

Today's News - Monday, March 30, 2015

- ArcSpace brings us a round-up of Zumthor gems that "stand out against their surrounding contexts as statements of formal clarity," says Søberg + Meyer's most interesting Q&A with Herzog re: H&deM's "current trials and tribulations, as well as his influences and goals."
- Wainwright minces no words about Mayne's proposed 80-story hotel in Vals (Zumthor-land): "a gigantic mirror-clad middle finger aimed at the region - it's hard to imagine a more obnoxious gesture to inflict on a sleepy spa town" (with "a design statement that verges on farce" - and rooms named for Zumthor and Kuma to boot!).
- Davidson lays out all the reasons Gehry's Fondation Louis Vuitton is a "masterpiece": "Harrumphing that the building is overdesigned and flamboyant is a little like complaining that Champagne has too many bubbles: Theatrical extravagance isn't an incidental quality, it's the essence of this \$135 million tour-de-force."
- Woodman gives (mostly) thumbs-up to MJMA's makeover of Manchester's Whitworth Art Gallery: the firm's "inventiveness is grounded in an impressive command of the art of construction: the detailing, throughout the building, is a joy. It is to be hoped that it may yet be given the opportunity to finish the job."
- Bozikovic contemplates architecture's digital revolution and considers what Therrien, the Guggenheim's new curator of architecture and digital initiatives, might do with the other 1,709 submissions to the Guggenheim Helsinki competition once the winner is announced.
- Hill has a few issues with London's Skyline Campaign: "height isn't the issue that matters most. There are more important things to get worked up about. How damaging are tall buildings, actually?"
- Langston, meanwhile, ponders that while "neighbors may hate tall towers" in Ottawa (long considered Canada's "banal building central"), the spate of taller condos is letting architects "get creative."
- Farrow considers the "ultimate test for architecture and design: do our buildings and spaces cause health?" His answer is Yes, and once understood, "dreary design and merely functional places would become unacceptable."
- Behre considers Duany's suggestion that local architects "should band together and create a Charleston urban vernacular" - it's a good idea, but "it's unclear if they will."
- Eye-fuls of two twisting oceanfront towers that are about to change Fort Lauderdale's coastline and skyline.
- A fascinating Q+A with MoMA's Antonelli re: "new directions in design, the work she finds most interesting, and her online project: Design and Violence."
- It's been awhile since we've heard news of the "high-voltage" electrical engineer's attempts to build a Frank Lloyd Wright house in a British village; apparently, the fight rages on.
- No architect is named, but how could we resist news that Springfield, Massachusetts, is getting a Dr. Seuss museum!
- One we couldn't resist Part Deux: Art in Island in Manila aspires to inspire "jaded museum-goers" with a "please touch" opportunity to take selfies within art masterpieces: "With portions of each work slightly altered or left out entirely, the art isn't even finished until you complete the picture" (totally bizarre - and totally cool!).
- Call for entries: LEAF Awards 2015: celebrating the best that global architecture + Holcim Awards - Your Choice: Vote for your favorite "Next Generation" sustainable construction project.

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-- Atelier Peter Zumthor: His buildings stand out against their surrounding contexts, whether urban environments or natural landscapes, as statements of formal clarity. By Martin Søberg
-- Interview: Jacques Herzog: Herzog & de Meuron is one of the largest and currently, perhaps the most successful Swiss architectural practice...Q&A about his current trials and tribulations, as well as his influences and goals. By Ulf Meyer

Is the tiny town of Vals really the right place for the tallest building in Europe? Plans for a 381m high luxury hotel tower...the designer is convinced it will fit right in...7132 Hotel...an 80-storey silo stuffed with luxury bedrooms...a gigantic mirror-clad middle finger aimed at the region; indeed, it's hard to imagine a more obnoxious gesture to inflict on a sleepy spa town. In a design statement that verges on farce... By Oliver Wainwright -- Thom Mayne/Morphosis [images]- Guardian (UK)

Why Frank Gehry's Fondation Louis Vuitton Building Is a Masterpiece: Harrumphing that the building is overdesigned and flamboyant is a little like complaining that Champagne has too many bubbles: Theatrical extravagance isn't an incidental quality, it's the essence of this \$135 million tour-de-force. By Justin Davidson- New York Magazine

