

## Today's News - Friday, October 16, 2015

- It's a Stirling kind of day for AHMM, and the pundits are only beginning to weigh in: Wainwright cheers the Burntwood School, a "1950s time warp in the best possible sense" that "harks back to the days when schools were full of fresh air and optimism, their buildings invested with care, quality and the power to uplift."
- Heathcote hails the Stirling win that "strikes a blow for public architecture" (and "a kind of poetic justice").
- Olcayto, as a Stirling juror, explains why the jury unanimously chose the school: it "outshone its competitors on the shortlist because of the sheer range of architectural skills put to good use."
- Ijeh, on the other hand, calls the Stirling win an "unusual" but "underwhelming choice," that has "all the charm and intimacy of a fortified military outpost built 50 years ago. I struggle to see how Burntwood School sufficiently elevates itself from the mundane and monotonous to merit its prize" (ouch!).
- Meanwhile, the Gallaudet University International Design Competition results in four impressive finalist teams.
- Kamin x 2: first, he makes the case for tearing down McCormick Place: "It's time to start a civic conversation about getting rid of the shoreline's Berlin Wall - one of Chicago's worst urban design mistakes."
- Then he makes the case for sparing Jahn's Thompson Center from the wrecking ball: "handing down a death sentence for Jahn's 30-year-old postmodern glitter palace is both premature and ill-informed. Chicago is now the epicenter of the debate over how to handle troubled postmodern buildings."
- Historian Bright isn't all that enamored of the Thompson Center, but doesn't want to see it torn down, either: "the real truth is: It is in the way of profits. And the visionaries aren't the ones holding the reins."
- Feldman takes an in-depth look at a "radical design movement" in New Orleans, and what can happen "when activists, architects and artists team up to change their city."
- OMA is tapped to lead another big project in Washington, DC: to "develop a holistic conceptual plan for the iconic" 190-acre RFK Stadium-Armory campus.
- WMF unveils its 2016 Monuments Watch List of the world's 50 most endangered cultural sites (as we sadly sigh).
- Call for entries: 3rd Annual Fairy Tales Competition (deadline looms for early bird registration!).
- Weekend diversions:
  - Betsky finds much to like in "Shelter" at the A+D Museum: "Los Angeles certainly could use such inventive thinking. Three things, however, were missing."
  - Birnbaum digs deep into "The New American Garden: The Landscape Architecture of Oehme, van Sweden" at the National Building Museum, which "provides opportunities to examine a body of work, explore its significance and ponder its future" (and the future of so many others).
  - "Grace of Intention: Photography, Architecture and the Monument" at the Museum of Contemporary Photography Chicago "investigates themes of permanence and impermanence, memorial and commemoration, and the human propensity to mark power and characterize history with structures."
  - Wolf-Powers gives two thumbs-up to Brandes Gratz's "We're Still Here Ya Bastards," finding "an appealing juxtaposition that Gratz is eloquent in arguing" between "clueless or depraved government functionaries, and return-obsessed developers" being "outmatched by grassroots civic groups and small, local entrepreneurs."
  - Moore is impressed with Stamp's "Gothic for the Steam Age": George Gilbert Scott "finds a champion at last" by making the argument "that Scott was more sensitive to the fabric of old buildings than the critics allowed."
  - Margolin finds Goldberger's "masterful but frustrating" Gehry biography filled "with in-depth detail, but lacking in passion" (and "a bit starry-eyed about Frank").
  - Whitaker wades into "Sergey Chernyshev: Architect of the New Moscow" by Lykoshin and Cheredina expecting it to be "a real clunker, and then while lumbering forward discovers something truly wonderful."
  - An excerpt from Rizvi's (very timely, it turns out) "The Transnational Mosque: Architecture and Historical Memory in the Contemporary Middle East."

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Burntwood school wins 2015 Stirling prize - and offers lessons for all: With light-flooded classrooms and a sharply chamfered concrete facade, this building is a symbol of a bygone age: A 1950s timewarp in the best possible sense...it harks back to the days when schools were full of fresh air and optimism, their buildings invested with care, quality and the power to uplift. By Oliver Wainwright -- Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM) [images]- Guardian (UK)

Comprehensive strikes a blow for public architecture with Stirling Prize win: ...perhaps it is a kind of poetic justice that the country's most prestigious architecture award should go to the expansion of a 1950s school...Burntwood School...snatched the prize from a strong field...If the shortlist this year showed anything it was a renewed interest in the value of a public architecture... By Edwin Heathcote -- AHMM- Financial Times (UK)

It's no cliché to say Burntwood School is a genuine tour de force: AJ editor and 2015 RIBA Stirling Prize judge Rory Olcayto on why the jury unanimously chose AHMM's school in Wandsworth...[it] outshone its competitors on the shortlist because of the sheer range of architectural skills put to good use. -- Allford Hall Monaghan Morris [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Burntwood School Stirling Prize win an underwhelming choice: ...proved an unusual choice, but could it be a political one too: ...concrete facades may conceal all manner of technical wizardry but in their relentless repetition, heavy articulation and defensive form, they have all the charm and intimacy of a fortified military outpost...that looks as if it could have been built 50 years ago...I struggle to see how Burntwood School sufficiently elevates itself from the mundane and monotonous to merit its prize. By Ike Ijeh [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Gallaudet University International Design Competition announces four finalists for 6th Street development project: ... to create a new campus gateway and redefine the university's urban edge as a vibrant, mixed-use, creative and cultural district. -- Hall McKnight Architects; Kennedy & Violich Architecture; Marvel Architects; MASS Design Group- Gallaudet University (Washington, DC)

