

Today's News - Thursday, December 15, 2016

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tomorrow and Monday will be no-newsletter days. We'll be back Tuesday, December 20.

- Palafox on architectural activism and the "balance among social equity, the natural environment, economic development, culture and identity, and spirituality."
- Grabar explains why cities will regret "cutting public transportation because they think ride-hailing services will fill the gap. It's a bad idea now. And it's going to look like a worse one in hindsight."
- A look at how some are transforming alleys into "new enclaves that make communities safer, cleaner, and more prosperous."
- Wachs considers what New Yorkers are really getting with Heatherwick's "Vessel" at Hudson Yards: the "renderings raise troubling questions - it feels like a Gilded Age geegaw foisted on the city by a 'benevolent' rich guy."
- BIG's team wins the competition to create an umbrella identity for the five countries that make up the Nordic region.
- A star-studded group of architects have designed prefabs that "aim to reinvent home-buying with a portfolio of striking residences that fuse low build effort with high design" (who isn't on the list?).
- Lange and Lamster laud and lambast in their (always seriously amusing) review of 2016, handing out the Yeah Right, Award, Believe the Hype Award, The We-Told-You-So Prize, and so many others.
- Mairs "looks back at 10 skyscrapers that have bent the rules in the past year."
- Pei's Grand Louvre - Phase I in Paris garners the 2017 AIA Twenty-five Year Award: "Despite the rancor that surrounded the design's unveiling, he gave France an unexpected treasure."
- Hawthorne parses the AA's Steele taking the helm of UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture just as the school "is taking on some ambitious new projects even as it has been reconstituting itself."
- Call for entries: "Maintaining" seeks "bold ideas to use design thinking, creative financing, new technology, and community organizing to maintain our physical and social infrastructure."
- Weekend diversions:
- Rawsthorn cheers "Design Anatomy" in Tokyo, "a strange, obsessive exhibition, which is dense with information, playful in parts, and unfailingly intriguing."
- Betsky cheers "Moholy-Nagy: Future Present" in Chicago that "shows how he found things crossing and even coming together in an era in which everything seemed to be coming apart."
- Brasuell and Stephens round up Planetizen's top planning books for 2017.
- Alberts picks "six projects that would have made for a very different NYC" from Goldin and Lubell's pick of 200 projects in "Never Built New York."
- Hall Kaplan thinks the Jane he knew (the "Saint of City Planning") would approve of Kanigel's "Eyes on Street: The Life of Jane Jacobs" - "a sweeping biography, comprehensive and complimentary."
- Green reviews Dauvergne's "Environmentalism of the Rich" peppered with "depressing environmental indicators showing how trends worldwide are going in the wrong direction."
- Kuala Lumpur-based Lim Eu Jin has found a way to combine his love of being an architect and comic-book artist "with projects that straddle the fine line between architecture, orthographic drawings and the sequential graphic novel art form."

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Felino A. Palafox, Jr.: Toward a more meaningful architecture, planning and design: ...the greatest economic gain and operational savings can only be reaped if there is balance among social equity, the natural environment, economic development, culture and identity, and spirituality...Architectural activism, simply put, involves being a professional who is steadfast in his values... -- Palafox Architecture Group- *The Manila Times*

Henry Grabar: "They Can Just Take an Uber": Cities across the country are cutting public transportation because they think ride-hailing services will fill the gap. They'll regret it: The rise of ride-hailing companies is increasingly viewed not as a fix for bad service but as its justification...It's a bad idea now. And it's going to look like a worse one in hindsight...- *Slate*

From Dead Space to Public Place: How Improving Alleys Can Help Make Better Cities: ...to a visionary few, the negative space alleys occupy isn't dead at all; it's merely dormant, waiting for a rebirth into something functional and new....green alleys have the potential to create new enclaves that make communities safer, cleaner, and more prosperous. -- Daniel Toole; Dan Cheetham/fyooq; Architect David Winslow/Winslow Architecture [images]- *ArchDaily*

Audrey Wachs: What do New Yorkers get when privately-funded public art goes big? When Thomas Heatherwick...unveiled his design for...Vessel at Hudson Yards...renderings raise troubling questions about the gap between the not-architecture-but-still-architecture's intended and probable uses...Why were so many details missing? ...in contrast to the High Line...[it] feels like a Gilded Age geegaw foisted on the city by a "benevolent" rich guy. -- Heatherwick Studio; Nelson Byrd Woltz [images]- *The Architect's Newspaper*

BIG to rebrand Nordic region: BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group...appointed to help build a new brand identity..."Traces of North" proposes turning the current identity of the region around...contest organised by the Nordic Council of Ministers called for entrants to create...an umbrella identity that will represent the region's influence on other areas of the world. - *Dezeen*

Architect-designed prefabs to collect, courtesy of Wallpaper* and Robbie Antonio: Armed with blueprints prepared by some of the world's most celebrated architects, Revolution aims to reinvent home-buying...with a portfolio of striking residences that fuse low build effort with high design. -- Natasha Racki/Håkan Widjedal; Marcel Wanders; Marmol Radziner; Tom Dixon; Fernando Romero/FREE; AFGH/Andreas Fuhrmann Gabrielle Hächler Architekten; Mario Bellini; Sou Fujimoto; Zaha Hadid/Patrik Schumacher; Kengo Kuma; Ron Arad; Ben van Berkel; Campana Brothers; Jürgen Mayer/J Mayer H; Paulo Mendes da Rocha; Metro Arquitectos; Studio Fuksas ; Smiljan Radic; Atelier Bow-Wow; Amateur Architecture Studio; Nigel Coates; etc. [images]- *Wallpaper**

