

Today's News - Thursday, March 17, 2016

EDITOR'S NOTE: Happy St. Patrick's Day (and watch out for that green beer)! Tomorrow and Monday will be no-newsletter days. We'll be back Tuesday, March 22.

- Finch says all the hand-wringing about the glut of towering plans for London and New York's skylines misses some salient points: "The failure to develop a proper tall buildings policy is a minor tragedy. The failure to provide sufficient housing is a major scandal."
- A new report describes the procurement process for Heatherwick's Garden Bridge across the Thames "as beset by 'blunders' and 'confusion'" - just as the ink dries on the construction contract, "effectively giving the go-ahead for work to start."
- Young gives two thumbs-up to Dattner/WXY's Manhattan salt shed: "It is in these moments that the aesthetics of the city come alive, which is quite a wonderful gift" to NYC.
- Salingaros thinks that the "majority of contemporary design caters to machines, not people," and explains why "adaptive design offers another way."
- Moore "explores how young designers are making their own rules to get ahead - it takes ingenuity" (with cheers for "New Architects 3" that offers "a snapshot of what less-established names can and might, given the chance, do").
- Dickinson takes issue with a proposal to "clone the dead Penn Station - it takes creativity off the table as a design criteria," and turns off "part of our cultural brain, because that creative right side, has, for many, become too scary to trust."
- Brussat, not unexpectedly, takes issue with Dickinson: his "stock modernist cant about innovation is the old 'of its time' hoey decked out in creativity blather" - rebuilding Penn Station would bring "some real beauty, some real joy back into Midtown. Why is Dickinson against that?"
- Wainwright gleefully wallows in Ballard's 1975 novel "High-Rise," and ponders "what the author would have made of today's rash of skyscrapers for the megarich" as a film adaptation is about to hit theaters (a great read!).
- Hall Kaplan cheers the bequeathing of Lautner's Sheats-Goldstein House to LACMA: he "loved to talk about his buildings. And I loved to listen."
- Cheers to the winners of the 2016 Asia Hotel Design Awards (we're ready to check in!).
- Call for entries: Design Trust for Public Space Inaugural Equitable Public Space Fellowship Program.
- Weekend diversions:
 - "New Town Utopia" documents the history of Britain's Brutalist towns: "They face a lot of struggles, but there was so much optimism that went into their creation."
 - Medina cheers the CCA's "probing" show "The Other Architect" that is "premised on architects working at the fringes of traditional practice, and on the privileging of the collective endeavor over the Roarkian individual."
 - A look at what went into making MoMA's "A Japanese Constellation: Toyo Ito, SANAA, and Beyond": "When approached for a solo exhibition, Ito said, 'If you want to understand my architecture, you have to understand my peers.'"
 - "Global Citizen: The Architecture of Moshe Safdie," now at BSA Space in Boston, chronicles "the evolution of the self-proclaimed modernist and his eponymous firm."
 - Poon parses RIBA London's "Creation From Catastrophe" that considers the architect's role in rebuilding cities after disasters.
 - Rowland delves deep into Goldberger's "Building Art" and Gehry's LACMA show: "we, poor readers, are trapped within the contradictions of Gehry's own unresolved personality," and the show, "like his biography, is full of contradictions."
 - Goldring may have a few quibbles with Eisenman's "Palladio Virtuel," but overall, the "elegant object in itself, offers delight."
 - LeFevre cheers Millett's "Minnesota Modern": "Minnesotans, with their no-nonsense approach, cultivated a singular midcentury sensibility worth saving."

