

Today's News - Thursday, April 9, 2015

- Russell does a rough riff on "Placemaking" - "a rhetorical gimmick spreading across the urban-development wonkosphere like kudzu. The trouble is, Placemaking does not itself make real place."
- Hume isn't much happier with what a gathering of Greater Toronto Area city planners had to say: planning is "a profession out of touch with the communities it serves - a city's greatest asset isn't land, but learning how to use it intelligently."
- Meanwhile, an impressive gathering of international placemakers in Sydney came to the conclusion that "community collaboration, ownership, and unique experiences and flexible, adaptive space are essential to creating great places."
- A winner of the U.K.'s Design Council Active by Design IdeasTap competition "discusses the role of creativity and the arts in helping people to reclaim their parks and streets and become more active as a result."
- Los Angeles has everyone talking about its "first-of-its-kind sustainability framework" to "go from smog and sprawl" to being a green (and equitable) economic hub.
- Cetra cheers the design world starting "to treat resiliency as a new discipline for creating better, more risk-ready communities," but "developers and architects on the front lines are facing a daunting new challenge: How to fund resilient design."
- Of architects and oyster-ecture: "You never would think that oysters would become a demographic that designers came to rescue, but it is happening."
- Gunts ponders the possibility that another Tod Williams Billie Tsien arts center could be "headed for the wrecking ball," this one in Baltimore.
- Wainwright vicariously steps into "Zuckworld. Oh the fun they must have" - unfortunately, his requests to visit were "politely declined," so he has a field day captioning employees' images on Instagram (it's a hoot!).
- An architect pens an in-depth review (with fab photos) of the new Melbourne School of Design by John Wardle Architects and NADAAA: "It is a large, powerful and expensive institutional building designed to maximize the opportunities for a built pedagogy," and "play a role in the education of its students."
- Heathcote parses the pick of PagePark to lead the restoration of Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art: "The trick will be in the patina. Its essence has always been its authenticity. If PVP can fake that, they will have it made."
- Schumacher finds the design for the new Milwaukee Bucks arena is "inspiring many to respond with relief about what the structure would not be" (definitely not "faux historic"), though "the integration of landscape design, public art, lighting and other cultural ideas will be critical to the overall character of the spaces."
- Levet is tapped to design the second MPavilion in Melbourne: it will be like "a forest canopy in the heart of the city" (boat builders' expertise included).
- A new playground in New Orleans is part of an effort to "transform under-utilized urban spaces into fun environments for 4-12-year-olds to think and learn about architecture, design and city planning."
- The Sustainable Sites Initiative certifies 12 more landscapes (great presentation).
- Design Shanghai 2015 was even better than last year: along with the "big-hitting" international names were "30 young Chinese designers keen to play their part in China's design (r)evolution."
- We couldn't resist: two more in Places' "Fairy Tale Architecture" series: Young Projects explores the spaces of the Hans Christian Anderson's "The Snow Queen" + Bernheimer Architecture uses the band Richmond Fontaine's song "St. Ides, Parked Cars and Other People's Homes" as inspiration to explore suburban exteriors.
- Call for entries: Mediterranean Sea Club (MESOC) Ibiza, open to students and young architects.

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Enough of Bogus "Placemaking": ...a rhetorical gimmick spreading across the urban-development wonkosphere like kudzu...Now urban developers have glommed onto the term, because [it] sounds like something that could sail through city-review regimes and sell. The trouble is, Placemaking does not itself make real place. By James S. Russell -- Steven Holl Architects; Projects for Public Spaces; Jane Jacobs; William H. "Holly" Whyte; Richard Haag; Louis Kahn; Bohlin Cywinski Jackson; Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM); Jaume Plensa; Anish Kapoor; Frank Gehry; Kathryn Gustafson; Perkins + Will; James Corner Field Operations [images]- JamesSRussell.net

GTA city planners need a reality check: Gathering of chief planners from the Toronto region highlights a profession out of touch with the communities it serves: ...little of what planners have allowed is anything to be proud of...The hard truth is that they have little to say and lack the powers to enforce their schemes anyway. Developers are in control...a city's greatest asset isn't land, but learning how to use it intelligently. By Christopher Hume - Toronto Star

Placemakers' collaborative conclusion: Radical rethink needed across Australia: Leading architects, designers and planning experts gathered in Sydney...Future of Place forum...overall conclusions were that community collaboration, ownership, and unique experiences and flexible, adaptive space are essential to creating great places. - Architecture & Design (Australia)

New visions of the city through the arts: David Banks was one of two winners of our Active by Design IdeasTap competition with his proposal for Movement Codes. Here he discusses the role of creativity and the arts in helping people to reclaim their parks and streets and become more active as a result. - Design Council (UK)

LA's plan to go from smog and sprawl to green economic hub: Los Angeles is betting on new environmental targets and equitable economic development, along with new smart cities technology...as part of a first-of-its-kind sustainability framework. - GreenBiz

