

Today's News - Friday, December 4, 2015

- Peirce cheers mayors and local governments sitting at the table at the COP21 climate confab in Paris - they are "key agents in the global fight against climate change" - but there's no guarantee their nations will listen.
- Anderton talks to L.A.'s Chief Sustainability Officer about "why urban design is central to global climate, and how Los Angeles is in the vanguard of sustainable thinking."
- Speaking of climate and urban issues, plans are afoot to build the "Bride of the Gulf" in Basra, Iraq, that would not only be "the world's tallest vertical city" (241 stories!), but would also be a net-zero energy building (we'll believe it when we see it).
- Hawthorne has a field day parsing the Petersen Automotive Museum's "happily tasteless exterior" and "its absolute and endearing refusal to be embarrassed. There has been an architectural arms race going on along this stretch of Wilshire. The Petersen has chosen the nuclear option" (a must-read!).
- Anderton, meanwhile, goes behind the Petersen's "delirious skin" to explore the museum's interior - "a dynamic environment that woos all generations" (you don't have to be a "gearhead") with "a makeover that is more muted than the exuberant exterior but every bit as dramatic" (fab photos!).
- Birnbaum offers cheers and jeers for the year's developments in landscape architecture: "For broken, derelict, and underutilized urban space, 2015 was a good year - it is also marred by taking - specifically, the confiscation of open space held in the public trust."
- MoMA PS1 2016 Young Architects Program shortlist includes five rising firms from the U.S. and Mexico.
- Saffron cheers local girl making good: "This time, Denise Scott Brown's name is on the prize" along with Robert Venturi. "Given that they also railed against the myth of the 'lone-genius architect,' there is a poetic justice in the fact that they are the first architects to share the AIA Gold Medal."
- On a not-so-cheerful note, RIBA investigates an architect's allegations of institutional racist and sexist discrimination.
- Call for entries: ULI Global Awards for Excellence + RFQ for a new museum in Beirut open to architects of Lebanese origin.
- Weekend diversions:
 - "Bikes vs. Cars" is a new documentary that "reveals that the war playing out on our streets could be the decisive battle of our time. It isn't a story about people on bikes vs. people driving cars, but a story about love vs. hate."
 - Iovine cheers the Adjaye show at the Art Institute of Chicago that proves "he's got the talent to match the early fanfare," and "does something even more impressive: It opens up new ways of thinking about architecture itself."
 - Miranda splashes through LACMA's "Rain Room" and comes away with three lessons: 1) It's "better in pictures" and "made for Instagram"; 2) It "comes with too many instructions" (#3 is a hilarious riff on Miami Beach spas).
 - At Yale, "Pedagogy and Place" celebrates 100 years of architecture education at YSoA - and beyond.
 - At the Bauhaus Museum in Berlin, "Moving Forward" shows the best of the submitted design concepts from the competition for new Bauhaus museums in Berlin, Dessau, and Weimar.
 - Wainwright takes to a bean-bag chair to take in "Black Shoals," a planetarium "in the vaulted bowels of Somerset House in London" that "depicts a cosmos made up not of stars in the night sky, but of money. Stock exchange tickers never looked so dreamy" ("just watch out for the black holes").
 - Saffron delves into "Becoming Penn: The Pragmatic American University, 1950-2000," the "ugly story behind the bucolic urban campus" that included "ruthless real estate grabs that destroyed distinctive neighborhoods."
 - Byrnes has a conversation with the authors of "Heroic: Concrete Architecture and the New Boston," which "reads like a template for how to properly tell the story of any American city's concrete architecture" (why "Heroic" and not "Brutalist"? "Obviously, 'Brutal' is not a good brand.")
 - Gorlin cheers five "camouflaged monographs" by firms that "have produced beautiful artifacts - each completely different."
 - Budds cherry picks "9 things you didn't know about Frank Gehry" from Goldberger's biography: "Misunderstood genius? 'Building Art' suggests as much, painting a portrait of Gehry as a shy, sensitive man who's grappling with self-doubt and ego in equal measure."

