

Today's News - Wednesday, August 10, 2016

- It's a Venice Biennale kind of day: ArcSpace picks its favorite exhibition catalogs so you can "learn about the research presented without ever having to leave the comfort of your own couch."
- Davidson and Ponce de León take issue with Menking's review of the U.S. Pavilion: he "raises important questions" - but "also makes blatant errors that grossly misrepresent the work that we and the 12 U.S. architecture teams developed."
- Seewang focuses on three Biennale "fronts" that are worth looking into in detail.
- "Reporting from the Front or an affront to architecture?" A handy round-up of critics' takes on the Biennale.
- Pedersen delves deep into Campanella's deep look at post-Katrina architecture, which uncovers a "troubling statistic: the fraying, now nearly broken connection between architects and ordinary people - just 3% of the new homes were the work of commissioned architects."
- King gives thumbs-up - and down - to San Francisco's Rincon Hill towers: "None of these is a hack job, but few of them aspire to architecture - they're costumed product. And repackaged product, at that" (with a few exceptions).
- Risen returns (yay!) to write about an architect/developer's "high hopes" to help turn around "the beleaguered New Jersey capital" of Trenton.
- An interesting question: after a flurry of activity two years ago, whatever happened to plans for the Sarasota Museum of Art?
- Rao offers a fascinating (and depressing) take on how "our culture of fear has changed the role of architecture."
- Miller has mixed feelings about touring the new Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT: it's "meant to be a fresh start," but "it isn't yet easy. This sanctuary is a fortress, too."
- Sisson says the new Sandy Hook school "exudes a commitment to openness and a connection to nature, all while keeping issues of safety and student performance paramount" (Shelby the turtle, too!).
- Farrelly minces no words about what she thinks of not landmarking Sydney's Sirius building: "Vandalistic. Soulless. Crass" - and "explicitly places heritage below profit."
- Perrotet, the NSW Minister for Finance, Services and Property, bites back: the Sirius building is "as sexy as a car park - the demise of the concrete eyesore and the promise of a new, less brutal building will be met with cheers, not jeers."
- Saffron cheers Philly's new Mormon Temple, which "may be the most radical work of architecture built in the city in a half-century" - most recent classically inspired designs have been "insipid" - the temple "is the real classical deal."
- Brussat has a different take on Saffron's take: "She praises the genuine quality" of the Mormon Temple's "forthright classicism," but he wonders "if her plaudits are reluctant."
- Experts who worked on or have written about Chicago's Millennium Park give Toronto advice about how to build a "once-in-a-generation park" as the city considers building a 21-acre park over a stretch of downtown rail yards.
- Grabar gives his take on Toronto's Rail Deck Park plans: it would be "a contribution to the city that doesn't require turning over parkland for condominiums, stadiums, or other private uses. If Toronto can pull it off, that is."
- Hopefully, Toronto's powers-that-be will read The Trust for Public Land's new report, "City Parks, Clean Water: Making Great Places Using Green Infrastructure."
- Plans are afoot - and moving forward - to rebuild Frank Lloyd Wright's long-ago-demolished Banff Pavilion.
- FLW was a great architect, but those who have had to deal with restoring his work weigh in on 7 things he got wrong about design: "It takes a brave soul to buy one of Wright's houses."
- One we couldn't resist (and truly your must-read of the day!): Kennicott's Pokémon Go diary: "I've now zapped two exotic birds..." (bad omens ensue).

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[Venice Biennale Catalog Picks: ...catalogs offer you an opportunity to learn all about the research presented without ever having to leave the comfort of your own couch. \[images\]](#)

[Cynthia Davidson and Mónica Ponce de León respond to AN's review of U.S. Pavilion at the Venice Biennale: In his review of The Architectural Imagination...William Menking raises important questions...Alas, he also makes blatant errors that grossly misrepresent the work that we and the 12 U.S. architecture teams developed to expand the discussion of architecture in Detroit. - The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Reporting from the Front: Venice Architecture Biennale: Although the theme is developed across scales and disciplines...many of the exhibitors foreground the benefits of ground-up design that result when social, environmental, and political lessons trump economic factors...three \["fronts"\] are worth concentrating on in more detail. 1: Technology \(meets beauty\); 2: Environment \(meets respect\); 3: Construction \(meets fairness\). By Laila Seewang -- Alejandro Aravena- Scenario Journal](#)

[Reporting from the Front or an affront to architecture? ArchitectureAU rounds up the critics comments on Alejandro Aravena's 2016 Venice Biennale...Curators of the national pavilions responded with a veritable smorgasbord of global \(and in some cases universal\) issues... - ArchitectureAU \(Australia\)](#)

[Post Katrina: Why New Orleanians Overwhelmingly Choose Traditional Architecture: Tulane geographer Richard Campanella takes a deep look at post-Katrina architecture...\[his\] research uncovered a more troubling statistic, more damaging to all architects, regardless of their stylistic preferences: the fraying, now nearly broken connection between architects and ordinary people...just 3% of the new homes were the work of commissioned architects. By Martin C. Pedersen - Common Edge](#)

[Rincon Hill: Inside SF's first vertical neighborhood: None of these is a hack job, but few of them aspire to architecture. The idea is to fill the allowable zoning envelope and then coat it in a veneer that looks fresh and new. In essence, they're costumed product. And repackaged product, at that. By John King -- Handel Architects; HKS; Solomon Cordwell Buenz; Santos Prescott; Arquitectonica; Hller Manus \[images\] - San Francisco Chronicle](#)