Op-Ed: Rethinking Resiliency: ...the design world has begun to treat resiliency as a new discipline for creating better, more risk-ready communities...Yet the building developers and architects on the front lines...are facing a daunting new challenge: How to fund resilient design...we need both public and private partners to acknowledge that this is the future of our cities. By John Cetra/CetraRuddy - Multi-Housing News

Oyster-ecture: How Design Can Bring Back Marine Habitats: You never would think that oysters would become a demographic that designers came to rescue, but it is happening through a number of upcycling these days... -- BanG studio; Young & Ayata; Kate Orff/SCAPE [images]- Architizer

Twilight of the Inside: Another Tod Williams Billie Tsien arts center headed for the wrecking ball? The Mattin Center...opened in 2001 on the Johns Hopkins University's Homewood campus in Baltimore...the same year as the American Folk Art Museum opened in Manhattan...."At the end of the day, we can't leave [it] exactly as it is and succeed"...It doesn't serve the university or the community the way the location could." By Ed Gunts -- Ann Beha Architects; Gustafson Guthrie Nichol - The Architect's Newspaper

Step into Zuckworld: rollerblading and selfie stumps at the new Facebook HQ: ...gargantuan new office designed by Frank Gehry...Oh the fun they must have...Sadly it is a sense of community and connection that doesn't quite extend to the prying eyes of architecture critics: my requests to visit the open-plan social utopia have been politely declined...thanks to its workplace culture of compulsive sharing, we can now live the Bay Area dream vicariously through its employees' feeds on Instagram. By Oliver Wainwright [images]- Guardian (UK)

Melbourne School of Design by John Wardle Architects and NADAAA: ...an in depth review: It is a large, powerful and

expensive institutional building...a very good building...designed to maximise the opportunities for a built pedagogy...to play a role in the education of its students. By Warwick Mihaly/Mihaly Slocombe Architects [images]- Architecture & Design (Australia)

PagePark to lead restoration of Glasgow School of Art: ...has wide experience of conservation and, in particular, the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh himself...The trick, however, will be in the patina...Its essence has always been its authenticity. If PagePark can fake that, they will have it made. By Edwin Heathcote- Financial Times (UK)

Design for new Milwaukee Bucks arena aims to 'embrace idea of modern architecture': ...inspiring many to respond with relief about what the structure would not be..."It's not overly zooming and it's not faux historic"...the integration of landscape design, public art, lighting and other cultural ideas will be critical to the overall character of the spaces... By Mary Louise Schumacher -- Populous; Eppstein Uhen Architects [images]- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

MPavilion 2015 to be designed by British architect Amanda Levete: The second MPavilion to be erected in Melbourne will be like "a forest canopy in the heart of the city"...inaugural pavilion by Sean Godsell...will be permanently relocated to the gardens of the Hellenic Museum -- AL\_A; Naomi Milgrom Foundation- Guardian (UK)

New Orleans playground by Rozas Ward Architects inspires next generation of architects: An 'imagination playground'...PlayBuild's goal is to transform under-utilised urban spaces into fun environments for 4-12-year-olds to think and learn about architecture, design and city planning. [images]- CLAD (Community of Leisure Architects & Designers)

SITES Certifies 12 More Landscapes: The Sustainable Sites Initiative has certified a dozen landscapes...for meeting rigorous standards for environmental design and performance. OCULUS – Landscape Architecture; The Trust for Public Land;RGR Landscape Architecture & Architecture; W.G. Smith Design; GSA/Atkins Global; Alrie Middlebrook; HELIX Environmental Planning; Torre Design Consortium; Talley Associates; CRSA; Conservation Design Forum [images]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Design Shanghai 2015: Fantasy flowers, deco and a dragon - the top picks of this year's fair: ...marked by a strong Chinese presence...Stealing the show was Wang Yuyang, with the Bally Jean Prouvé House...an increase in big-hitting names like Magis and Vitra was matched by 30 young Chinese designers keen to play their part in China's design (r)evolution. [images]- Wallpaper\*

"Fairy Tale Architecture" series curated by brother-sister duo of writer Kate Bernheimer and architect Andrew Bernheimer: Bryan Young/Young Projects explores the spaces of the Hans Christian Anderson tale "The Snow Queen": "'Resin Bees magnetic swarms and defaced Barbie dolls.' In my line of work, that sentence makes perfect sense." [images]- Places Journal

"Fairy Tale Architecture": Bernheimer Architecture uses the band Richmond Fontaine 's song "St. Ides, Parked Cars and Other People's Homes" as inspiration to explore suburban exteriors.- Places Journal

Call for entries: Mediterranean Sea Club (MESOC) Ibiza: produce a new leisure model on the fragile and unique coast of this Mediterranean island; open to students and young architects; cash prizes; earlybird registration deadline (save money!): May 15; registration: June 15 (submissions due June 30)- Arquideas (Spain)



-- 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

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