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[COP21 cities at the table in Paris: A key moment for world cities - but are nation states listening? ...many mayors and local governments are proving themselves key agents in the global fight against climate change. And some are showing exciting results...a landmark "Compact of Mayors" targeted at achieving significant progress on climate change...But will such efforts be enough to spark a strong nation-city dialogue...There's no guarantee.](#) By Neal Peirce - Citiscope.org

[DnA/Frances Anderton: Why Paris Matters to LA, explained by Chief Sustainability Officer Matt Petersen...why urban design is central to the global climate summit \[COP21\], and how Los Angeles is in the vanguard of sustainable thinking.](#) -- Henk Ovink-KCRW (Los Angeles)

[Iraq Plans the World's Tallest Building: ...Basra has ambitious plans to build the world's tallest vertical city..."Bride of the Gulf" from Iraqi-British firm AMBS Architects...if built would soar up to 241 stories and 3,780 feet tall...a net-zero energy building independent of the city's electrical grid...\[with\] "multiple access and escape routes" across 16.7 million square feet of tower space.](#) By Kristin Hohenadel [images]- Slate

[Petersen Automotive Museum's new look conveys a happily tasteless exterior: It would be extreme - irresponsible, really - to suggest that staring too long at the new façade...might leave you cross-eyed, cause your hair to spontaneously catch fire or turn you, Old Testament style, into a pillar of salt...There has been an architectural arms race going on along this stretch of Wilshire...The Petersen has chosen the nuclear option.](#) By Christopher Hawthorne -- Welton Becket (1962); Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); The Scenic Route [images]- Los Angeles Times

[DnA/Frances Anderton: The Scenic Route Exalts the Car at the Petersen Automotive Museum: ...a blast of the metal ribbons and red cladding...have turned the building into a giant, zany billboard for its contents. Beyond the delirious skin...lies the interior - and the job of giving it equal firepower went to...a design company specializing in trade shows and rock concerts...creating a dynamic environment that woos all generations...a makeover that is more muted than the exuberant exterior but every bit as dramatic... -- Welton Becket \(1962\); Eugene Kohn/Kohn Pedersen Fox \(KPF\); Ulf Henriksson/Sean Culhane/Ron Gould/The Scenic Route \[images\]- KCRW \(Los Angeles\)](#)

[Making and Taking: 2015's Notable Developments in Landscape Architecture: For broken, derelict, and underutilized urban space, 2015 was a good year...however, it is also marred by taking - specifically, the confiscation of open space held in the public trust... By Charles A. Birnbaum/The Cultural Landscape Foundation -- SWA Group; Sasaki Associates; Ross Barney Architects; Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates; OLIN; Frank Gehry; M. Paul Friedberg; Hanna/Olin; Ricardo Legorreta; Peter Lindsay Schaudt/Hoerr Schaudt Landscape Architects \[images\]- Huffington Post](#)

[MoMA PS1 Announces Its 2016 Young Architects Program Shortlist: The 17th edition of the design competition includes five rising firms from the U.S. and Mexico. -- First Office; Ultramoderne; Cobalt Office; Escobedo + Solis; Frida Escobedo-Architect Magazine](#)

[At last: Phila. architect Denise Scott Brown gets her \(Gold Medal\) due: This time, \[her\] name is on the prize... together with her husband and partner, Robert Venturi...she is the first living woman to win the medal for career achievement since the AIA began handing out the prize in 1907...Given that they also railed against the myth of the "lone-genius architect" throughout their careers, there is a poetic justice in the fact that they are the first architects to share the Gold Medal.](#) By Inga Saffron-Philadelphia Inquirer

RIBA investigates architect's allegations of institutional racism: Elsie Owusu claims racist and sexist discrimination runs through architecture 'like a stick of rock' after missing out on vice-president post: Riba said it had appointed a QC and expert in the field to conduct an independent investigation into the claims. -- Society of Black Architects - Guardian (UK)

Call for entries: ULI Global Awards for Excellence (international): recognize real estate projects that achieve a high standard of excellence in design, construction, economics, planning, and management; earlybird deadline (save money!): January 22, 2016 (submissions due February 22, 2016)- Urban Land Institute (ULI)

Call for entries: Request for Qualifications/RFQ: new museum in Beirut, Lebanon; international design competition for Lebanese origin architects with a Jury headed by Lord Peter Palumbo, Chair of the Pritzker Architecture Prize; deadline: January 4, 2016- Association for the Promotion and Exhibition of the Arts in Lebanon (APEAL)

"Bikes vs. Cars" - Is This a City or a Battlefield? As the world grapples with the climate crisis and rising congestion, a new documentary reveals that the war playing out on our streets could be the decisive battle of our time: Swedish filmmaker Fredrik Gertten is no stranger to controversy..."I'm telling a story about different ways to plan a city"...[film] lays out in plain view just how bad the conflict has become...It isn't a story about people on bikes vs. people driving cars, but a story about love vs. hate. By Hilary Angus - Momentum Magazine