The Whitworth by MJMA: The amount going on...leaves you feeling as if it has added more than one extension...MJMA's inventiveness is grounded in an impressive command of the art of construction: the detailing, throughout the building, is a joy...has gone a long way towards unlocking the potential of JW Beaumont's design. It is to be hoped that it may yet be given the opportunity to finish the job. By Ellis Woodman -- Bikerdike Allen Partners (1960s) [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Digital revolution brings new edge to Guggenheim Helsinki museum designs: ...Troy Conrad Therrien...Guggenheim Museum's curator of architecture and digital initiatives...as the Helsinki competition moves toward a winner...[he] is looking to do something with the other 1,709 submissions...questions begin to suggest the complexities of thinking about, and curating, contemporary architecture. By Alex Bozikovic- Globe and Mail (Canada)

What use is the London Skyline Campaign? Opponents of the proliferation of tall buildings in the capital joined forces a year ago but height isn't the issue that matters most...feels a bit like an alliance of affronted civic worthies declaring war on vulgarity...There are more important things to get worked up about. How damaging are tall buildings, actually? By Dave Hill- Guardian (UK)

Rising up: Higher condos let architects get creative: "As we're getting more height and more sophisticated, we're going with more sophisticated architects"...Ottawa has been considered banal building central. Thank the spill-over effect of boring, penny-pinching federal office buildings for that...But with this new generation of condos...change [is] coming. By Patrick Langston -- Hariri Pontarini Architects; George Dark; Barry J. Hobin & Associates Architects; Rod Lahey/Roderick Lahey Architect; Graziani Corazza Architects [images]- Ottawa Citizen (Canada)

The ultimate test for architecture and design: do our buildings and spaces cause health? ...architecture which 'causes health'...promotes five vital elements - nature, authenticity, variety, vitality, and legacy...If the industry understood the health-causing potential of every building, every public space and every home, then "dreary design and merely functional places would become unacceptable"... -- Tye Farrow/Farrow Partners; Perkins+Will [images]- Architecture & Design (Australia)

Search for architecture that captures the experience of Charleston: One of the more intriguing ideas to emerge from Andres Duany's work here...was the concept that Charleston architects should band together...and create a Charleston urban vernacular...The idea was...something extra tossed in as he went about doing the main things he was hired to do...it's unclear if they will. By Robert Behre- Charleston Post and Courier (South Carolina)

Twisting oceanfront tower residences planned for Fort Lauderdale development Auberge Beach Residences: ...condominiums will be a stone's throw away from the pristine stretches of coastline and inherently alter the landscape of the city. -- Nichols Brosch Wurst Wolfe & Associates; Meyer Davis Studio [images]- designboom

The art of design: Q+A with MoMA's Paola Antonelli: More than a curator, Antonelli has been shaping the way museums collect and how design is viewed...She speaks...about new directions in design, the work she finds most interesting and her online project for MoMA: Design and Violence. - Australian Design Review

A Frank Lloyd Wright House Divides a British Village: ...Hugh Pratt, a high-voltage electrical engineer...has spent more than a decade and an estimated \$150,000 trying to build one of the late architect's original works in Wraxall...In the opposing corner are angry neighbors and members of the local council who believe the house is inappropriate in a rural setting...The case has divided the British architectural community. - Wall Street Journal

First-ever Dr. Seuss museum is coming to Springfield: When he wrote the words "Oh, the places you'll go!," he may never have imagined that would mean Springfield - his birthplace - for travelers from around the globe... "The Amazing World of Dr. Seuss" ...will be interactive and bilingual, focusing on literacy activities for a wide range of ages... [images]- Boston Globe

An Art Museum Designed for Taking Selfies: Art in Island, where the point isn't to look at art - how boring is that? - but to pose for photos with it...helps jaded museum-goers...allowing them to touch, sit on, and climb 3D approximations of paintings...With portions of each work slightly altered or left out entirely, the art isn't even finished until you complete the picture. [images]- Hyperallergic

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