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[Hand-wringing won't help us come to terms with tall buildings: Regarding London's skyline, the question is not whether height is acceptable but whether what is proposed is well designed: There is no evidence that you get density as a result of height...The failure...to develop a proper tall buildings policy...is a minor tragedy. The failure to provide sufficient housing is a major scandal. By Paul Finch- The Architects' Journal \(UK\)](#)

[Garden Bridge procurement panned by Lib Dems and Labour: ...described Boris Johnson's procurement of the Thomas Heatherwick-designed planted bridge across the Thames as beset by 'blunders' and 'confusion'...The report comes as the Garden Bridge Trust signed the construction contract for the bridge effectively giving the go-ahead for work to start.- The Architects' Journal \(UK\)](#)

[Crit> Salt Shed: In Praise of the Urban Object: Spring Street Salt Shed joins a select few buildings...that can be considered estranged urban objects as much as architecture...it pushes the background to the fore for a moment...It is in these moments that the aesthetics of the city come alive, which is quite a wonderful gift to the City of New York. By Michael Young -- Dattner Architects; WXY Architecture + Urban Design \[images\]- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Architecture For People, Not Machines: The majority of contemporary design caters to machines, not people. Adaptive design offers another way: ...design decisions come down to interference and control versus feedback and learning. Does one wish to dominate the environment and all it contains, or to acknowledge, respect, and accommodate its living patterns? By Nikos A. Salingaros - Metropolis Magazine](#)

[The architects building a future for themselves: The Architecture Foundation publishes..."New Architects 3," Rowan Moore explores how young designers are making their own rules to get ahead: ...it takes ingenuity...a survey of nearly 100 of the brighter young/emerging/new sparks in Britain...produces the desired effect of giving a snapshot of what less-established names can and might, given the chance, do. -- Adam Nathaniel Furman; Rural Office for Architecture; Practice Architecture; Sam Causer; Gort Scott; Orkidstudio \[images\]- Observer \(UK\)](#)

[Sprinting to the Past: Do Not Clone the Dead Penn Station: Atelier & Company want to literally 3D print an exact clone of a recreation of an ancient Roman temple...it takes creativity off the table as a design criteria...3D Xeroxing is not veneration. It's turning part of our cultural brain off, because that creative right side, has, for many, become too scary to trust. By Duo Dickinson -- McKim, Mead & White \(1910\)- Common Edge](#)

[Gird Penn Station's rebuild: Duo Dickinson...rails against...proposal to rebuild...First let's understand that nobody has proposed...to "literally 3D print a clone"...stock modernist cant about innovation is the old "of its time" hoey decked out in creativity blather...Rebuilding Penn Station...would, arguably, bring some real diversity, some real beauty, some real joy back into "our era," and back into Midtown. Why is Dickinson against that? By David Brussat -- McKim Mead & White; Richard Cameron/Atelier & Co.- Architecture Here and There](#)

[A long way down: the nightmare of JG Ballard's towering vision: The 1975 novel "High-Rise" depicted an apocalyptic tower that drove its inhabitants insane. As a new film adaptation hits cinemas...what the author would have made of today's rash of skyscrapers for the megarich...Would he have been revolted? Or would he have found...the most thrilling setting ever conceived for one of his dark tales of social psychopathy? By Oliver Wainwright \[images\]- Guardian \(UK\)](#)

[Lautner House Acquired by Museum: In a first for the LA County Museum of Art, it announced the acquisition of the iconic Sheats-Goldstein House...a very much original and, I think, an under-appreciated architect...\[he\] loved to talk about his buildings, each a unique marriage between architecture and engineering. And I loved to listen... By Sam Hall Kaplan- City Observed](#)

2016 Asia Hotel Of The Year Goes To...: ...highest honour, "The Asia Hotel Design of the Year", was handed to Phum Baitang, Siem Reap, Cambodia. Designed by AW2, the project also took home a total of three other awards... -- AW2 [Architecture Workshop 2]; Tonkin Zulaikha Greer; BAR Studio; Tonkin Zulaikha Greer; Hirsch Bedner Associates [images]- Indesign

Call for entries: Design Trust for Public Space Inaugural Equitable Public Space Fellowship Program to support the next generation of urban designers, architects, landscape architects, and planners; an intensive one-year fellowship; deadline: April 13- Design Trust for Public Space

