

Today's News - Tuesday, January 19, 2016

- More Pritzker chatter well worth reading: Rudin has a very interesting take on Aravena, the Pritzker, and video games about humanitarian crises: "Videogame architecture is failing the poor of the world. Aravena is Penn and Teller to the starchitect's Houdini."
- Lamster weighs in (again): the "timing inevitably, and unfortunately, raises the question as to the credibility of the prize. The irony is that Aravena [a Latin Christopher Walken] is widely perceived as responsible for pushing the jury in a more progressive and inclusive direction."
- Hall Kaplan says "Hooray!" for Aravena's win: "it will hopefully lend additional attention to the groundswell for affordable, well designed, user-friendly housing."
- Bozikovic has a very interesting conversation with the Pritzker winner: "Architects may not solve the world's biggest problems - but it's their job to try. Aravena is excited to use the 'gravitas' of the prize to change the conversation."
- Winston's Q&A takes quite a different tack, with Aravena coming down hard on architectural education, saying architects "are never taught the right thing. There's nothing worse than answering the wrong questions well."
- The Pritzker's Thorne offers insight into "the room where it happens" - how the jury's deliberation work, and what makes Aravena's work deserving of the prize."
- Korody offers a round-up of Pritzker stories (most already in ANN), but scroll down to his amusing take Schumacher's "rant," and his own take on what it means when "the Pritzker and the Venice Biennale confer authority to a mode of architectural practice applauded for its political orientation."
- Meanwhile, a Beijing architect "gets back to the basics of caring for humanity" by converting "a clutch of old warehouses in a remote rural village...to give new life to a community through good design."
- Poon talks to the team behind the Design Museum Dharavi to find out if "a Mumbai museum on wheels can change perceptions of slums" - just in time for the annual India Design Forum.
- One more reason to find yourself in Mumbai in February: the 361° Design Conference: Architecture and the City: Architecture | Urbanism | Sustainability, and an impressive array of speakers (Ito and Cook included).
- Kuma denies Hadid's accusations that "numerous components of his design" for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic stadium "are identical to her original work": "despite the technical details being similar, the concepts are completely different."
- Kamin says that while "great skyscrapers are thrilling to behold, great cities are defined by lively streets and rich layers of culture. Where would you rather spend your next vacation, in Paris or Dubai?"
- Heathcote x 2: He ponders the question of what makes a design good, and "design art" - a "hybrid territory where the usual rules do not apply" (has it "become a victim of its own success"?).
- He cheers the urban lighting spectacular: "Done well, it creates a fleeting glimpse of another, more civic city in which the skyline and our increasingly privatized streets are requisitioned as places of spectacle and genuine public space."
- Gould reports on her enlightening experience at the USGBC annual conference, which tackled activism and diversity - and the terms "inclusion" and "equity" too often "used as buzzwords (or 'diversity-washing' distractions)."
- Three (!) we couldn't resist: Rogers is surprised and "delighted" to find out he was name-dropped in Bowie's 1995 "Thru" these Architect's Eyes."
- Five myths about architects: #2: Architects have big egos and are bad listeners.
- Taiwan dons a giant glass slipper church "in a bid to attract more women. It has not been an unqualified success" (oh, really?!?!?).
- Eye-fuls of the 2016 AIA Institute Honor Awards (great presentations).
- Folio's "Hanger Barn" wins the City of Dreams 2016 Pavilion Competition on Governors Island (coat check not included).

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Videogame architecture is failing the poor of the world: ...Alejandro Aravena's best works gradually reveal themselves...This, one might argue, is a more compelling magic trick than the eternal mystery of how some of his colleagues' wild creations remain standing...[he] is Penn and Teller to the starchitect's Houdini...In the real world, architecture moves slowly. In virtual worlds, however, architecture moves even more slowly. By David Rudin -- Elemental- Kill Screen

Architecture's top prize goes to a jury favorite, Alejandro Aravena: ...timing inevitably, and unfortunately, raises the question as to the credibility of the \$100,000 prize...The irony is that [he] is widely perceived as responsible for pushing the jury in a more progressive and inclusive direction...Venice Biennale...is a fitting follow-up...the Biennale has also long been associated with the architecture of a selected group of jet-setting iconists. By Mark Lamster -- Elemental- Dallas Morning News

Hooray: Pritzker Prize to Chilean Architect for Social Housing: Not only is the award noteworthy this year for tapping a relatively unknown designer in Chile...but for its focus on social housing. This really sets Alejandro Aravena apart...it will hopefully lend additional attention to the groundswell...for affordable, well designed, user-friendly housing, that also serves and involves the communities where located. By Sam Hall Kaplan- City Observed

Chilean architect's Pritzker-winning designs give power to the people: Architects may not solve the world's biggest problems - but it's their job to try. That is the message that the Pritzker Prize sent...when it honoured Alejandro Aravena with the profession's most prestigious award...he is excited...to use the "gravitas" of the prize to change the conversation. By Alex Bozikovic -- Elemental- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Architects "are never taught the right thing" says 2016 Pritzker laureate Alejandro Aravena: Exclusive interview: universities are failing to give architects the training that will enable them to find solutions for an imminent global housing crisis...[they] are unable to overcome the challenges posed by politics, economics and building codes to deliver viable solutions. By Anna Winston -- Elemental [images]- Dezeen