Tear down lakefront McCormick Place: It's time to start a civic conversation about getting rid of the shoreline's Berlin Wall...a powerful work of steel-and-glass modernism that is one of Chicago's worst urban design mistakes...black 1971 behemoth is a brutally divisive presence...why not take the next step in correcting past mistakes...There's already a pro bono plan to do just that..."Burnham Sanctuary"... By Blair Kamin -- C.F. Murphy Associates (1971) Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)- Chicago Tribune

Spare Jahn's Thompson Center from Rauner's death sentence: ...handing down a death sentence for Helmut Jahn's 30-year-old postmodern glitter palace is both premature and ill-informed. By viewing the building's future through the prism of a spreadsheet, the governor is ignoring the vital role it plays in the life of the Loop - and how renovation could transform it into a far more appealing civic hub...Chicago is now the epicenter of the debate over how to handle troubled postmodern buildings. By Blair Kamin -- Michael Graves (1982)- Chicago Tribune

Op-Ed: Don't tear down the Thompson Center: Chicago is an architecture city - we build our dreams, then we tear down to build new dreams. Money drives most of the creation - and most of the destruction...when money lacks vision and doesn't recognize the power of architecture...Chicago...is full of examples of cheaply built, banal buildings in which money sorely lacked vision...the real truth is: It is in the way of profits. And the visionaries aren't the ones holding the reins...In a city of groundbreaking architecture, it is a 1980s example of daring. By Wendy Bright -- Helmut Jahn (1985)- Crain's Chicago Business

A Radical Design Movement Is Growing in New Orleans: What happens when activists, architects and artists team up to change their city? ...using music, celebration and performance as a vehicle to facilitate community and change is no foreign

concept. By Nina Feldman -- National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA); Take Em Down NOLA; Blights Out [images]- Next City (formerly Next American City)

OMA to Lead RFK Stadium-Armory Campus Conceptual Design Plans: ...will develop a holistic conceptual plan for the iconic Campus located in the Southeast corridor of the District [Washington, DC]...conceptual designs will address connectivity across the 190 acre site... - Citybizlist Washington, DC

The World's 50 Most Endangered Cultural Sites: The World Monuments Fund Unveils its 2016 Monuments Watch List...to generate awareness and prompt preservation. [images]- Architectural Record

Call for entries: 3rd Annual Fairy Tales Competition: earlybird registration deadline (save money!): October 22; regular registration deadline: December 9 (submissions due January 16, 2016)- Blank Space

"Shelter: Rethinking How We Live in Los Angeles" at Los Angeles' Architecture and Design Museum: Los Angeles certainly could use such inventive thinking, and the images the exhibition produced were strong enough to be able to participate in the wider debate about the area's future. Three things, however, were missing... By Aaron Betsky -- MAD Architects; PAR; LA-Más; Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects (LOHA); Bureau Spectacular; wHY Architecture [images]- Architect Magazine

The New American Garden: The uncertain future of a great legacy: ...a new exhibition at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. - "The New American Garden: The Landscape Architecture of Oehme, van Sweden" - provides opportunities to examine a body of work, explore its significance and ponder its future. By Charles A. Birnbaum/The Cultural Landscape Foundation -- Dan Kiley; M. Paul Friedberg [images]- Huffington Post

"Grace of Intention: Photography, Architecture and the Monument": ...investigates themes of permanence and impermanence, memorial and commemoration, and the human propensity to mark power and characterize history with structures; at the Museum of Contemporary Photography Chicago [images]- Museum of Contemporary Photography Chicago

Tropes of a Storm: A new book on Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath explores the grassroots recovery efforts: "We're Still Here Ya Bastards: How the People of New Orleans Rebuilt Their City" by Roberta Brandes Gratz...In this recovery narrative, elite city planners, clueless or depraved government functionaries, and return-obsessed developers are in many cases outmatched by grassroots civic groups and small, local entrepreneurs. This is an appealing juxtaposition, one that Gratz is eloquent in arguing. By Laura Wolf-Powers - The Architect's Newspaper

"Gothic for the Steam Age" by Gavin Stamp: St Pancras architect finds a champion at last: George Gilbert Scott's reputation suffered because of his prolific work rate, but at last he has found someone to speak up for him...Stamp defends him on the grounds that originality is overrated in architecture...argues that Scott was more sensitive to the fabric of old buildings than the critics allowed... By Rowan Moore- Observer (UK)

A Gehry biography with in-depth detail, but lacking in passion: Paul Goldberger's masterful but frustrating new work, "Building Art: The Life and Work Of Frank Gehry"...presents this less attractive side of Gehry to us clearly and factually, but seems a bit starry-eyed about Frank and cuts him too much slack. Gehry's failings are often whitewashed away with explanations that are less than convincing. By Elaine Margolin- Jewish Journal

"Sergey Chernyshev: Architect of the New Moscow" by Ivan Lykoshin and Irina Cheredina: It is always fun to begin a book, decide after 10 or 11 pages that it is a real clunker, and then while lumbering forward discover something truly wonderful...Moscow General Plan...studded with a dozen large wedges of park...makes the reader wish [authors] had provided a more detailed description of the plan's parts and pieces. By Craig Whitaker- Architectural Record

The Symbolic Potential of the Transnational Mosque: The architectural design of contemporary mosques is an amalgam of forms, one that merges the past with the present, the traditional with the technological. It is an important resource for the study of social and religious expression and of how a culture defines itself through the act of building. -- Excerpt from "The Transnational Mosque: Architecture and Historical Memory in the Contemporary Middle East" by Kishwar Rizvi- Faith & Form Magazine

A Filtered View: Buckminster Fuller (Not Al Gore) Invented the Internet: the first in a new series of musings by Charles F. Bloszies, FAIA- ArchNewsNow.com



Atelier Alter: Qujing Culture Center, Qujing, China + Archea Associati: Liling Ceramic Art City, Hunan, China. By Kirsten Kiser [images]

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