A new year and much catching up to do — ArcSpace takes us to Barcelona and Tokyo. — Ouroussoff takes on Israel's barrier wall and some of the "bizarre design solutions" it fosters. — Rybczynski's prognosis for New Orleans is not good. — Official design guidelines for Ground Zero not yet issued, but designs move forward. — New Year predictions: budget challenges for good design, and a prayer for no more plate-glass façades. — A look back, a look ahead. "Narrow visions, not big egos, are the problem." — Year in review from Canada and U.K. — Goldberg finds some pleasant surprises in Shanghai. — NewcastleGateshead at the cultural forefront of urban regeneration. — A poor Alabama county is rich in modern architecture. — Why rural museums are struggling: they need to give "more bang for the buck, not more bucks for the same old bang." — A museum in Leipzig may be unfinished on the outside, but it is spectacular on the inside. — Nobel Peace Centre is a "triumph of technology and MTV style."

Architects and Israel's Barrier: A Line in the Sand: The forced segregation of two worlds that were until recently intertwined has fostered some bizarre design solutions. By Nicolai Ouroussoff [images] - New York Times

After Katrina: What is going on in New Orleans? Given weak demand and weak governmental leadership, the prognosis for recovery is not good. By Witold Rybczynski - Slate

At 9/11 Site, No Guidelines? No Problem. Design Away: How many commercial buildings will be designed...before the official World Trade Center Commercial Design Guidelines are issued? — Daniel Libeskind; Norman Foster - New York Times

Labor Shortages, High Material Prices Made 2005 a Real Budget-Buster: In 2006...All will be challenged to achieve the difficult balance among aspirations and budgets, rising construction costs, available funding and long-term value. By Roger K. Lewis - Washington Post

New year revolutions: Giles Worsley prays for a time when the plate-glass façade is banned...How about frightening the horses with a bit of intelligent decoration...younger architects...investigating how decoration might be reintroduced into façades, with rich results...— Herzog & de Meuron; Caruso St John - Telegraph (UK)

The Highs and Lows: A Vision of a Mobile Society Rolls Off the Assembly Line: We should be clearer about who the enemy is. Narrow visions, not big egos, are the problem. By Nicolai Ouroussoff — Hadid; Koolhaas; Edward Dunle Stone; Kevin Roche; Hans Schaaroun; Oswald Mathias Ungers - New York Times

Year in Review: By, of and for Canadians: Amid banal urban design, Lisa Rochon found three gems worth celebrating...Untested ideas almost always go over budget and past deadline...— Raymond Moriyama/Griffiths Rankin Cook Architects; Patkau Architects; Goldsmith Borral & Company; Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg; Libeskind; Harid Pontarini; Arthur Erickson; James Cheng - Globe and Mail (Canada)

Our intelligent designs: No, 2005 wasn't the year Toronto came of age, but it was the year the city started to grow up. By Christopher Hume — Will Alsop; Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg; Goldsmith Borral and Co.; Libeskind; Gehry; architectsAlliance; Behnisch; Behnisch and Partner; Janet Rosenberg; Diamond Schmitt Architects - Toronto Star

Review 2005: architecture. By Giles Worsley — Hadid; Herzog & de Meuron; Fukas; Siza/Souto de Moura; McAslan; Mendesdoehn/Chernyewff; Pantur Hudson; Feilden Clegg Bradley; Alsop; Hopkins; Keith Williams - Telegraph (UK)

Shanghai Surprise: The radical quaintness of the Xintiandi district...a stage set of an idyllic past...a place to experience the public realm as something pleasant...how potent another Western idea has become here: old architecture is a very good way to make new money. By Paul Goldberger — Benjamin Wood - New Yorker

Birthplace of a cultural revolution: Gateshead and Newcastle have led the way in using the arts as a tool for urban regeneration - but it hasn't always been plain sailing. - Telegraph (UK)

In Alabama, a Poor County Is Rich In Modern Architecture: Rural Studio, under the auspices of Auburn University, is sometimes called the "redneck Taliesin." By Fred A. Bernstein — Samuel Mockbee; Andrew Freear [images] - New York Times

Why Rural Museums Are Becoming Ancient History - Wall Street Journal

Calling on an Inner Strength: Its Exterior Remains Unfinished, but Leipzig Museum Has a Healthy Glow...a spectacular feat of architectural space shaping. By Benjamin Forgey — Hufnagel, Putz and Rafaelian - Washington Post

Nobel: the remix: There's nothing quaint about David Adjaye's Peace Centre in Oslo. It's a triumph of technology and MTV style - Guardian (UK)