

Today's News - Thursday, January 21, 2016

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tomorrow will be a no-newsletter day; we may - or may not - post on Monday, but we'll definitely be back Tuesday, January 26.

- Lange x 2: a report on the "opening salvo in the battle to save postmodernism in New York" - Roche's Ambassador Grill & Lounge: "Stop the unpermitted demolition. Landmark this interior and, in doing so, remind people of its undated and undateable wonder."
- She has a great Q&A with Roche re: the Ambassador and UN Plaza Hotel lobby: "I'd like to see this preserved. They were good spaces. Interiors are where we live. That's what we should protect more than anything else."
- The City Club of New York calls for a public hearing re: Heatherwick's Pier55: it's "a deal that follows a disturbing trend in park financing. The construction of a new island by a private entity in a public park is unprecedented and contrary to the public interest."
- In Rangoon, architects are up in arms about a new bank building in the city's heritage core - including the building's architect, who says "the current incarnation of the building was '50% contrary' to the blueprint he handed over to developers" (link to story about what it replaced, and it's even more depressing!)
- On a brighter note, Nonko reports on how adaptive reuse "has emerged as a major force in New York's [insert any city here] residential real estate" ("I think architects were beaten into doing it," says Eckstut).
- Schuler looks at "designing for deconstruction beyond adaptive reuse - a design philosophy and set of strategies that acknowledge that the vast majority of buildings have a life span" (what does one do with tons of steel: grant it to public art projects!).
- Waite "looks at the pros and cons, the risks and rewards" of being an architect/developer, and the "wave of new practices" doing just that.
- An Australian firm comes up with what could be "the Suburban House 2.0: "Uniting suburban populism with design-nerd aspirations, the Offset House identifies why there's so much confusion and mistrust between designers and the suburban communities they mostly don't work for" (offending other Australian architects' sensibilities intended).
- London's mayor "blames architects' 'jealousy' of Heatherwick for Garden Bridge row and fuelling negative press coverage" ("politically-driven twaddle" included).
- Scott Merrill wins University of Notre Dame's 2016 Richard H. Driehaus Prize (and \$200,000), and Havana's city historian takes home the \$50,000 Henry Hope Reed Award.
- Three of the seven finalists vying for the Obama Presidential Library make up the shortlist to design Syracuse University's National Veterans Resource Complex.
- Call for entries reminder (and deadline extended!): Harvard University GSD's 2016 Wheelwright Prize for a \$100,000 research grant (international).
- Weekend diversions:
- Zeiger's lively Q&A with Cloepfil re: his "crafty, abstract, and tactile" exhibition "Case Work" in Denver: it's "like making a piece of art that is pure and saying, 'How close can we get to that in the building?'"
- Eye-fuls of 7 "stunning models and drawings and the buildings they inspired" featured in "Case Work" that are "artworks in their own right."
- Rawsthorn cheers "Josef Frank: Against Design" at the MAK in Vienna: "His commitment to affordable housing is especially timely given its popularity among young design activists."
- Makovsky delves into what went into making both the book and exhibition "Partners in Design: Alfred H. Barr Jr. and Philip Johnson" (amazing pix!).
- Lynch cheers Furman's "Style: In Defence of Postmodernism": it is a "witty and robust defense - nuanced and optimistic...excitingly well written, admirably ambiguous and slightly intoxicating style without being gratuitous."
- The latest issue of the new landscape journal LA+ "sets aside questions of saving money or the earth to focus exclusively on pleasure for its own sake."
- A most delightful read: Sadler's introduction Moore's 1965 "You Have to Pay for the Public Life" - and the original text: "He was the first observer in the field to look seriously at Disneyland - and he liked what he saw."

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Imminent Demolition Feared for United Nations Plaza Hotel's Iconic Postmodern Interior: [Docomomo US] filed...with the Landmarks Preservation Commission for the Ambassador Grill & Lounge and Hotel Lobby...this is an opening salvo in the battle to save postmodernism in New York...Stop the unpermitted demolition. Landmark this interior and, in doing so, remind people of its undated and undateable wonder. By Alexandra Lange -- Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Associates [images]- Curbed

Kevin Roche Talks Threatened Postmodern Designs & Power of Mirrored Interiors: Q&A with Roche about the design of the Ambassador Grill & Lounge and the lobby of the UN Plaza Hotel. Were you surprised to hear that these interiors were threatened? "That's part of our life these days...I'd like to see this preserved. They were good spaces"...Why are interiors particularly important? "Interiors are where we live. That's what we should protect more than anything else." By Alexandra Lange [images]- Curbed

Protest> The City Club of New York: Why the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should deny permission to build "Diller Island": The Hudson River Park Trust has made a deal that follows a disturbing trend in park financing...A public hearing is needed. The construction of a new island by a private entity in a public park...is unprecedented...is contrary to the public interest. -- Heatherwick Studio/Pier55 [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Architects Decry New Shwe Bank Building in Rangoon Heritage Core: The architect...says the current design...is far from what he had envisioned...insisted that the current incarnation of the building was "50% contrary" to the blueprint he handed over to developers. "The appearance of the building is quite different from what I had envisioned"...Yangon Heritage Trust...is seeking to have its exterior altered. -- Aung Myint [image]- The Irrawaddy (Burma/Myanmar)

'Adaptive Reuse' Gives New Life to Old Buildings: ...changing the function of a building, not its form has emerged as a major force in New York's residential real estate..."I think architects were beaten into doing it. The preservation movement is solely responsible for acknowledging these beautiful and flexible buildings...were capable of change." By Emily Nonko -- Stanton Eckstut/EE&K/Perkins Eastman; Ward Dennis/Higgins Quasebarth & Partners; Robert Hammond/Friends of the High Line; ASH NYC - Observer.com (U.S.)

