

Today's News - Thursday, May 26, 2016

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tomorrow will be a no-newsletter day, as will Monday (Happy Memorial Day, USA!). We'll be back Tuesday, May 31 (with a lot of Biennale babble to catch up with, no doubt).

- Wainwright weighs in on the Biennale: "Thankfully the moralizing is kept at a relatively low volume" in "a dazzling range of ingenious responses to situations of scarcity and insecurity" (but "still too much of the usual fodder").
- London's new mayor explains why scrapping the Garden Bridge would cost more than building it (but no explanation that we could find of where the £37.7 million of public money already spent went).
- Hall Kaplan gives a lukewarm welcome to L.A.'s new Expo Line to Santa Monica: "It works, for a finite few. It is a win-win for the city and agency, lose, lose for the commuting public" (a bit of fine tuning would fix that).
- A deep dive into the density debate in Australia, with "the views, the numbers and the aspirations" - applicable everywhere ("we are not doing it very well").
- King takes a deep dive into the rising reality of sea-level rise in the Bay Area in the first of a series: it's time to "begin planning for that future now and upend a half-century of priorities that inhibit adventurous decision-making and design" (great read!).
- Lamster gives a tentative thumbs-up to MVVA's "serious plan for a park" between Dallas's Trinity River levees after "decades of infighting and foot-dragging. The fantasies of the past, hot-air dreams have been set aside" (but it is "by no means perfect").
- Speaking of rising tides and flood protection, this might come in handy: CChangeAP is a new online climate adaptation and resilience tool that "aims to help assess risks and outline mitigation pathways for building and infrastructure projects."
- A fascinating perspective: "Can examining the complex relationship between humans and nature through analytical psychology help us to create more meaningful landscapes?"
- How Atelier Ten uses circadian rhythms and ancient Roman baths technology to transform cities with "the next generation of sustainable buildings."
- DS+R unveils its design for the University of Chicago's Rubenstein Forum, "a new hub for convening and scholarly collaboration."
- After basking at the Biennale's U.S. Pavilion, Monica Ponce de Leon's next assignment is a new wing of the Bronx Museum of the Arts.
- Call for entries: proposals for educational sessions at the 2017 AIA Convention in Orlando next year.
- Weekend diversions:
- Mortice explains why "architecture isn't the villain of 'High-Rise' - we are. Modernity, not Modernism, is the film's target."
- Betsky bobs around the "roots of blobism" explored in three NYC exhibitions "that might offer blobists some perspective and perhaps even discipline."
- The V&A's garden now sports the Elytra Filament Pavilion that integrates "biomimicry, robotic fabrication, and new materials in architecture" - while a robot continues to fabricate on-site (cool!).
- Kennicott cheers Howard's "Architecture's Odd Couple: Frank Lloyd Wright and Philip Johnson": "their rivalry was a wary dance of scorn and admiration - they needed each other."
- Budds cheers "a photographic ode to one of the most polarizing modern architectural movements," Chadwick's "This Brutal World."
- Tarleton offers a very different take on Managua's "A Burglar's Guide to the City": his "inclination to look at places through the eyes of burglars and the police would prove extremely valuable were architecture jettisoned as his key variable."
- Cronan finds "An Eames Anthology" to be "extraordinary": "One is struck at the sheer depth of their moral commitments."
- In an excerpt from "Twenty Over Eighty: Conversations on a Lifetime in Architecture and Design," Beverly Willis finds design in everything.

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Alejandro Aravena's Venice Architecture Biennale: 'We can't forget beauty in our battles': ...pitches activism against starchitecture...Thankfully the moralising is kept at a relatively low volume. What shines through is a dazzling range of ingenious responses to situations of scarcity and insecurity, along with a good number of beautiful things...For all of this provocative work...there is still too much of the usual fodder... By Oliver Wainwright - Guardian (UK)

It would cost more to scrap Garden Bridge than to build it, says mayor: Sadiq Khan backs Heatherwick Studio bridge: ...£37.7 million of public money has already been spent..."If we were to cancel the project today that would have been spent for no benefit at all for Londoners." - BD/Building Design (UK)

One Hand Clapping for L.A. Landmark City to Sea Expo Line: ...connecting downtown L.A. to Santa Monica...it works, for a finite few at leisure or for whom it is convenient...It is a win-win for the city and agency, lose, lose for the commuting public...It just has to be fine tuned. And it can be... By Sam Hall Kaplan - City Observed

The density debate on fire: the views, the numbers and the aspirations: Depending on who you talk to high-rise buildings are either destroying the liveability of Australian cities or setting us up for the future..."we are not doing it very well." - The Fifth Estate (Australia)

Rising reality: ...climate change will cause sea levels to rise at an ever-more rapid pace...the Bay Area must begin planning for that future now and upend a half-century of priorities that inhibit adventurous decision-making and design...Fortunately, we aren't starting from scratch...San Francisco and the region need to get serious about the slow-moving threat coming our way. Otherwise...nature might swamp our best intentions once and for all. By John King - San Francisco Chronicle