Alexandra Lange and Mark Lamster: Year in review 2016: making architecture great again: The best and worst of a weighty year for design. -- Donald Trump; Santiago Calatrava; George Lucas; Ben Carson; Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects; David Adjaye; Alejandro Aravena; Robert Venturi; Snohetta; SHoP Architects; SO-IL; Bohlin Cywinski Jackson; Thomas Heatherwick; Studio Gang; Marcel Breuer; Gordon Bunshaft; I.M. Pei; Louis Kahn; West 8; Mathews Nielsen; BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group; Lewis-Tsurumaki-Lewis (LTL); Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Patrik Schumacher; Diana Balmori; Bing Thom; Zaha Hadid; etc. - *Curbed*

Dezeen's top 10 skyscrapers of 2016: Jessica Mairs looks back at 10 skyscrapers that have bent the rules in the past year... -- BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group; Herzog & de Meuron; Moshe Safdie/Safdie Architects; Rafael Viñoly Architects; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); LBR&A Arquitectos; Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); Kengo Kuma & Associates; Gensler [images]- *Dezeen*

The Grand Louvre - Phase I in Paris honored with 2017 AIA Twenty-five Year Award: ...recognizes an architectural design that has stood the test of time...Despite the rancor that surrounded the design's unveiling, Pei gave France an unexpected treasure... -- I.M. Pei/Pei Cobb Freed & Partners - *American Institute of Architects (AIA)*

Christopher Hawthorne: Brett Steele, head of London's Architectural Association, named a dean at UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture: ...joins a school that is taking on some ambitious new projects even as it has been reconstituting itself. -- Michael Maltzan Architecture; Johnston Marklee; Neil Denari; Patrik Schumacher/Zaha Hadid Architects; Dana Cuff; Adam Nathaniel Furman; etc. - Los Angeles Times

Call for entries: Call for Ideas: Maintaining: The Crisis of Maintenance: bold ideas to use design thinking, creative financing, new technology, and community organizing to maintain our physical and social infrastructure; registration deadline; January 30, 2017 (proposals due March 1, 2017)- Urban Design Forum

Alice Rawsthorn: At a Tokyo Museum, the Design Is in the Details: "Design Anatomy" at the 21_21 Design Sight gallery is the latest of a series of recent exhibitions around the world that explore the cultural influence of design...a strange, obsessive exhibition, which is dense with information, playful in parts, and unfailingly intriguing. [images]- New York Times

Aaron Betsky: The Reverberations of Artist László Moholy-Nagy: [He] made art that was at the core of Modernism...developed after World War I to create art that celebrates the era's possibilities and exhilaration. "Moholy-Nagy: Future Present"...currently at the Art Institute of Chicago...shows how he found things crossing and even coming together in an era in which everything seemed to be coming apart. [images]- Architect Magazine

James Brasuell and Josh Stephens: Planetizen's Top Planning Books for 2017: "A Burglar's Guide to the City" by Geoff Manaugh; "Never Built New York" by Greg Goldin and Sam Lubell; "The Past and Future City" by Stephanie Meeks; "Streetfight: Handbook for an Urban Revolution" by Janette Sadik-Khan and Seth Solomonow; "Vital Little Plans: The Short Works of Jane Jacobs"; "The Well-Tempered City" by Jonathan F.P. Rose; "What Makes A Great City?" by Alexander Garvin; "Where We Want To Live" by Ryan Gravel; etc. - PLANetizen

Hana R. Alberts: Imagine if NYC looked like this: Imagine if the Time Warner Center was a spaceshiplike mall...It all could've happened. In "Never Built New York" Greg Goldin and Sam Lubell explore 200 unrealized proposals for the city...Here are six projects that would have made for a very different NYC. [images]- New York Post

Sam Hall Kaplan: 100 Years After Her Birth, Jane Jacobs Might Not Recognize New York: He reviews "Eyes on Street: The Life of Jane Jacobs" by Robert Kanigel...a sweeping biography, comprehensive and complimentary...Portrayed is the Jane I knew nearly 60 years ago...a direct narrative. No doubt Jane...would have approved. - PLANetizen

Jared Green: "Environmentalism of the Rich" by Peter Dauvergne: His issue with this now-widespread shade of green: it may not be working...[he] peppers depressing environmental indicators showing how trends worldwide are going in the wrong direction...[his] critique is a harsh one but one worth considering...He wants a new deep green global movement... - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Combining comics and architecture: Before he found his calling as an architect, Lim Eu Jin had dreams of becoming a comic-book artist...has found a way to merge both loves...with projects that straddle the fine line between architecture, orthographic drawings and the sequential graphic novel art form...."Drawing The Blue Mansion" [includes] a pop-up model [to] make your very own Blue Mansion. -- Laurence Loh/Lin Lee Loh-Lim/Arkitek LLA; John Bulcock, Design Unit [images]- The Star (Malaysia)



Henning Larsen Architects: Frederiksbjerg School, Aarhus, Denmark: ...a collaboration with GPP Arkitekter...it strives to set the bar for future educational buildings...a primary school version 2.0...designing the interior of the building as a tremendous playground. [images]

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