Today's News - Wednesday, March 18, 2015

- Lewy takes issue with Saffron's "What Champions of Urban Density Get Wrong": "As far as I can tell, there are three myths underlying the article."
- Beasley on putting some love back into urban planning: "the great irony of modern culture is the more that we have chosen city life, the less that city life has satisfied us."
- Hume is as ecstatic as we've ever seen him re: the Jack Layton Ferry Terminal competition shortlist: what they all "share is a clear understanding that this project goes beyond boarding a boat or a chance to make a statement; it's an occasion to change how a city sees itself."
- Eyeful of the "brilliant" shortlisted ferry terminal proposals: "One thing's for sure: the ferry dock will be reborn as an architectural showstopper."
- Chicago's lakefront may never be the same now that the Chicago Architecture Biennale has teamed three area schools with notable firms to devise kiosks - and don't forget international Lakefront Kiosk Competition deadline is March 23!
- The Christchurch Botanic Gardens Visitor Centre, "the only capital project to stay alive" after the 2010/11 earthquakes, has risen from the rubble as "a fairy-tale palace within a troubled land: this city needs more knights in shining armor."
- Semuels looks at the progress in retrofitting dying malls for other purposes: "But if those preferences change again in 40 years, there could be a whole new set of retail buildings - and sky scrapers - to replace them.
- King cheers the San Francisco Giants' "urban chic" Yard at Mission Rock, a corporate "pop-up village" of shipping container pods for retail, dining, and events (sure beats a parking lot!).
- Artful news everywhere: Russell hails "a dramatic new direction" for the Met by choosing Chipperfield to redesign its Modern Art wing: the museum "has found an architect of personal reticence and sober intellect whose work can be bold and simultaneously deferential."
- Apparently Asymptote has been tapped to design a satellite branch of the Hermitage in a former car factory in Moscow (no pix yet - we can't wait to see!).
- Lange lingers in Phifer's new wing at the Coming Museum of Glass that combined "high-tech and hands-on making" to invite in the light.
- Miranda marvels at Radic's makeover of the Chilean Museum of Pre-Columbian Art in Santiago: "it does not disappoint. The architect has taken a somewhat dour neoclassical building and turned it into a remarkable space."
- Meanwhile, Houston decides to "hit the pause button" on the already-started Nau Center for Texas Cultural Heritage (so much for being ready for the 2017 Super Bowl).
- Four British industry experts share their views on what museums should look like come 2020: "Their future depends on remaining a dynamic part of the public realm."
- Heathcote continues his poetic series of urban musings with an ode to street lights: "Romantic scene-setter or tool of social control?"
- Saffron minces no words about what she thinks of a proposed bill that would expand Philly's digital billboard district; she doesn't buy the description that they'll be "a marriage of art and architecture" (or possible political shenanigans that makes it a bad deal for the city).
- Shubow minces no words in a (rather lengthy) rant about why the AIA's "outreach campaign is doomed- (sure beats a parking lot!).
- On a brighter note: a good reason to be in NYC on March 25: IIDA NY's (always fabulous!) Annual Sustainable Quilt Auction will benefit Be Original Americas.
- Call for entries: Architect magazine's (always intriguing) 2015 R+D Awards.

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Hermitage to open satellite branch in former Moscow factory: Russia’s largest museum signs agreement with the redeveloper of the Soviet-era ZIL automobile plant...part of the ZIL campus as a new residential, commercial and recreational district of Moscow. -- Hani Rashid/Asymptote Architecture - The Art Newspaper (UK)

New Wing at Corning Museum of Glass Invites the Light: ...combination of high-tech and hands-on making would be repeated over and over in the process of designing, curating and fitting out the 100,000-square-foot Contemporary Art + Design Wing. By Alexandra Lange -- Thomas Phifer and Partners [images] - New York Times

Smiljan Radic’s striking redo of Chile’s pre-Columbian museum: ...housed in what was once a royal customs house [in Santiago]...it does not disappoint. The architect has taken a somewhat dour neoclassical building...and turned it into a remarkable space...Chilean Museum of Pre-Columbian Art brings drama to the works...which are just divine. By Carolina A. Miranda [images] - Los Angeles Times

‘Time to hit the pause button’ on downtown Houston museum, mayor says: Nau Center for Texas Cultural Heritage has halted construction on the downtown facility just four months after its groundbreaking...was expected to be complete by fall 2016 - just before the 2017 Super Bowl in Houston. -- Bailey Architects; Gallagher & Associates [images] - Houston Business Journal

What should our museums look like in 2020? Four industry experts share their views on the past, present and future of museums: "...should be radical and participatory institutions at the heart of their communities"..."Their future depends on remaining a dynamic part of the public realm." -- David Anderson/National Museums Wales; Christoph Vogtherr/Wallace Collection; Maria Balshaw/Whitworth Art Gallery; Robert Hewison - Guardian (UK)

How street lights have illuminated city life: Romantic scene-setter or tool of social control? Lamp posts have transformed our urban spaces in varying ways...a device that turns darkness into light but also an intimation of the unnatural state of the city, a place that comes alive and becomes, perhaps, most completely public, when it is darkest. By Edwin Heathcote - Financial Times (UK)

Digital billboards more harm than good: Bill would transform city streets into blaring, blazing digital billboard:...screens would be housed in fanciful forms...describing them as a "marriage of art and architecture," rather than what they really are: billboards...just when we thought we had corralled the major screens into a single downtown zone... By Inga Saffron - Philadelphia Inquirer

The American Institute of Architects’ Outreach Campaign Is Doomed to Failure: The centerpiece is the AIA's first ever TV spot..."I Look Up"...What the commercial does not show is a single client or a person using a building. It suggests that architects build for no one but themselves. The video is all too accurate. By Justin Shubow -- I.M. Pei; Frank Gehry; Thom Mayne/Morphosis - Forbes

IDA NY 7th Annual Sustainable Quilt Auction March 25: proceeds will go to Be Original Americas to support the organization’s efforts to educate and inform professionals on the moral, environmental, and economic value of genuine design.-- Be Original Americas

Call for entries: 2015 R+D Awards (international): from design strategies and building systems to products and digital tools; deadline: April 17 - Architect Magazine

-- The Camera: Yiorgis Yerolymbos: ...a leading figure in architectural photography in Greece.
-- Bookshelf: "Double Dutch: Dutch Architecture since 1985" by Bernard Hulsman; "The Future of Architecture in 100 Buildings" by Marc Kushner; "Copy Paste: Bad Ass Copy Guide" by Winy Maas; "The Inevitable Specificity of Cities" by ETH Studio Basel; "Women, Modernity, and Landscape Architecture" by Sonja Dümpelmann; John Beardsley