[The Roebing Center's High Hopes for Trenton, NJ, Are Mutual: With its first phase set for completion next spring, the 6.8-acre, \\$130 million project...seeks to help turn around the beleaguered New Jersey capital...The idea is to create an instant neighborhood... By Clay Risen -- Clarke Caton Hintz \[images\] - Architect Magazine](#)

[Whatever happened to the Sarasota Museum of Art? Two years ago...there was a furious surge of activity at the former Sarasota High School...Then, without any public explanation, the activity came to a standstill...stakeholders await a revised design plan for what the Ringling College of Art and Design...is calling its "South Campus Complex." -- Ayers Saint Gross; K/R Architects; Parallel- Sarasota Herald-Tribune \(Florida\)](#)

Architects Are Designing Buildings for the Age of Mass Shootings: Our culture of fear has changed the role of architecture...every new attack reminds architects and building engineers what they're trying to avoid...a world where our cities are marked by harsh barricades instead of open plazas that invite art, music and conversation send a very disturbing message... By Ankita Rao -- Aaron Betsky; David Childs/SOM; Alana Konefal/Svigals+Partners; Richard Paradis/National Institute of Building Sciences [images]- Motherboard

The New Sandy Hook Elementary Is Meant to Be a Fresh Start, But It Still Evokes Tragedy: The building tries hard to signal joy, and it would succeed, maybe, if you could believe that the fresh linoleum really meant a fresh start...It isn't yet easy...The whole place has a playful, tree-house aspect, but indications of its impenetrability are everywhere: This sanctuary is a fortress, too. By Lisa Miller -- Svigals + Partners - New York Magazine

New Sandy Hook Elementary School design finds safety, security in openness: When the new school in Newtown, Connecticut, opens this fall, the design will be as notable for what it is...a complete rethinking of school design...exudes a commitment to openness and a connection to nature, all while keeping issues of safety and student performance paramount. By Patrick Sisson -- Svigals + Partners [images]- Curbed

The brutal truth: we're trashing Sydney's heritage: "No heritage listing for Sirius building"...There should be a word for it. Vandalistic. Soulless. Crass...a culture that destroys its own treasures will end with no culture at all. And when the Heritage Minister explicitly places heritage below profit, it's clear this endgame is in play. By Elizabeth Farrelly -- Tao Gofers - Sydney Morning Herald

Sirius building is 'as sexy as a car park': Fans of Sydney's "lump on The Rocks"...have generated a bit of noise...Dismissing those who won't miss the concrete stack as architectural barbarians only confirms that the building's elite apologists are out of touch. For the rest of us, the demise of the concrete eyesore and the promise of a new, less brutal building on the site...will be met with cheers, not jeers. By Dominic Perrotet/NSW Minister for Finance, Services and Property - Sydney Morning Herald

Mormon Temple: Radical conservative upstart: ...may be the most radical work of architecture built in Philadelphia in a half-century...It's radical because it dares to be so out of step with today's design sensibilities and our bottom-line culture...There have been, of course, plenty of classically inspired designs...in recent years, most of them insipid...The Mormon Temple is the real classical deal. By Inga Saffron -- Perkins+Will; FKRR Architects [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Mormon temple in Philly: The Church of the Latter Day Saints has put up a lovely new temple in Philadelphia, one whose traditional design has raised the eyebrows of...Inga Saffron...She praises the genuine quality of its forthright classicism, but readers may be forgiven for wondering if her plaudits are reluctant - that she feels a church in the 20th century has no right to look like a church. By David Brussat -- Perkins+Will; FKRR Architects - Architecture Here and There

How to build a 'once-in-a-generation park': advice for Toronto as it considers Rail Deck Park: Find private sector champions, don't rush and be ambitious, say experts on Chicago's Millennium Park: ...a sweeping new park that would be constructed by building a deck over a stretch of the rail yards downtown - literally, creating 8.5 hectares (or 21 acres) of new space..."Think big" -- Ed Uhler; Timothy Gilfoyle [images]- CBC (Canada)

Toronto's Answer to Central Park Could Be a Massive Victory for Public Space: ...a plan to build a 21-acre park on top of the rail yards in the city's downtown core...a contribution to the city that doesn't require turning over parkland for condominiums, stadiums, or other private uses. If Toronto can pull it off, that is...Rail Deck Park...By Henry Grabar [images]- Slate

Parks Can Also Be Green Infrastructure: "City Parks, Clean Water: Making Great Places Using Green Infrastructure," a new report from The Trust for Public Land (TPL)...offers several useful case studies that explain the challenges and opportunities involved in designing parks to act as systems for storing or absorbing excess stormwater. By Aaron King -- HDR; Kevin Burke; Tom Leader Studio [images]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Frank Lloyd Wright Revival Initiative proceeds with next phase of Banff Pavilion rebuild: The Pavilion is just one candidate in a list of rebuilds the Initiative plans on tackling. Being a relatively simple structure helped it top the list...consensus amongst devotees is that The Pavilion, just one of two FLW structures ever built in Canada, should still stand. [images]- Canadian Architect

7 things Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the greatest American architects, got wrong about design: "It takes a brave soul to buy one of Wright's houses"...nobody's perfect. Innovation almost always comes at a cost. -- John Eifler; Jeffrey Herr; Gunny Harboe [images]- Tech Insider

Pulitzer Prize-winner Phil Kennicott's Pokémon Go diary: I've now zapped two exotic birds outside a museum dedicated to the people who were once stewards of our primal forests and fruited plains and purple mountain majesty, and this strikes me as a bad omen. - Washington Post

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