

Today's News - Wednesday, August 17, 2016

- Betsky weighs in on SOM's master plan for a second Downtown Philly: "Do we really need another ersatz Oz of skyscrapers?" Even with a sprinkling of public amenities, "it could be better. Philadelphia will still be Philadelphia. This will not."
- Preservationists are concerned about Moscow's rush to redevelop derelict industrial areas; now on their radar: the city's former ZIL car factory - it's an "attempt at a good compromise" between preservation and profit, but it's "more destructive than expected."
- Motor City issues an RFQ for Pink Zoning Detroit, which "invites architects and planners to tear down zoning red tape."
- Musca minces no words about what he thinks of Miami's Porsche Design Tower, which, beyond being "a bland monument of hubris" and "an apt symbol for the self-absorbed hedonism" of the city's 1%, it's indicative of Florida's climate-change denial stance that doesn't bode well.
- Moore considers London's growing network of bike lanes: even with its "glitches," the lanes "have the potential to change the spirit and character of the capital," and "might even prove that the city's former mayor was capable of doing something right."
- Could Elon Musk be taking his "first steps into architecture" by developing a "solar roof" - are "full-scale solar homes are next"?
- Quirk's great Q&A with Adjaye re: his soon-to-open National Museum of African American History and Culture, "its symbolic significance, and the blurry boundary between monument and museum" (with fab photos!).
- Altabe finds buildings "that mimic the goings-on inside" are an example of "form follows function on steroids" and a "relief we need from all those banal, anywhere buildings that pass for architecture today."
- Hawthorne is not happy with news that Thomas Mann's house by "midcentury great" J.R. Davidson is "being marketed as a tear-down" - a "reminder of how unusually fragile the cultural patrimony of L.A. remains - often vulnerable to the whims of their owners."
- A hi-tech, big-data kind of day: Bailey and Villaggi ponder "data-fication" - what "if architects and their clients viewed the value of their real estate data on par with the actual value of real estate?"
- Sisson parses how Big Data is "changing the design of our workplaces," with companies and architects "using computer modeling and data analysis to make our offices work as hard as we do."
- Maguid mulls what architects might learn from video game designers: while the tools "have begun to overlap," they "will never be quite the same because of the inherent nature of the physical world architects must respond to."
- Misra marvels at Italian architect Renzo Picasso's proposal to build "superstreets" through American cities: "there are lessons here" for contemporary urban planners.
- UCSB now houses the "vast archive" of Carlos Diniz, considered the "last great architectural illustrator" who "touched thousands of projects for some of the world's best architects."
- An eye candy round-up we couldn't resist: a Shulman photo essay of modernist buildings, "where sober geometries rub against playful details."
- Perkovic x 2: 2016's "10 most unusual architectural gems" + "10 most exciting new buildings announced" this year.
- Conti's eloquent ode to the "strength and beauty of design" of Pittsburgh's many (many!) bridges.
- Metcalfe marvels at a photographer's foray to chronicle the "the massive, mysterious underbellies," and "Zen-like beauty" of Seoul's 27 river bridges.

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[Weighing a Second Downtown for Philadelphia: Aaron Betsky finds more questions than answers in a new master plan for...30th Street Station: Do we really need another ersatz Oz of skyscrapers...renderings make the plan look like it could be anywhere...the developers have been smart enough to sprinkle around the usual amenities...It is just that it could be better...Philadelphia will still be Philadelphia. This will not. -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill \(SOM\) \[images\]- Architect Magazine](#)

[Moscow's industrial heritage 'at risk' in rush to redevelop old Soviet sites: The former ZIL car factory is the latest to undergo a major redevelopment...to transform derelict industrial areas... ZILArt an "attempt at a good compromise" between preservation and profit..."It's indeed more destructive than expected." -- Vesnin Brothers; Meganom; Rem Koolhaas/OMA; Hani Rashid/Asymptote; Alexander Brodsky \[images\]- Guardian \(UK\)](#)

[In quest for street success, Detroit invites architects and planners to tear down zoning red tape: ...Pink Zoning Detroit, a call to action for architects, landscape architects, policy analysts, planners, and preservationists to test the city's zoning and land use codes for red tape-laden areas that hinder development...Applications for teams are open now through September 16. -- Maurice Cox \[link to RFQ\]- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Miami's Porsche Design Tower: A Bland Monument of Hubris in the Face of Climate Catastrophe: Florida is a state in denial...\[sea level\] is anticipated to rise to up to 80 inches...threat...will continue to be ignored until the city is literally drowning. The \[tower\] is an apt symbol for the self-absorbed hedonism of Miami's one percent. By Thomas Musca -- Sieger Suarez Architectural Partnership \[images\]- ArchDaily](#)

[Superhighway to cycling heaven - or just a hell of a mess? As London's network of cycle lanes takes shape, we ask whether Boris Johnson's transport revolution was blue-lane thinking or a convoluted mistake: They are "doing more damage to London...than almost anything since the Blitz"...They are not, but they do have the potential to change the spirit and character of the capital...They might even prove that the city's former mayor was capable of doing something right...There are indeed glitches. By Rowan Moore- Observer \(UK\)](#)