Dallas finally gets a serious plan for a park between Trinity River levees: After more than two decades of infighting, foot-dragging, false starts, and recrimination...The fantasies of the past, hot-air dreams...have been set aside...A reinvented Trinity would be...consequential in the suturing of a divided city...The plan is by no means perfect... By Mark Lamster -- Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates [images] - Dallas Morning News

New online climate adaptation and resilience tool launched: CChangeAP aims to help assess risks and outline mitigation pathways for building and infrastructure projects...One thing that is a concern going forward is the sacking of the CSIRO scientists that had been developing the climate change impacts data...We still need the scientists... -- Wood & Grieve Engineers - The Fifth Estate (Australia)

A Psychological Perspective on Landscape: Can examining the complex relationship between humans and nature through the lens of analytical psychology help us to create more meaningful landscapes? By Sophie Wilkinson [images] - ArchitectureAU (Australia)

How circadian rhythms and Roman baths are transforming Australian cities: The team behind the next generation of sustainable buildings, including Sydney's Barangaroo, aim to promote wellness along with preventing environmental harm: But there is still a long way to go...there remains a "lot of sick buildings." By Clarissa Sebag-Montefiore -- Paul Stoller/Atelier Ten - Guardian (UK)

Design unveiled for the new Rubenstein Forum: The University of Chicago has approved a preliminary architectural design by...Diller Scofidio + Renfro for the David M. Rubenstein Forum, a new hub for convening and scholarly collaboration... [images] - University of Chicago News

Monica Ponce de Leon to design new wing of the Bronx Museum of the Arts: ...co-curator of the 2016 Venice Biennale...to redesign the South Wing Atrium as a "Gallery Cube." -- MPdL Studio- The Architect's Newspaper

Call for entries: Call for education proposals: Speak at AIA Convention 2017 in Orlando, Florida, next April; deadline: July 15- American Institute of Architects (AIA)

Architecture Isn't the Villain of "High-Rise" - We Are: In the film adaptation of J.G. Ballard's book, a few people's domestic fantasies are enough to tear apart [a] Brutalist monolith...a neutral container for a series of ghastly plays...that fell society...residents...are desperate to remake the architect's spaces to reflect their own cravings...Modernity, not Modernism, is High-Rise's target. By Zach Mortice- Metropolis Magazine

Roots of Blobism: Three current exhibitions at New York museums explore the roots of non-rectilinear form through fashion, textile, and architecture: ...present some historical roots...that might offer blobists some perspective and perhaps even discipline. "Manus x Machina, Fashion in an Age of Technology"; "Roberto Burle Marx: Brazilian Modernist"; "A Japanese Constellation: Toyo Ito, SANAA, and Beyond" By Aaron Betsky [images]- Architect Magazine

Carbon Fiber Pavilion Woven by Robots Opens at V&A Museum: The Elytra Filament Pavilion...is part of the inaugural Engineering Season...integrating biomimicry, robotic fabrication, and new materials in architecture...As a robot continues to fabricate the pavilion on-site, visitors will be able to witness live the cutting edge of contemporary construction engineering. -- Achim Menges; Moritz Dörstelmann; Jan Knippers; Thomas Auer [images]- Artinfo

"Architecture's Odd Couple: Frank Lloyd Wright and Philip Johnson": According to Hugh Howard, their rivalry was a wary dance of scorn and admiration: ...they needed each other...[the book] is an appealing primer in 20th-century American architecture, with myriad insights into the vanity and interpersonal politics of the two men who dominated American architecture for a century. By Philip Kennicott- Washington Post

The Real Story Behind Brutalism: "This Brutal World" by Peter Chadwick is a photographic ode to one of the most polarizing modern architectural movements: Praised by architects - and often lambasted by the public - they're the architectural equivalent of an acquired taste. In your face initially but nuanced as you get to know it better, like a ripened cheese. By Diana Budds [images]- Fast Company / Co.Design

Seeing Like a Burglar: Geoff Manaugh's "A Burglar's Guide to the City": True to the tropes of architectural criticism and crime dramas, people largely disappear from [his] urban landscape...characterizes crime as inevitable, even natural...his inclination to look at places through the eyes of burglars and the police would prove extremely valuable were architecture jettisoned as his key variable. By Jonathan Tarleton- Washington Spectator

Architects in the Hands of an Angry God: Charles and Ray Eames on Things: The lesson of the extraordinary "An Eames Anthology: Articles, Film Scripts, Interviews, Letters, Notes, and Speeches" by Daniel Ostroff, is the Eames' genius for imagining degrees of design interference and degrees of responsibility that had never been conceived either before or after. One is struck...at the sheer depth of their moral commitments. By Todd Cronan- Los Angeles Review of Books

Q&A: Beverly Willis on Finding Design in Everything: ...an excerpt from "Twenty Over Eighty: Conversations on a Lifetime in Architecture and Design" by Aileen Kwun and Bryn Smith- Metropolis Magazine



Herzog & de Meuron: Blavatnik School of Government, Oxford, U.K.: ...creates an unapologetically contemporary addition to the streetscape, holding its own against the neoclassical stone portico of Oxford University Press...Yet one traditional marker of scholarly life is missing: a library...The building's materiality is surprisingly traditional in appearance, though stunningly detailed. By Alice Haugh [images]

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