

Today's News - Tuesday, May 19, 2015

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tomorrow is this week's "floating" no-newsletter day - we'll be back Thursday, May 21.

- Volner evaluates the odds of the Guggenheim winning the hearts of Helsinki, which "has become the latest battleground in an ongoing conflict over how - and whether - small cities should accommodate expansionist mega-museums - the 'Bilbao effect' has proven a difficult formula for the Guggenheim to replicate."
- Farago totally {hearts} the new Whitney, and "the low expectations before the opening" leading to "the joy bordering on giddiness with which it has been greeted. It is civic, astute, winningly modest in both materials and form. It is glorious."
- Miami's Historic Preservation Board signs off on Gauld's "massive" expansion plans for the Bass Museum.
- Bernstein is less than impressed with the Swiss Pavilion at Expo Milano 2015: "the world's most equitable supermarket" may be aiming "to teach a lesson about shortages and waste" with a "big gimmick demonstrated through architecture. But the idea isn't executed in a way that makes sense."
- Wainwright x 2: Mecanoo's new arts center for Manchester is "a low-slung, dour affair" and "a sorely missed architectural opportunity" that "exhibits all the clumsy hallmarks of the local council design-and-build procurement process," which is "a shame" for a city "whose architecture was once such a source of civic pride."
- On the other hand, he considers FAT and Grayson Perry's House for Essex, "a tour de force of narrative design, an autobiography wrought in the vessel of a home. The level of detail is truly astounding."
- Bevan finds A House for Essex to be "a kitsch haven - serious rather than silly in its playfulness and the architecture is sophisticated...a magical shrine in the landscape."
- Woodman wanders the "deliriously madcap little building" that is A House for Essex: "Pretentious? Absolutely. And yet the project's boundless visual imagination ultimately carries the day."
- NORD's new home for the Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice will be "strangely familiar but curiously new" with four linked villas that "reflect the traditional architecture of that area of Glasgow. Inside, it will be all mod cons" (we wish there were images!).
- A shipping container village of local restaurants, cultural events, and retail by Gehl Studio and OpenScope Studio opens on San Francisco's waterfront.
- While "'cargotecture' is all the rage in the architecture world," there are "8 things architects should consider before designing with shipping containers."
- MVRDV has high hopes of bringing a "High Line effect" to Seoul by turning an abandoned stretch of 1970s highway into "a park on a pedestal. We'll be watching to see if starchitect-designed condos, hotels, and restaurants crop up nearby."
- Detroit considers "a new future for I-375, America's shortest (and arguably silliest) Interstate" - it's "an opportunity to breathe life back into a portion of the city's urban core that was long ago stripped of culture and vibrancy."
- The Australian Institute of Architects is feeling the heat from the Building Designers Association of Victoria about the AIA's "Ask An Architect" campaign (on billboards, no less!) that "compares designers and draughtsmen to butchers in a vegetarian world" - and leading to broader discussions.
- Esperdy offers a most eloquent intro to Douglas Haskell, "once a leading voice in design journalism, now largely forgotten" (though he did coin the term "Googie"), and his 1958 essay "Architecture and Popular Taste" (both are great reads!).
- Help Wanted: AIANY and Center for Architecture launch a search for a new Executive Director.
- Eyefuls of the RIBA London Awards.
- Eyefuls of the Architectural League Prize 2015 portfolio competition winners (great presentation).
- Call for entries: 2015 Expanded Environment Awards: MONSTER: ideas about how extreme combinations of architectural form, material, and programs can reshape our built worlds and the way we think of them.

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Can the Guggenheim Charm Finland? Helsinki has become the latest battleground in an ongoing conflict over how - and whether - small cities and emerging countries should accommodate expansionist mega-museums...the "Bilbao effect" has proven a difficult formula for the Guggenheim to replicate. By Ian Volner - The New Yorker

The Wonder of the Whitney: A new building captures the museum's oldest virtues: ...most cultural buildings that arose in the Bloomberg years have little to recommend them to architectural aficionados, or anyone not in the boardroom...Hence the low expectations before the opening...Hence, too, the joy bordering on giddiness with which it has been greeted...It is civic, astute, winningly modest in both materials and form, and already homey...It is glorious... By Jason Farago -- Marcel Breuer; Renzo Piano - The New Republic

Bass Museum in Miami Beach approved for massive expansion: Historic Preservation Board signs off on demolition, renovation and expansion plans. -- Russell Pancost (1935); Arata Isozaki & Associates (2000); David Gauld Architect [images]- The Real Deal (Florida)

Swiss Pavilion at Expo Milano 2015: "Welcome to the world's most equitable supermarket" ...This supermarket is the centerpiece...to explore the theme "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life"...aims to teach a lesson about shortages and waste...The idea isn't just stated. The big gimmick of the pavilion is that it is demonstrated through architecture...But the idea isn't executed in a way that makes sense. By Fred A. Bernstein -- Netwerch GmbH [images]- World-Architects.com

Manchester's £25m Home is a sorely missed architectural opportunity: Arts centre's programme looks set to live up to the city's hopes, but the same cannot be said of the venue itself, a low-slung, dour affair: ...exhibits all the clumsy hallmarks of the local council design-and-build procurement process, where the architect is subservient to cost-cutting tendencies...It's a shame...for a city whose architecture was once such a source of civic pride. By Oliver Wainwright -- Mecanoo - Guardian (UK)

