Grants allow some grand plans. — Best/worst scenarios for the future. — New Prime Minister promises a new day for Canadian urban centers. — Architects are pompous? (Say it ain't so!). — High praise for the British Museum's "sumptuously austere and gloriously restored" Enlightenment Gallery. — Indianapolis experiencing its own museum boom — A huge urban renewal project for Cork County, Ireland. — Hadid to master plan Beijing's SoHo Town. — A touch of titanium for Gehry's ARO (but no pictures 'til next year). — A Florentine villa gracefully restored. — Shopping goes very upscale. — The Smithson factor. — Musical notes for a Prague hotel. — Nature calls a Canadian talent. — Unacceptable behavior.

National Endowment for the Arts Announces $25.3 Million in Grants - Los Angeles Forum for Architecture; National Building Museum; openhousenewyork inc.; Design Corps; etc. [link to complete list] - NEA

Best and Worst Case Scenarios for the Future: designers, urbanists, and city-dwellers outline their personal best- and worst-case scenarios for the future - Kurt Andersen; James Howard Kunstler; Martha Schwartz; Aaron Betsky; Sam Schwartz; Andreas Duany; etc. - Metropolis Magazine

It's a new day for cities: ...one of [Prime Minister] Paul Martin's top priorities — striking a new relationship with Canada's urban centres. - Toronto Star

The Amenities That Matter: Pools, Parks and the Effort to Build a Community - Los Angeles Downtown News

On the level: modern architecture: If architects were less pompous on site, they might win the hearts and minds of builders... The general public, too...if anyone took the time to explain to them... - Telegraph (UK)

Enlightenment dawns: the British Museum opens a museum of itself... is self-awareness of the best kind. By Hugh Pearman - Robert Smirke; HOK [images] - HughPearman.com (UK)

Eiteljorg Museum plans to expand borders: "An architect doesn't often get a chance to go back to a project and work on it again." - Jonathan Hess/Browning Day Mullins Diendorf - Indianapolis Star

Science centre to be heart of €500m living and culture space: Boston Science Museum...will be heavily involved in running the project. - Irish Independent

Zaha Hadid to design masterplan for SoHo (Soft Office, Home Office) Town, Beijing: 1 million-square-metre project - The Standard (Hong Kong)

Gehry reno unveiled to Art Gallery of Ontario: ...will include some titanium panelling... "But not as much as you might think". - Globe and Mail (Canada)

Savio College opens multi-purpose hall in Dingli...curved lines are reminiscent of prehistoric temples in Malta. - John Ebejer; Cassar, Grech, Ebejer and Partners - Times of Malta

As Beffits an Old Villa, Restoration and Rumor: The aura of timelessness has just returned to Villa La Pietra after a four-year gut restoration... By Joseph Giovannini [images] - New York Times

In Midtown, Minimalism Meets British Luxe: the Asprey store on Fifth Avenue - Norman Foster; David Mlinaric [images] - New York Times

In Europe, a Shopping Tradition Updated: KaDeWe [Berlin] will begin a $54 million renovation... Many successful department stores are drawing shoppers in by transforming themselves into a kind of museum cum theater offering exhibits and performances... - New York Times

A career built on dreams: Of the few buildings designed by architects Alison and Peter Smithson, many were disastrous or just plain ugly. So why, asks Giles Worsley, do they remain such hugely influential figures? - Telegraph (UK)

Architect Rocco Magnoli Designs Music-Themed Aria Hotel in Prague - PR Web

The call of the wild: Emerging architect Pierre Thibault finds being out in nature can trigger fresh, creative ideas. By Lisa Rochon - Globe and Mail (Canada)

Architect found guilty of unacceptable conduct by watchdog - Peter RichardsonZoo Architects - The Herald (Scotland)


Competition winners: Shigeru Ban; Jean de Gastines & Philip Gumuchdjian, Centre Pompidou - Metz, France

Competition winners: Foreign Office Architects: The Music Box, BBC Music Centre, White City, London

Foster & Partners: Elephant House, Copenhagen Zoo, Denmark

Half-way mark: Santiago Calatrava: Turning Torso, Malma, Sweden