Recycled Buildings or Bridges? Designing for Deconstruction Beyond Adaptive Reuse: ...the Oakland Museum of California announced a new public arts grant program. Except instead of money, selected artists would receive steel. Tons of it: Design for deconstruction (or disassembly/DfD) is a design philosophy and set of strategies that acknowledge that the vast majority of buildings have a life span. By Timothy A. Schuler -- Bradley Guy; William McDonough/McDonough + Partners; David Miller; KieranTimberlake; Single Speed Design/SsD - Line//Shape//Space

Who wants to be an architect/developer? Richard Waite looks at the pros and cons, the risks and rewards, for architects thinking of developing their own schemes: A wave of new practices are being set up specifically to do just that... -- Wimshurst Pelleriti; Foster Lomas Architects; Morrow + Lorraine Architects; Karakucevic Carson Architects; Liddicoat & Goldhill; Cany Ash; John Smart Architects - The Architects' Journal (UK)

Is This the Suburban House 2.0? Australian architects make an intriguing discovery when they peel back the layers of a McMansion: Uniting suburban populism with design-nerd aspirations, the Offset House identifies why there's so much confusion and mistrust between designers and the suburban communities they mostly don't work for..."We wanted to offend Australian architects' sensibilities. We don't want to offend any actual [inhabitants]." By Zach Mortice -- otherothers [images]- CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

Boris blames architects' 'jealousy' of Heatherwick for Garden Bridge row: ...claimed architects' hostility to Heatherwick was fuelling negative press coverage..."The rest of it is politically-driven twaddle..." - The Architects' Journal (UK)

Scott Merrill Wins University of Notre Dame's 2016 Richard H. Driehaus Prize: The award recognizes living architects who have made significant contributions to traditional, classical, and sustainable architecture and urbanism: ...will receive a \$200,000 prize...Eusebio Leal Spengler, city historian of Havana, will receive the \$50,000 Henry Hope Reed Award. -- Merrill, Pastor & Colgan Architects [images] - Architect Magazine

Syracuse University Announces Finalists to Design National Veterans Resource Complex: Notably, each of these firms is among the seven finalists currently vying for the opportunity to design the Obama Presidential Library in Chicago. -- Adjaye Associates; SHoP Architects; Snøhetta - Syracuse University News

Call for entries deadline reminder (deadline extended!): Harvard University Graduate School of Design 2016 Wheelwright Prize (international) \$100,000 travel-based research grant to early-career architects; deadline: February 15 - Harvard University Graduate School of Design (GSD) / Wheelwright Prize

Q&A> Built en valise: Allied Works Architecture's Brad Cloepfil on his Denver exhibition "Case Work: Studies in Form, Space & Construction": The show is crafty, abstract, and tactile at a time when much architectural representation prides itself on slick realism..."They're reminders of what we're doing. They inspire us...like making a piece of art that is pure and saying, 'How close can we get to that in the building?'" By Mimi Zeiger [images] - The Architect's Newspaper

How Architecture Is Born: 7 Stunning Models and Drawings and the Buildings They Inspired: "Case Work: Studies in Form, Space & Construction," a comprehensive collection of explorative models and drawings behind some of Allied Works Architecture's most famous buildings...artworks in their own right, at the Denver Art Museum [images] - Architizer

Josef Frank: Celebrating the Anti-Design Designer: The Austrian Museum of Applied Arts/Contemporary Art [MAK] has mounted the biggest exhibition of the designer's work in 30 years, hoping to burnish his reputation..."Josef Frank: Against Design"...Determined to use design as a means of enriching daily life, he created objects to last and focused on then-unfashionable qualities like comfort and ease...His commitment to affordable housing is especially timely given its popularity among young design activists. By Alice Rawsthorn [images] - New York Times

Partners in Design: In the 1930s, Alfred H. Barr Jr. and Philip Johnson became known as ambassadors of Modernism...Their shared design sensibility can now be seen in "Partners in Design: Alfred H. Barr Jr. and Philip Johnson," a book and touring international exhibition that kicks off at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in Quebec this April...The idea for a show...came to David Hanks...when Victoria Barr...donated the modern furnishings of her parents' apartment. By Paul Makovsky [images] - Metropolis Magazine

"Style: In Defence of Postmodernism": Adam Nathaniel Furman makes the case for Postmodernism as a way of life rather than an architectural categorisation: ...witty and robust defence...nuanced and an optimistic, calibrated perspective, free of the crippling self-conscious irony and faux mischievousness that typifies conventional discussions about Postmodernism...an excitingly well written, admirably ambiguous and slightly intoxicating style...without being gratuitous. By Patrick Lynch - The Architects' Journal (UK)

The Landscape of Pleasure: LA+, a new journal from University of Pennsylvania's landscape architecture department, sets aside questions of saving money or the earth to focus exclusively on pleasure for its own sake...But the larger forces behind the evolution of leisure go unexamined...In a triumph of pleasure over method, the journal itself takes a wunderkammer approach, more interested in the joy of collecting than in the pursuit of science or editorial logic. By Mariana Mogilevich - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Future Archive: You (Still) Have to Pay for the Public Life: Introduction by Simon Sadler. Archival Text by Charles Moore: Half a century ago Moore was a rising architect and Ivy League academic. He was also the first observer in the field to look seriously at Disneyland - and he liked what he saw. - Places Journal



Learning Hub: Heatherwick Studio's new multi-use building for Singapore's NTU university [Nanyang Technological University] responds to the transforming role of the university campus in the 21st century...recognising the most important asset of the campus in the information age - social space. [images]

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