

Today's News - Wednesday, November 11, 2015

- On ArcSpace, Kiser revisits de Portzamparc's Cidade das Artes in Rio, which pays "homage to an archetype of Brazilian architecture" (fab photos!).
- Betsky's Part Deux re: Seoul, where "urban and object design meld into each other with an ease and lack of studied elegance that I have seen in few other cities."
- Hecht reports on Libeskind's Pyramid in Jerusalem being reduced in height by more than one-third; the architect vows "continue full-speed ahead" with the developer's "vision of creating a 'wow' for the city," but some say "Jerusalem is already a 'wow' and does not need another tourist attraction."
- Watson explains why the \$1 billion Bank of America Tower in Manhattan "has become ground zero in the battle over LEED" and how "a somewhat wonky design standard become such a strong marketing tool - what are the lessons - and warnings - that other sustainability initiatives can learn from its success?"
- Wainwright minces no words about what he thinks of the U.K.'s £1 billion plan to build a "new generation of bargain-basement holding pens" (a.k.a. "warehouse super-prisons"): "To really 'design out' reoffending, they should look to Scandinavia's open, trusting prisons."
- Berg delves into "how the arts can drive a city's redevelopment" with the likes of Theaster Gates and Assemble "blurring the line between art and urban intervention."
- Heathcote talks to Gates about his first public work in the UK built "amid the bombed-out, burnt-out ruins" of a 14th-century church: "What he has done so brilliantly and consistently is to conscript the resources of the art world towards social use."
- O'Sullivan paints a rather pathetic picture of the trials and tribulations of Heatherwick's beleaguered Garden Bridge over the Thames: "First seen as symbol of a bright new future - it's fast becoming a symbol of frivolous waste, skewed priorities, opaque planning, and alleged backroom deals by the elite. It's no wonder the city has fallen out of love with it."
- Frommer, on a brighter note, reports on Tokyo's efforts to create its own Champs-Élysées: "The bigger question is whether you can manufacture charm. But it's worth a shot. Bon Courage!"
- Saffron cheers a revitalized Vernon Park in Philly's Germantown: be it ever so humble, "behind every neighborhood success story, there seems to be a rejuvenated park."
- Not so cheered are parks advocates awaiting Congressional reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, "which has supported the creation and maintenance of greenways, trails, and other outdoor spaces across the U.S." (considering the current political climate, they have every reason to be concerned).
- Semuels reports on a Syracuse co-working project that includes micro-units for its residents: "what makes it truly different is its goal of helping revitalize the downtown of a Rust Belt city" (and "a solution for lonely Millennials" - "social engineer" included).
- Muji taps Konstantin Grcic, Jasper Morrison, and Naoto Fukasawa to design tiny prefab houses ("cue envy"): eye-fuls of the three "cozy escapes from the city hustle" that "are modest, outfitted with the basics, and executed elegantly."
- schmidt hammer lassen teams with James Turrell to expand Denmark's ARoS Aarhus Art Museum "that will merge art and architecture into a new civic experience."
- Metcalfe muses about Columbus, Ohio's "Bold Booths" venture to make parking lot attendants' job "a little brighter," replacing their cramped boxes with booths along the lines of "a green, airy, biomorphic entity known as 'The Slug'" (a great read/pix).
- Harvard GSD's \$50,000 Veronica Rudge Green Prize in Urban Design goes to the four design teams behind Madrid Río, the 120-hectare linear park that's been 10 years in the making.

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Atelier Christian de Portzamparc: Cidade das Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Paying homage to an archetype of Brazilian architecture, [it] is seen as a large house - a great veranda above the city...The building is a small city contained in one big structure... By Kirsten Kiser [images]

The Understated Elegance of Seoul: Some cities focus on grand projects and major monuments; others try to improve the infrastructure and amenities available to their citizens. Seoul...has taken the latter route...has pushed out and intensified its street life without building many recognizable monuments....urban and object design meld into each other...with an ease and lack of studied elegance that I have seen in few other cities. By Aaron Betsky -- Dominique Perrault; Zaha Hadid; MVRDV; UNStudio [images]- Architect Magazine

Libeskind's Jerusalem Tower Chopped, But Not Tossed: Says the architect, "we will continue full-speed ahead": ...officials reduced the height by more than one-third...he shared the developer's vision of creating a "wow" for the city...participants objected that Jerusalem is already a "wow" and does not need another tourist attraction. By Esther Hecht -- Studio Daniel Libeskind; Studio Ygal Levi- Architectural Record

The skyscraper at the heart of the debate over America's green building standard: One Bryant Park/Bank of America Tower has become ground zero in the battle over LEED, with some critics claiming the tower highlights the green certification's shortcomings: How did a somewhat wonky design standard become such a strong marketing tool? And what are the lessons - and warnings - that other sustainability initiatives can learn from its success? By Bruce Watson- Guardian (UK)

Pile 'em high: Britain's £1bn plan to build nine warehouse super-prisons: The UK government is selling off bloodstained Victorian prisons to swanky hotel developers - and building new ones that are just as grim and oppressive. To really 'design out' reoffending, they should look to Scandinavia's open, trusting prisons: By prioritising efficiency over rehabilitation, this new generation of bargain-basement holding pens are cutting out crucial spaces. By Oliver Wainwright- Guardian (UK)

