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UK firms to masterplan war-torn Iraqi city. Pall Frischmann and Llewelyn Davies Yeang to work on redevelopment of Kirkuk: Building (UK)

Consider earthquake risks of Transbay designs: if the city chooses the maximum high-rise route, it will be venturing into unexplored territory. There has been no experience anywhere on Earth with hyper-high-rise buildings in earthquakes of the magnitude expected for San Francisco (think 1906). By Harold Gilliam- San Francisco Chronicle

London prompts towering visions - and a dose of reality - this ambition and the uncomfortable reality of London’s history in building towers is making people question whether all five of the City buildings will be built. – Richard Rogers; Kohn Pedersen Fox; Rafael Vinoly; Renzo Piano- Sydney Morning Herald

Slow Progress for Ground Zero: the final designs for World Trade Center Towers changes that have been made have less to do with design than with urbanistic concerns about the interaction of these skyscrapers with the WTC Memorial and with Church Street, given a more precise sense yesterday of the experiential aspects of the building’s interiors. By James Gardner -- Libeskind; Childs/Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); Foster; Maki; Rogers; Snohetta- New York Sun

Civic Virtue By Design: The meaning behind Mayor Bloomberg’s vision for New York City: We will need every ounce of creative strength to bring our city into a new balance with nature and in so doing, define a new civic measure for architecture. By Alexandros Washburn- Metropolis Magazine

Leith Docks revamp plans lodged: A huge regeneration of 144 hectare brownfield site featuring 15,000 new homes has been unveiled in the largest planning application in Edinburgh’s history. -- RMJM [images]- BBC News

Royal Children’s revamp: $850 million redevelopment of the Royal Children’s Hospital... -- Billard Leece Partnership; Bates Smart- The Age (Australia)

National Bank of Washington building to host Armenian Genocide Museum and Memorial -- Gallagher & Associates, Martinez & Johnson Architecture-PanARMENIAN.net

Is saving the past sexy? Contest shows it might be... American Express...kicked off a Chicago-area "American Idol"-inspired contest, an online vote that will let people pick a favorite landmark from a list of contenders vying for $1 million in rehab funds... By Blair Kamin -- National Trust for Historic Preservation- Chicago Tribune

Get ready for Hampshire’s most unusual classroom: £500,000 tree house study centre, to be built among the trees of the Beaulieu Estate...designed by architecture student Samantha Sherwood, will replace the dilapidated buildings...is at one with its surroundings and...as well as illustrating green building practice... This is Hampshire (UK)

Tree dimensional in New Zealand: In a prime bit of forest half an hour from Auckland, a newly qualified architect has built his dream house ‘z/2013 a razor-sharp box floating between giant boughs. -- Chris Tate [slide show]- Telegraph (UK)

Architectural whimsy, inspiration along I-80: There’s plenty of junk, but also a scattering of jewels that make everything else fade, By John King- San Francisco Chronicle

Having fun can be serious business for local AE firms: Competing to attract and retain workers leads to modelling contests, skateboard luges in the lunchroom and paid foreign travel. -- Coughlin Porter Lundeen; Mithun; Weber + Thompson; Mahlum Architects: DLR Group- Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce

Cornell Architects Win National Chair Affair Design Competition: their favorite part of the competition was “dumpster diving for recycled cardboard at midnight” – Nicholette Chan; Andrew Kim; Jean You; American Institute of Architecture Students (AIA)- Cornell Daily Sun
Taking child's play to another level: Andrew Comfort took inspiration from a toy from his childhood, founding Q-BA-MAZE to build and market his new creation, appealing to grownups as a desktop diversion and to Lego-loving youngsters as an active construction toy. - Minneapolis Star Tribune

Book review: Filling in the Details: "Strange Details" by Michael Cadwell, provides admirably focused, legible, and sympathetic readings of the similar accomplishment of four very different structures, each in its way a milestone of mid-century modernist architecture. By James Gardner -- Richard Meier; Carlo Scarpa; Frank Lloyd Wright; Mies van der Rohe; Louis Kahn - New York Sun

Thinking Glacially, Acting Artfully, "Take Your Time: Olafur Eliasson" at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. By recreating the sensory effects of Icelandic landscapes in artificial settings like museums, he has transmitted his own physical and emotional relationship with spectacular natural phenomena. - New York Times

Movie Review: Contras City (City Of Contrasts): Static buildings come alive in curious look at Dakar architecture - Tonight (South Africa)

Showcasing the Artisans of Kyoto: From 1994 to 2005, many of Kyoto’s artisans were kept occupied by the construction of a major work of modernized sukiya-style architecture, the Kyoto State Guest House. "Shokunin Event Vol 2" - By Thomas Daniell – Nikken Sekkei; Kiyokazu Arai; Esther Tsoi [images] - Artscape (Japan)

INSIGHT: The Cultural and Environmental Differences of Global Project Types: As the world’s economy becomes more global, western developers, designers, and engineers must keep developing innovative ideas for efficiency improvement if they want to keep ahead. By Reg Monteyne, P.E., and Gary H. Pomerantz, P.E./Flack + Kurtz [images] - ArchNewsNow

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