Architecture

"Hélène Binet: Fragments of Light" at the Woodbury University Hollywood Gallery (WUHO), Los Angeles: Binet is the 2015 recipient of the Julius Shulman Institute Excellence in Photography Award...For 25 years, she has photographed the work of leading contemporary and historical architects... [images]- Julius Shulman Institute

"Design for a Living Planet: Settlement, Science and the Human Future" by Michael Mehaffy and Nikos Salingaros: ...slender yet profound volume brings science into the equation...authors do not mince words when it comes to pointing the fickle finger of blame at modernism – especially its architectural and planning establishments...an indispensable roadmap to understanding the ordered complexities society must master to survive. By David Brussat- Architecture Here and There

Oscar-nominated short film shows what it's like to have modernist architect parents: "Me and My Moulton" is a short film by Academy Award-Winning director Torill Kove which looks at the life and struggles of a seven year old girl and her siblings when they have "hopelessly unconventional" parents. [video trailer]- Architecture & Design (Australia)



COBE + Transform: Porsgrunn Maritime Museum, Porsgrunn, Norway: The new saw-toothed museum manages to fit into its surroundings, by mirroring the shapes of the town's characteristic gabled roofs, while at the same time appearing contemporary with its abstract shape and aluminum facades. By Ulf Meyer [images]

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