• It’s a Pritzker kind of day, and we’ve spent most of the morning poring over dozens of reports to come up with those that include actual commentary on and conversation with Alejandro Aravena - all are most excellent reads (with more to come, we’re sure).

• Goldberg considers the "modest, practical, and exceptionally elegant" work by a Pritzker winner "you’ve probably never heard of."

• Heathcote hails Aravena’s "half a house" that might not "seem enough to win a Pritzker Prize. Perhaps it’s because that half a house is half of a very good house indeed" and "his offer of hope to a profession fearful of its own lack of engagement."

• Kamin cheers the choice as "the latest sign of a shift that has seen socially conscious buildings shoveling flashy museums and other iconic designs off of architecture’s center stage."

• Pogrebiv hears from the Chilean that "he doesn’t worry about becoming rich and famous. ‘Human life is so much richer than money,' though "I guess from now on we don’t have to prove anything to anybody."

• Wainwright says it’s "a refreshing choice for the Pritzker, usually awarded to later-career architects whose portfolios brim with grand cultural monuments."

• To other news (yes, there is more going on than just the Pritzker): Dunlap talks to some who are not thrilled with 5th iteration of grand plans for the (currently grotesque) Penn Station: "From ‘Wow!’ to ‘Meh’ in five easy steps" - the latest "renderings may be a brilliant use of reverse psychology - to galvanize the design community to say we can do something so much better."

• Kimmelman considers the current plan for Penn a missed opportunity, and "the equivalent of saying that New York can no longer achieve complicated tasks. We are better than this" - and move the equally grotesque Madison Square Garden, while you’re at it.

• Lam lauds the decision to scuttle "the misguided plans for a Memorial to the Victims of Communism" in Ottawa and "restart the competition process on a new site"; it was "a hard won victory led by a coalition of design-sector individuals and organizations."

• King considers two major Bay Area museums opening soon, andpondersthequestion: "Who are they really for?" Dykers sayeth: "Is a museum a place for art with people in it, or a place for people with art in it?"

• Sernovitz queries three D.C. architects who weigh in on BIG being tapped to design "a new battlefield for Washington’s NFL team" (to be left unnamed until renamed): "Right now, at the beginning, it’s better to start with the guys who are going to dream."

• A look at the first high-rise in the U.S. made of wood - in enlightened Portland, Oregon (where else?).

• Lamster takes a very different tack, focusing on "the very imperfect process of reporting" on a Pritzker winner who is "a relatively obscure figure" whose work most critics haven’t actually seen in person.

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• Large calls Aravena’s work "easy on the eyes as well as comfort for the soul. He’s only a surprise if you really thought more white male neo-modernists from the East Coast were going to be Pritzkered right now."

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are better than this. By Michael Kimmelman - New York Times

Editorial: Looking behind the controversy: ...the misguided plans for a Memorial to the Victims of Communism...have happily changed...government...will relocate the Memorial from its contentious site, and restart the competition process on a new site...a hard won victory led by a coalition of design-sector individuals and organizations...efforts set an inspirational road map, showing how by engaging in public policy, architects and civic organizations have the capacity to influence government decisions and public opinion. Elsa Lam/Canadian Architect – ABSTRAKT Studio Architecture - Canadian Architect magazine

Redesigned museums pose question: Who are they really for? When two major Bay Area museums reopen...we'll hear plenty about the art on the walls and the architecture within which that art resides...pay attention to...how they balance the quest for communal spectacle and the desire to encounter the sublime, one on one..."Is a museum a place for art with people in it, or a place for people with art in it?" By John King -- Craig Dykers/Snøhetta; Diller Scofidio + Renfro - San Francisco Chronicle

D.C. architects weigh in on Dan Snyder's pick to design his new stadium: BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group...appears to be setting its sights on changing the paradigm for stadium design...a new battlefield for Washington's NFL team...All three architects I called said Snyder is clearly going for the wow factor...No experience? No problem..."Right now, at the beginning, I think it's better to start with the guys who are going to dream"...By Daniel J. Sernovitz -- Gavin Daniels/Wingate Hughes Architects; Lewis Goetz/Baskervill; Ryan Sickman/Gensler - Washington Post


New Map Shows the Impact of Future Sea Level Rise: In a new report, Climate Central finds that Asia...will be hardest hit...U.S. could experience huge impacts, too, with land for 25 million underwater...The Surging Seas Risk Zone Map...shows in starting detail what that flooding could look like, foot by foot...designed to help policymakers and planners better plan coastal resilience efforts. By Jared Green [images]: The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

2015 in Canadian architecture: Canada is coming out at the forefront of tall wood buildings... -- Michael Green Architecture.; Acton Ostry Architects; Lemay+CHA, Herzog & de Meuron; ABSTRAKT Studio Architecture; PARTISANS; Fowler Baud & Mitchell/schmidt hammer lassen; Snøhetta/Zeidler Partnership Architects; Paul Laurendeau/Francois Beaudesne: 5468796 Architecture/Moryama & Teshima Architects; PUBLIC WORK; etc. [images]:- Canadian Architect magazine

Best of Design Awards 2015: AN's third annual design award program celebrates some of the most exciting and innovative American architecture: ...21 categories -- Renzo Piano Building Workshop/Cooper, Robertson & Partners; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)/Wight & Company; SmithGroupJJR; Trahan Architects; Marvel Architects; Koning Eizenberg; Thoughtbarn; First Office; Buro Koray Duman; etc. [images]:- The Architect's Newspaper

Toronto's 2016 Winter Stations Design Competition Encourages Locals to Embrace the Cold: Four winning submissions and three student designs will transform seven lifeguard stations along Lake Ontario into temporary art installations. -- Team Secret (Calvin Fung and Victor Huyhn); MUDO (Elodie Doukhan and Nicolas Musche); Calitlind R.C. Brown/Wayne Garrett/Lane Shoree; FFLO (Claire Fumley and James Fox); etc. [images]:- Architect Magazine

Call for entries: 2016 AAF Sustainable Cities Design Academy (SCDA): encourages public-private partnership project teams to apply. Successful applicants will join AAF for a design workshop in Washington, DC, August 3-5, 2016; deadline: January 28- American Architectural Foundation (AAF)

Coop Himmelb(l)au: Dalian International Conference Center, Dalian, China: A multi-functional "small city within a city" with conference and event rooms for 7,000 visitors. A landmark for the prospering harbor city. By Kirsten Kiser -- Wolf D. Prix

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