"Making Place: The Architecture of David Adjaye": A strong contender to build President Barack Obama's presidential library, Adjaye is a rising star: ...has had to work especially hard at the unfair task of proving he's got the talent to match the early fanfare. "Making Place" at the Art Institute of Chicago does just that...does something even more impressive: It opens up new ways of thinking about architecture itself. By Julie V. Iovine [images]- Wall Street Journal

Art for Instagram: 3 lessons from LACMA's 'Rain Room': 2...comes with too many instructions. Any element of surprise is squashed before you set foot in the room...3...like going to a spa in Miami Beach...as is often the case when dealing with nature, the real deal is very difficult to improve. By Carolina A. Miranda -- Random International [images]- Los Angeles Times

"Pedagogy and Place: Celebrating 100 Years of Architecture Education at Yale" will present Yale School of Architecture alumni work and archival documents tracing the development of architecture education at Yale and the buildings that have housed the architecture program...An auxiliary installation...depicts more than 30 architecture schools from around the world to further illuminate the evolution of architecture education and the relationship between pedagogy and place.- Yale News

Stunning reinterpretations of Bauhaus architecture, a century later: To properly display the works of the influential art school for its 100th anniversary, new buildings are planned for the Bauhaus museums in Berlin, Dessau, Weimar..."Moving Forward" shows the best of the submitted concepts at the Bauhaus Museum in Berlin... -- Gonzalez Hinz Zabala; Young & Ayata; Staab Architekten; Heike Hanada/Benedict Tonon [images]- Deutsche Welle (Germany)

The stock market planetarium that could have a big bang any minute: "Black Shoals" is a planetarium that tracks trading in real time, turning the flow of global capital into a twinkling night sky. Just watch out for the black holes: A black dome...hangs in the vaulted bowels of Somerset House in London...as part of the "Big Bang Data" exhibition, depicts a cosmos made up not of stars in the night sky, but of money...Stock exchange tickers never looked so dreamy. By Oliver Wainwright -- Joshua Portway/Lise Autogena- Guardian (UK)

The ugly story behind Penn's bucolic urban campus: University City...How did this neighborhood of porch-fronted homes and cheap student eateries...evolve into such a powerhouse? ...provocative new book, "Becoming Penn: The Pragmatic American University, 1950-2000" by John L. Puckett and Mark Frazier Lloyd...details how the Ivy League university systematically executed a series of ruthless real estate grabs that destroyed distinctive neighborhoods, drove out small businesses, and displaced thousands of Philadelphians... By Inga Saffron- Philadelphia Inquirer

The Case for Calling Brutalism 'Heroic' Instead: A conversation with the creators of "Heroic: Concrete Architecture and the New Boston"...the book reads like a template for how to properly tell the story of any American city's concrete architecture. Too many famous examples...have already disappeared...Why "Heroic" instead of "Brutalist"? "Obviously, 'Brutal' is not a good brand." By Mark Byrnes -- Mark Pasnik; Michael Kubo; Chris Grimley- CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

Monographs in Disguise: ...the camouflaged monograph - which seems at first glance to be about larger questions facing architecture culture rather than strictly a survey of a particular architect...five architectural firms...have produced beautiful artifacts...each completely different...By far the most lavish and precious is "In Situ: George Ranalli Works & Projects"..."Public Natures: Evolutionary Infrastructures" by Weiss/Manfredi; "Learning Through Practice" by Rob Rogers; "Reveal, Filter, Evolve, Effect" by FXFWLE and Liz Campbell Kelly; "Improvisations on the Land: Houses of Fernau + Hartman"... By Alexander Gorlin- Architectural Record

9 Things You Didn't Know About Frank Gehry: The quintessential starchitect's biography is surprisingly sensitive: Misunderstood genius? "Building Art: The Life and Work of Frank Gehry" by Paul Goldberger...suggests as much, painting a portrait of Gehry as a shy, sensitive man who's grappling with self-doubt and ego in equal measure. By Diana Budds [images]- Fast Company / Co.Design



UNStudio: Transfer Terminal - Arnhem Central Station, The Netherlands: The future of train travel...opens after 20-years of development: ...the new "front door" of the city, embracing the spirit of travel...constructed using boat building techniques on a scale never before attempted. By Kirsten Kiser [images]

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