

Today's News - Monday, March 9, 2015

- ArcSpace brings us Meyer's travel guide to Taiwan's cities, where "architectural qualities do not reveal themselves at first glance - you have to know where to look."
- New research discovers "a new law of physics explaining how people interact in large groups - findings that architects could use to design safer and more efficient buildings."
- King gives thumbs-up - and down - to Heatherwick/BIG plans for Google HQ, "a blend of the visionary and the vacuous, at once innovative and self-absorbed."
- Loth ponders what price Chicago would pay to land the Obama Presidential Library in a land-swap for Olmsted property: "Park advocates say such a deal is like amputating an arm and giving back a glove."
- Kamin x 2: he continues his call for "modesty" in any park land used for the Obama library: while it "represents a huge potential economic boost in parts of the city that desperately need it - why does the library need so much land?"
- He cheers ESI's 400-foot-tall map on 300 S. Wacker Drive that shows "how bold graphic design can help freshen a tired modernist building" while being "respectful" of its "sober modernist language."
- Birnbaum expounds on the national significance of the Frick's Russell Page garden, and what considerations the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission should take into account: "the physical and historical context would be given equal weight in design decision-making, and holistic expansion plans would acknowledge the invaluable and irreplaceable landscape that is at stake."
- Litt, on a brighter note, cheers Cleveland's Public Square renovation, "the most visible example yet of the city's desire" to make "the urban core more walkable and livable" (jackhammers may "never sound pleasant. But in this case, the racket will be welcome").
- Heathcote x 2: a most eloquent ode to the "hidden language of the streets," where postboxes, pavements, and signage are "markers of urban identity as potent as the great monuments" - though now, "the architecture of security and surveillance shows how intimately street furniture reflects the changing nature of public space."
- He has a cheery conversation with Scheeren re: his "spectacular" design for the China Guardian Auctions building in Beijing that promises to be "an extreme version of what all the major auction houses are trying to do: reposition themselves as cultural and lifestyle destinations."
- Foster "bags" the signature stadium job for Qatar's 2022 FIFA World Cup: "The environmental strategies will be of international interest to the sporting public as well as those concerned with the architecture"
- Piano, Kamin, and others talk about building tall: "Are skyscrapers simply about vanity, or are there practical and even spiritual reasons why we want to build so high?"
- Eyefuls of Melbourne's newest apartment tower that presents the portrait of a historic Aboriginal leader on two façades, and a heat map on the other two.
- Davies finds much to like about Melbourne's ARM-designed portrait building, but wishes it "shared a little more DNA" with RMIT's Godsell-designed Design Hub: "One's curving, grungy and literary; the other is austere, formal and perfect - they don't 'talk' to each other."
- Saffron cheers Philly's Fishtown "having its Williamsburg moment" with plans to transform a former brewery into an Adjmi-designed boutique hotel, by a developer "in tune with Fishtown's arty, DIY, tattoo-and-vintage-loving culture."
- Wainwright weighs in on the London collective Assemble, known for its for pop-ups, "hitting the big time...And they've done all this without even being qualified architects" (are we the only ones who find that a bit worrisome?).
- Altabe sees a dark side in a Chinese company using a 3D printer to manufacture "mansions en masse": "selfsameness can be had with the flick of a switch. There's a certain uh-oh in all this, don't you think?"
- Hosey debunks six myths of sustainable design: "Green building isn't as difficult as you might think."
- UNESCO Director General condemns the bulldozing of Nimrud in Iraq by ISIS: "The deliberate destruction of cultural heritage constitutes a war crime."
- Call for entries: CTBUH 2015 Tall Building Awards (no fee!).

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Travel Guide: Taiwan: Taipei City, Taichung City, Kaohsiung: The cities impress; not because of their beauty, but because of their vitality. The architectural qualities do not reveal themselves at first glance - you have to know where to look. By Ulf Meyer -- C.Y. Lee; Toyo Ito; Richard Rogers; Uheiji Nagano (1919); Chen Chi-Kwan/I.M. Pei (1963); Wang Ta-hung; Yang Cho-Cheng; Norihiko Dan; Jay W. Chiu/Chuang Hsueh-neng; Kuo Ying-chao/Bio Architecture Formosana; Er-Pan Kao; LIAO Weili/Ambi Studio; Justus Dahinden; Kris Yao/Artech; OMA/Artech/Projekt; Kerry Hill/TIA Architects [images]

Designing for a crowd eased by new discovery: University of Minnesota discovered a new law of physics explaining how people interact in large groups...findings that architects could use to design safer and more efficient buildings. - Minnesota Daily (University of Minnesota)

Google plan for Mountain View campus shuns walls, roofs, reality: ...a blend of the visionary and the vacuous, at once innovative and self-absorbed. There's a lot to like...Thinking outside the box is great. But that doesn't mean we need to blow up the box. Sometimes we just need to make it better. By John King -- Thomas Heatherwick; BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group; CMG Landscape Architecture; Sherwood Design Engineers [images] - San Francisco Chronicle

What price must Chicago pay for Obama library? The city promises a "park positive" swap of other land in exchange for the Olmsted property, but has not said where that would be. Park advocates say such a deal is like amputating an arm and giving back a glove. By Renée Loth - Boston Globe