From Theaster Gates to Assemble: is there an art to urban regeneration? ...transformation of Stony Island Arts Bank [Chicago] is the latest high-profile example of how the arts can drive a city's redevelopment. But is this always a good thing? Most architects don't build economic engines into their projects...As more architects and artists begin to think about ways their projects can have an impact...the better these efforts will be at blurring the line between art and urban intervention. By Nate Berg -- Rebuild Foundation; Frida Escobedo; Mark Bradford/Art + Practice [images]- Guardian (UK)

Theaster Gates' "Sanctum," Bristol, UK: 'A bricolage of the city's archaeology': The Social Practice artist talks about his first public work in the UK and reaching for the sacred in art: ...amid the bombed-out, burnt-out ruins of the 14th-century Temple church...Gates is one of a small number of artists who has managed to engage with the city at the scale of architecture...What [he] has done so brilliantly and consistently is to conscript the resources of the art world towards social use. By Edwin Heathcote [image]- Financial Times (UK)

How London Fell Out of Love With the 'Garden Bridge': First seen as symbol of a bright new future, the structure has come to reflect the city's wider problems: The pressure seems to be doing some good...But the bad smell lingers...it's fast becoming a symbol of frivolous waste, skewed priorities, opaque planning, and alleged backroom deals by the elite. It's no wonder the city has fallen out of love with it. By Feargus O'Sullivan -- Thomas Heatherwick/Heatherwick Studio- CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

[Bon Courage: Tokyo is trying to transform this boulevard into its own Champs-Élysées: As Tokyo prepares to host the 2020 Olympics, one of its more interesting infrastructure design projects is to make a part of town feel more like ... Paris...aimed at "generating vibrancy and revitalizing communities through such measures as opening outdoor cafés on wide sidewalks" ...The bigger question is whether you can manufacture charm...But it's worth a shot. By Dan Frommer \[images\]- Quartz](#)

[Germantown bets its future on revitalized Vernon Park: Behind every neighborhood success story in Philadelphia, there seems to be a rejuvenated park.: the humble local park is now having its moment, thanks in large measure to a generation that craves public socializing...renovation comes at a crucial time for Germantown...the park will eventually bring people to the commercial area, but for the moment, "what's lacking is a diversity of businesses." By Inga Saffron- Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

[America's \\$900 Million Parks Problem: Making the case for better investing in urban green space: At the end of September, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which has supported the creation and maintenance of greenways, trails and other outdoor spaces...since its inception in the '60s, expired...with no definitive word yet on Congressional reauthorization, parks advocates are concerned. By Marielle Mondon- Next City \(formerly Next American City\)](#)

[Dorms for Grownups: A Solution for Lonely Millennials? In a new model of living, residents will have their own "microunits" built around a shared living space: This office looks like a pretty typical co-working space...CoWorks, in downtown Syracuse...on the top two floors...Commonspace...no other startup has combined shared space and micro units. Yet what makes truly different is its goal of helping revitalize the downtown of a Rust Belt city... By Alana Semuels -- Pure House; Krash; WeWork \[images\]- The Atlantic](#)

[Muji Unveils A Trio Of Tiny Prefab Houses \(Cue Envy\): Konstantin Grcic, Jasper Morrison, and Naoto Fukasawa explore minimal living: ...cozy escapes from the city hustle...three huts are modest, outfitted with the basics, and executed elegantly. By Diana Budds \[images\]- Fast Company / Co. Design](#)

[James Turrell + schmidt hammer lassen unveil dynamic plans for Denmark ARoS Aarhus Art Museum extension: ..."The Next Level" will feature a 1,200 sqm subterranean gallery and two semi-subterranean art installations by Turrell - "The Sphere" and "The Dome"...€30 million expansion that will merge art and architecture into a new civic experience. \[images\]- designboom](#)

[Columbus, Ohio, Tries to Improve the Parking Experience With Weird Architecture: "Bold Booths" inject art into the city and try to make the job of parking attendant a little brighter: You have to feel for parking attendants, stuck in that cramped box...It makes you wonder: Would their lives be improved if instead of a booth they worked inside a green, airy, biomorphic entity known as "The Slug"? By John Metcalfe -- Blostein/Overly Architects; DesignGroup; Jonathan Barnes Architecture and Design; BAWorkshop; Neal Clementz \[images\]- CityLab \(formerly The Atlantic Cities\)](#)

[Madrid Rio Wins Harvard Graduate School of Design's 12th Veronica Rudge Green Prize in Urban Design: ...120-hectare linear park that transformed the banks of Madrid's Manzanares River...completed its final phase this year - 10 years after being announced as winner of project's international competition. -- Burgos & Garrido; Porras & La Casta; Rubio & Álvarez-Sala; West 8 \[images\]- ArchDaily](#)

[A More Active Approach to Design Can Save Lives: Businesses are investing billions to make their workspaces more environmentally sustainable. But they should also consider how sustainable those workspaces are for the human beings who work in them. By Jonathan Webb- ArchNewsNow.com](#)

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