"Making A Pritzker Laureate" - Martha Thorne, executive director of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, gives us an inside look: When news broke that Alejandro Aravena was the winner...reactions were generally positive, albeit a bit conflicted...Thorne...gave us insight into "the room where it happens" - how the jury's deliberation work, and what makes [his] work deserving of the prize. -- ELEMENTAL [audio]- Archinect

Alejandro Aravena's Pritzker: A Critical Round-Up: The most vociferous criticism comes, unsurprisingly, from Patrik Schumacher...continuing with a now-typical diatribe against what he perceives as a misdirection for architecture...rant generated some laughs...What does it mean when...the Pritzker and the Venice Biennale confer authority to a mode of architectural practice applauded, specifically, for its political orientation? By Nicholas Korody- Archinect

Beijing architect's Henan village project gets back to the basics of caring for humanity: Conversion of 1950s buildings into a community facility and tourist attraction was a cooperative project...Xihe Cereals and Oils Museum and Village Activity Centre...a clutch of old warehouses in a remote rural village...the plan being to give new life to a community through good design...the adaptive reuse potential of an abandoned granary complex...On a shoestring budget... -- He Wei [images]- South China Morning Post

Can a Mumbai Museum on Wheels Change Perceptions of Slums? The team behind Design Museum Dharavi...says it won't be just another tourist stop: ...between February and March, showcasing crafts by local artisans...goal is to help change the overall negative perception of the so-called slum...coincides with the annual India Design Forum... By Linda Poon -- Jorge Mañes Rubio; Amanda Pinatih; Institute of Urbanology (URBZ) [images]- CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

361° Design Conference: Architecture and the City: Architecture | Urbanism | Sustainability: speakers include Toyo Ito, Peter Cook, etc.; February 17-18, Mumbai, India - [Indian Architect & Builder](#)

Japanese architect denies copying Zaha Hadid's Olympic stadium design: Kengo Kuma admits to 'certain similarities'...[Hadid] says numerous components of Kuma's design are identical to her original work..."When we consider...sight-lines ...and regulations on constructions of this type, it is automatic that some similarities will arise....despite the technical details being similar, the concepts are completely different".... [images]- [Telegraph \(UK\)](#)

Cities defined by more than tall buildings: Today's tallest tower is tomorrow's Guinness World Records footnote. Great skyscrapers are thrilling to behold, but great cities are defined less by record-breaking spires than by lively streets and rich layers of culture. Where would you rather spend your next vacation, in Paris or Dubai? By Blair Kamin -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture; Studio Gang Architects/Jeanne Gang - [Chicago Tribune](#)

What is good design? A look at the many definitions of quality: There are numerous ways to judge the virtue of an object, from usefulness and aesthetic merit to simply how it makes us feel: Design has become a victim of its own success..."design art"...a hybrid territory where the usual rules do not apply...has deserted the functional for the psychological, choosing instead to address the needs of the intellect rather than everyday life. Then there is social design. By Edwin Heathcote -- Dieter Rams; Steve Jobs; Assemble; Theaster Gates; etc. [images]- [Financial Times \(UK\)](#)

Celebrations of light set our splendid cities ablaze: The city is not just about density - it is as much about the ethereal intensity of its night-time dreamscape: bright lights, big city...Done well, it creates a fleeting glimpse of another, more civic city in which the skyline and our increasingly privatised streets are requisitioned as places of spectacle and genuine public space. By Edwin Heathcote - [Financial Times \(UK\)](#)

Expanding Diversity For Design: Activist designers at the U.S. Green Building Council's annual conference prove that equity happens when you take the lead...and follow through: While the terms "inclusion" and "equity" are often used as buzzwords (or "diversity-washing" distractions), our speakers showed concrete ways they are manifesting meaningfully in practice today. By Kira Gould - [Metropolis Magazine](#)

Richard Rogers "Delighted" to Have Been Name-Dropped in David Bowie Song: [He] may count a Pritzker Prize, the Stirling Prize, and a knighthood...among his impressive heap of awards, but unbeknownst to the British architect, he also achieved recognition from...David Bowie back in 1995. In the song "Thru' these Architect's Eyes"...he namedrops both the late Philip Johnson and Rogers. - [Architectural Record](#)

Five myths about architects: The profession is an area where myths abound about everything from what an architect does to how much they earn and the size of their egos...Myth 2: Architects have big egos and are bad listeners...Myth 5: Architects cannot wait to sting you with hidden costs. - [The West Australian](#)

The giant glass slipper church of Taiwan: A 16m-high (55ft) glass church in the shape of a high-heeled shoe...apparently in a bid to attract more women. A huge glass... what? It has not been an unqualified success...Women apparently don't all want glass slippers. [images]- [BBC News](#)

2016 AIA Institute Honor Awards: Gold Medal; Architecture Firm Award; Topaz Medallion for Excellence in Architectural Education; Edward C. Kemper Award; Whitney M. Young Jr. Award; Architecture; Interior Architecture; Regional & Urban Design; Twenty-five Year Award -- Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi; LMN Architects; EHDD/Monterey Bay Aquarium; BNIM; Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Rogers Partners; Jones Studios; Morphosis Architects; Eric Owen Moss Architects; Murphy Burnham & Buttrick Architects; Studio Gang; etc. - [American Institute of Architects \(AIA\)](#)

The City of Dreams 2016 Pavilion Competition winning design: Hanger Barn by Folio (Youngsu Lee and Bosuk Hur). will be assembled on Governors Island... [images]- [FIGMENT/ENYA/AIANY/SEAoNY](#)

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