Obama library footprint for Olmsted parks should aspire for modesty: The celebration of his legacy represents a huge potential economic boost in parts of the city that desperately need it...Friends of the Parks, which has threatened a lawsuit to keep the Obama library out of Washington and Jackson parks. is clearly fighting an uphill political

battle...Why does the library need so much land? By Blair Kamin- Chicago Tribune

Mural helps put riverfront high-rise on the map: ...400-foot-tall map on the river-facing wall of 300 S. Wacker Drive helps show how bold graphic design can help freshen a tired modernist building...by virtue of its palette and proportions, is respectful of the building's sober modernist language. By Blair Kamin -- ESI Design [image]- Chicago Tribune

Comment> On the national significance of the Frick's Russell Page Garden: ...all eyes will be on the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission...should examine whether the garden has "acquired historic significance"...it would follow that the physical and historical context would be given equal weight in design decision-making, and holistic expansion plans would acknowledge the invaluable and irreplaceable landscape that is at stake. By Charles Birnbaum/The Cultural Landscape Foundation- The Architect's Newspaper

Public Square renovation signals a paradigm shift for public space in Cleveland: ...the most visible example yet of the city's desire to reinforce the recent surge in downtown's residential population by making the urban core more walkable and livable...Jackhammers never sound pleasant. But in this case...the racket will be welcome. By Steven Litt -- LAND Studio; James Corner Field Operations [images]- Cleveland Plain Dealer

Hidden language of the streets: Postboxes, pavements and signage define our cities but often fade into invisibility: ...markers of urban identity as potent as the great monuments...inventions to improve everyday life has given way to the architecture of security and surveillance in which every citizen is seen as a potential terrorist. It is a radical reversal of the nature of the public realm but it shows how intimately street furniture reflects the changing nature of public space. By Edwin Heathcote- Financial Times (UK)

China Guardian Auctions building rises in Beijing: ...a celebration of the emerging hybrid nature of what art space has become: ...contains a hotel and large areas of "cultural space", it is an extreme version of what all the major auction houses are trying to do: reposition themselves as cultural and lifestyle destinations...design is spectacular...Edwin Heathcote -- Buro Ole Scheeren- Financial Times (UK)

Foster bags Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup stadium job: ...the centrepiece...80,000-seat Lusail stadium..."The environmental strategies...will also be of international interest to the sporting public as well as those concerned with the architecture." -- Foster + Partners; Populous; Arup [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

The Why Factor: Skyscrapers: why do we like to build tall and be high -- what is it about standing tall and defying gravity that matters so much? Are Skyscrapers simply about vanity or are there practical and even spiritual reasons why we want to build so high? -- Renzo Piano; Blair Kamin; Daniel Safarik/Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat/CTBUH; Phillip Oldfield/University of Nottingham [video]- BBC

About face: William Barak apartments: 31-story apartment tower that bears the face of historic Aboriginal leader...85-metre-high portrait representation formed from white balconies against black windows of the southern and eastern facades...northern and western facades are superimposed with a heat map. -- ARM Architecture; Sean Godsell [images]- ArchitectureAU (Australia)

Portrait building: Is the new face of Melbourne too shy? ...William Barak Portrait building...an exciting project but a lot more could've been done in this premier location: It's visually arresting and culturally important...Portrait and RMIT's Design Hub make odd neighbours...One's curving, grungy and literary; the other is austere, formal and perfect. One's alive, one's abstract...they don't "talk" to each other...streetscape would've benefited if both buildings shared a little more DNA. By Alan Davies -- ARM Architecture [image]- Crikey (Australia)

Developer Roland Kassis transforming Fishtown into hip haven: ...his first new construction project, a boutique hotel [in a former brewery]...he exhibits...manic energy and insatiable appetite for abandoned factories...he has a sensibility more in tune with Fishtown's arty, DIY, tattoo-and-vintage-loving culture...Fishtown is having its Williamsburg moment... By Inga Saffron -- Morris Adjmi Architects [image]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Assemble: It became famous for pop-ups, but with new projects such as the barn-like Yardhouse studio and a recent commission for a £2-million art gallery in a converted bathhouse, the east London collective is hitting the big time...And they've done all this without even being qualified architects. By Oliver Wainwright [images]- Icon (UK)

Manufacturing mansions en masse: Where are the Luddites when you need them? In need of a wrecking is the 3D printer that Winsun Global, the Chinese technology company, used to build a mansion...styled after Classical antiquity, no less...selvesameness can be had with the flick of a switch. There's a certain uh-oh in all this, don't you think? By

Joan Altabe- Examiner

[Six Myths of Sustainable Design: Green building isn't as difficult as you might think: We can be as smart about the way things look as we're becoming about the way they work. By Lance Hosey/RTKL - Huffington Post](#)

[UNESCO Director General condemns destruction of Nimrud in Iraq: "We cannot remain silent. The deliberate destruction of cultural heritage constitutes a war crime...At stake is the survival of the Iraqi culture and society." -- Irina Bokova- UNESCO](#)

[Call for entries: CTBUH 2015 Tall Building Awards \(internations!\); no fee; deadline: April 30- Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat \(CTBUH\)](#)

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