[Elon Musk Is Getting Into Architecture Now: The chairman of SolarCity takes his first steps into architecture by proposing to expand the company's presence in the roofing market...developing a "solar roof"...It makes us wonder if full-scale solar homes are next. By Katharine Schwab- Fast Company / Co.Design](#)

[Constructing a Narrative: David Adjaye tells us why The National Museum of African American History and Culture, opening in September, challenged him like never before: Q&A about the new institution, its symbolic significance, and the blurry boundary between monument and museum..."what I'm really proposing as a strategy for narrative museums." By Vanessa Quirk \[images\]- Metropolis Magazine](#)

[Design, the good, the bad, and the odd: Form follows function on steroids...effective commercial buildings that look like what they sell...maybe we should chalk up buildings that mimic the goings-on inside them the relief we need from all those banal, anywhere buildings that pass for architecture today. By Joan Altabe- Blasting News](#)

[Thomas Mann house by midcentury great J.R. Davidson: L.A.'s next big teardown? ...asking price of \\$14,995,000...being marketed as a tear-down..."The value is in the land...not really in the architecture"...a reminder of how unusually fragile the cultural patrimony of Los Angeles remains...\[its\] civic heritage is a scattered collection of \(official and unofficial\) house museums often vulnerable to the whims of their owners. By Christopher Hawthorne \[images\]- Los Angeles Times](#)

[Design as quantification: what if buildings could talk? As the built environment goes through a process of data-fication, what does a world of bytes mean for the architect? What would it mean if architects and their clients viewed the value of their real estate data on par with the actual value of real estate? By Carlo Bailey/WeWork & Lorenzo Villaggi/The Living- Archinect](#)

[Office 2.0: Big Data is changing the design of our workplaces: Companies such as WeWork and NBBJ are using computer](#)

modeling and data analysis to make our offices work as hard as we do...part of a move to increase satisfaction and profit by introducing the product development methodologies of the startup world into architecture and design. By Patrick Sisson -- CASE; Gensler [images]- Curbed

What can architects learn from No Man's Sky? Architecture as a discipline has struggled to manage and understand virtual design...While the tools that videogame designers and architects use have begun to overlap, the use of those tools will never be quite the same because of the inherent nature of the physical world architects must respond to. By Youssef Maguid [images]- Kill Screen

An Italian Architect's Wild American Dream: Renzo Picasso wanted to build seven-layer "superstreets" through American cities: If nothing else, [he] certainly grasped something important about American cities: We would soon want a lot more room for cars...there are lessons here that contemporary urban planners can learn from Picasso. By Tanvi Misra [images]- CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

The Art of Illusion: Vast archive of famed architectural illustrator Carlos Diniz is now housed at UCSB's Art, Design & Architecture Museum: Described as the "last great architectural illustrator to work in the techniques and materials of the hand-drawn perspective," Diniz touched thousands of projects around the world, for some of the world's best architects... [images]- University of California, Santa Barbara

Photo Essay: Machines for living: modernist American architecture: Photographer Julius Shulman visited the visionary modernist buildings of mid-century America - where sober geometries rub against playful details. [images]- Guardian (UK)

10 Most Unusual Architectural Gems in 2016: Alongside the completion of some remarkable, long-awaited buildings, 2016 has also given us some extraordinary buildings of a more unusual kind. By Jana Perkovic -- ThePlus Architects; XTU Architects; Avanto Architects; Studio Andrew Todd; Vector Architects; Foster + Partners; Farshad Mehdizadeh Architects + Ahmad Bathaei; Fiction Factory; BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group; Achim Menges/Moritz Do`rstelmann/Jan Knippers/Thomas Auer [images]- Artinfo

10 Most Exciting New Buildings Announced in 2016: ...the most ambitious, imaginative buildings announced this year. By Jana Perkovic -- Zaha Hadid Architects; Shigeru Ban; Thomas Heatherwick; Kengo Kuma; Dorte Mandrup; Open Platform for Architecture; MAD Architects; MVRDV; Napur Architect [images]- Artinfo

Pittsburgh's bridges exemplify strength and beauty of design: One of the most visually powerful aspects...is the plenitude of bridges that connect us...There are said to be about 540 bridges within the city boundaries alone. And maybe four times that when you count all of Allegheny County. By John Conti -- George S. Richardson; Stanley Roush; Benno Janssen; Charles Stratton Davis; Charles Morse Stotz; Gordon Bunshaft [images]- Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

The Zenlike Beauty of Seoul's 27 River Bridges: A photographer investigates the massive, mysterious underbellies of Han River overpasses. By John Metcalfe -- Manuel Alvarez Diestro [images]- CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)



Architecture for Fashionistas: When top profiles of both worlds join forces, lines between architecture and advertisement blur...surreal settings are created, and magical spaces occur. -- Frank Gehry/Gehry Partners; Olafur Eliasson; Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas; Rem Koolhaas/OMA; Gluckman Mayner Architects; William Russell/Pentagram; Legoretta + Legoretta; Kumiko Inui; Toyo Ito; Peter Marino; Renzo Piano; Jun Aoki [images]

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