For Grayson Perry's House for Essex, the only way was 'bonkers as possible': With deadly scooters, hovering pregnant women and thousands of ceramic nipples, the artist has created a Taj Mahal near Wrabness: ...a tour de force of narrative design, an autobiography wrought in the vessel of a home...The level of detail is truly astounding... By Oliver Wainwright -- Alain de Botton/Living Architecture; Charles Holland/FAT - Guardian (UK)

Grayson Perry and architects FAT design 'A House for Essex': ...a kitsch haven...that's open to paying guests...technicolour Taj Mahal...an extraordinary and fecund vision that has been made meticulously real. It is serious rather than silly in its playfulness and the architecture is sophisticated...a magical shrine in the landscape. By Robert Bevan -- Alain de Botton/Living Architecture [images]- Evening Standard (UK)

Grayson Perry's A House For Essex: 'deliriously madcap': Pretentious? Absolutely. And yet the project's boundless visual imagination ultimately carries the day. By Ellis Woodman -- FAT; Alain de Botton/Living Architecture - Telegraph (UK)

Alan Pert has designs on a new hospice: When the idea of building a new home for the Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice was first raised, the presentation from Nordic Architecture made a lasting impression because of its simple message. It wanted to create a building that was strangely familiar but curiously new...four linked villas in the park reflect the traditional architecture of that area of...Glasgow. Inside, it will be all mod cons. -- Northern Office for Research and Design (NORD)- Evening Times (Scotland)

Temporary Harbor: Gehl Studio and OpenScope Studio open a shipping container village in San Francisco: The Yard at Mission Rock...will one day be home to a 1.7 million-square-foot, mixed-used development...Groupings of stacked shipping containers bring local restaurants, cultural events, and retail to the area. -- UrbanBloc [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

8 things architects should consider before designing with shipping containers: ...'cargotecture' is all the rage in the architecture world at the moment – and for good reason, too...But before you buy your shipping container or agree to refit one... [images]- Architecture & Design (Australia)

Seoul's Turning an Old Highway Into a Flowery High Line: ...the latest city to get a park on a pedestal...Skygarden, a half mile of green space to be built on an abandoned stretch of 1970s highway...We'll be watching to see if starchitect-designed condos, hotels, and restaurants crop up nearby. -- MVRDV [images]- Wired

Getting creative about freeway removal: If Portland can do it, why can't Detroit? ... imagine a new future for I-375, America's shortest (and arguably silliest) Interstate...an opportunity to breathe life back into a portion of our city's urban core that was long ago stripped of culture and vibrancy...projects from around the world where a community's collective desire for well-designed and healthy urban environments lead to creative transformations of freeways...four examples...Seoul, Paris, Portland, Germany [images]- Model D (Detroit)

Building designers hit back at Architects campaign and head to the ACCC [Australian Competition and Consumer Commission]: "Ask An Architect" campaign that compares designers and draughtsmen to butchers in a vegetarian world has caused a stir among Victorian building designer circles. -- Australian Institute of Architects (AIA); Building Designers Association of Victoria (BDAV)- Architecture & Design (Australia)

Future Archive: "Architecture and Popular Taste" (1958): Douglas Haskell was once a leading voice in design journalism, always ready to promote unfashionable ideas. Yet he is now largely forgotten...if he is remembered at all, beyond a few specialists, it is because he added the term "googie" to the design lexicon and because he hired an ambitious journalist named Jane Jacobs... Intro by Gabrielle Esperdy- Places Journal

AIANY and Center for Architecture Launch Search for New Executive Director: ..."looking for a leader with a strategic vision for deepening our positive impact on New York City's built environment...The two institutions have accomplished much for the City and lead a global network of architecture centers focused on educating the general public about the value of design thinking."- e-Oculus (AIANY)

RIBA London Awards: Social justice centre in Vauxhall named capital's best building: ...Foundry project, described by Ellis Woodman as 'a building full of optimism'... -- Architecture 00; Alford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM); Stanton Williams; Haworth Tompkins; John McAslan and Partners; Piercy and Co.; Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands; vPPR; Rob Naybour/Weston Williams + Partners; Bennetts Associates; Peter Barber Architects; Dallas Pierce Quintero; etc. [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

The Architectural League Prize 2015: Authenticity - 6 portfolio competition winners -- Dan Adams/Marie Adams/Landing Studio; Erin Besler/Besler & Sons; Seth McDowell/Rychiee Espinosa/mcdowellespinosa; Thom Moran; Anna Neimark/Andrew Atwood/First Office; Clark Thenhaus/Endemic [images]- Architectural League of New York

Call for entries: 2015 Expanded Environment Awards: MONSTER: ideas about how extreme combinations of architectural form, material, and programs can reshape not only our built worlds but the way we think of them; registration deadline: May 29 (submissions due June 29)- The Expanded Environment (formerly Animal Architecture)

Architecture's New Scientific Foundations, Part 2: Architects often assume that complexity, in general, must be designed. That's a misconception, and rarely conducive to human wellbeing. By Nikos A. Salingaros- ArchNewsNow.com



Henning Larsen Architects: Moesgaard Museum: Surrounded by woods on the outskirts of Aarhus, Denmark, the new MOMU...offers a new perspective on the role of the museum as a public space. By Robert Martin [images]

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