"New Town Utopia" Film Dissects History of Britain's Brutalist Towns: What does utopia look like a half century later...a documentary about Basildon, a planned English community built in 1948...and how a place meant to be an arts and culture hub is now considered by some to be a concrete jungle with a struggling economy..."They face a lot of struggles, but there was so much optimism that went into their creation." By Patrick Sisson -- Christopher Smith; Basil Spence; Anthony B. Davies- Curbed

Bigger Than Buildings: A probing exhibition at the Canadian Centre for Architecture mines an alternative definition of "architecture": "The Other Architect" examines 23 alternative design practices spanning the countercultural era to the present...premised on architects working at the fringes of traditional practice, and on the privileging of the collective endeavor over the Roarkian individual... By Samuel Medina [images]- Metropolis Magazine

How Japanese Architects Rejected Starchitecture: When approached by MoMA for a solo exhibition, Toyo Ito said, "If you want to understand my architecture, you have to understand my peers": "A Japanese Constellation: Toyo Ito, SANAA, and Beyond"...divides the architects mentored by Ito into two generations...[he] considers himself influenced by his younger disciples, too. [images]- Fast Company / Co.Design

Looking Back at Moshe Safdie's Philosophy and Influential Works: The Boston Society of Architects' multifaceted exhibition chronicles the 2015 AIA Gold Medal winner's half-century career: "Global Citizen: The Architecture of Moshe Safdie" at BSA Space...designed by NADAAA principal Nader Tehrani and designers from Safdie's practice...chronicling the evolution of the self-proclaimed modernist and his eponymous firm. [images]- Architect Magazine

An Architect's Role in "Creation From Catastrophe": Amid disaster, natural or manmade, there is an opportunity to rebuild an entire city...exhibition considers the potential of a city that rises from ruins...there is one goal that architects try to achieve regardless of the location or type of disaster: "What you want is a participatory process..." By Linda Poon -- Toyo Ito; Shigeru Ban; Yasmeen Lari; Brett Moore/World Vision International- CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

The Frank Gehry Story: As a biographer, Paul Goldberger has made two strategic decisions...As a result, we, poor readers, have no room to move. We are trapped within the contradictions of Gehry's own unresolved personality..."Building Art" has sacrificed critical distance, either because its author is completely in awe of his subject, or in order to keep from offending that subject's touchy sensibilities...exhibition at LACMA, like his biography, is full of contradictions. By Ingrid D. Rowland- New York Review of Books

Virtual Reality: Peter Eisenman's "Palladio Virtual" promises a new take...: Eisenman asserts that as a practicing architect, he can discern "unseen" aspects in the buildings, and promises to rescue previously undetected yet significant qualities from oblivion...Despite what might be considered defects, in proposing a new approach to the study of Palladio, [it is] an elegant object in itself, offers delight. By Nancy Goldring- The Architect's Newspaper

Minnesota's Modern Love: Camille LeFevre reads Larry Millett's "Minnesota Modern: Architecture and Life at Midcentury": ...a nearly 400-page book rich with photography and illustration, he also places Minnesota's love of midcentury modernism in a broader context...Minnesotans, with their no-nonsense approach...cultivated a singular midcentury sensibility worth saving.- The Architect's Newspaper

Q+A with Rob Rogers, Rogers Partners Architects+Urban Designers: The New York City-based architect talks about the challenges and rewards of public projects, the value of competitions, and cross-disciplinary team work. - ArchNewsNow.com



Caruso St John: Newport Street Gallery: ...opened its doors in London last autumn. Their latest creation is hard to fault - an elegant gem in the crown of London's eclectic gallery scene...the culmination of a long-cherished project of British artist Damien Hirst...sees the practice return to a restrained, almost Nordic modernism of solidity, civic scale and sleek detailing. By Alice Haugh [images]

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