An impressive shortlist for the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

wHY Architecture tapped to bring Speed Art Museum up to speed.

If Barack Obama were a building, what building would [he] be?...What I’ve been trying to do is make sense of the connections I keep noticing between Obama’s first week or so in office and the ideals and symbols of neoclassicism. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Edward Lifson; Holl; Koolhaas; Rykwert; Piano; Foster [images, links] - The Architect's Newspaper

Ithaca Board Grants Final Approval For Milstein Plan: After over 10 years of controversy, Milstein Hall is finally past the bulk of its hurdles. -- Koolhaas/Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) - Cornell Daily Sun

Keep Your Eye on the Oculus: Even before the recession hobbled the MTA, the fate of the Fulton Street Transit Center was much in doubt...MTA has decided to go forward with an above-ground connection, though it could be sans Oculus. -- Grimshaw; James Carpenter [image, links] - The Architect's Newspaper

The neoclassicism of Barack Obama: ..."If Barack Obama were a building, what building would [he] be?"...What I’ve been trying to do is make sense of the connections I keep noticing between Obama’s first week or so in office and the ideals and symbols of neoclassicism. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Edward Lifson; Holl; Koolhaas; Rykwert; Piano; Foster [images, links] - Los Angeles Times

Dutch to Help New York Celebrate Hudson's Journey: ...NYC 400, a yearlong celebration of the 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson's arrival in New York Harbor...The Netherlands is giving New York City the New Amsterdam Plein and Pavilion, a small plaza...to be built in Battery Park. -- Ben van Berkel/UNStudio [images] - New York Times

The Ritz of gas stations looks for a new life: ...Montreal's Verdun borough is left to sort out what to do with a rare piece of architecture not easily adaptable...part of a neighbourhood that Mies's Chicago firm designed in the 1960s... -- Mies van der Rohe (1968)- Globe and Mail (Canada)

First Look at Bacara Condos: Residents, Planners Fret over Architecture, Beach Access...met with an unsure response...feared the minimalist, modern design clashed with Bacara's otherwise Spanish Mission-influenced aesthetic..."this building needs more playfulness. It's too rigid." -- John Pawson/BB UK Studio [image, links] - Santa Barbara Independent (California)

Contract Celebrates 30 Years of the Interiors Awards: 2009 Legend Wing Chao of Walt Disney Imagineering and 2009 Designers of the Year John Peterson and John Cary of Public Architecture...-- M Moser Associates; Poteet Architects; Nema Workshop; Enter Architecture; Shimoda Design Group; Clive Wilkinson Architects; Elliott + Associates; Mark Cavagnero; Zimmer Gunsul Frasca (ZGF); Westlake Reed Leskosky/Heritage Architecture & Planning [links to info/images] - Contract magazine

Q+A: Tom Kundig: Seattle's kinetic man on the move talks about his Alaskan architectural roots, the West's design boom, and nabbing the AIA firm-of-the-year award. -- Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen [images] - The Architect's Newspaper

Call for entries: 2009 Open Architecture Challenge: Classroom ...challenge to the global design community to partner with teachers and students to design the classrooms of tomorrow; registration deadline: May 1 - Architecture for Humanity

Template for the built world: "Andrea Palladio: His Life and Legacy"...designed by architect and academician Eric Parry, is serious, scholarly and superb...It is, perhaps, a little uncritical...But there is such depth here...a profile of an infinitely inventive magpie mind...that you can forgive almost anything. By Edwin Heathcote [images] - Financial Times (UK)

"Palladio was passé in his own time": guest writer Francis Terry reassesses the master...Palladio-mania is just going too far...he was passé in his own time." (flower market, anyone?).

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6 Finalists Vie to Design History Museum: National Museum of African American History and Culture...on the Mall in the shadow of the Washington Monument. -- Devrouax & Purnell/Pei Cobb Freed; Foster + Partners/URS; Freelon Adjaye Bond/SmithGroup; Diller Scofidio + Renfro/KlingStubbins; Moshe Safdie/Sultan Campbell Britt; Moody Nolan/Antoine Predock - Washington Post

Architects chosen for Speed Art Museum update: ...charged with the Speed's expansion and creation of a connection with landscape and nature as well as correcting challenges created by three additions to the original 1927 building... -- wHY Architecture-Courier-Journal (Louisville, KY)

Weekend diversions: two very different takes on Palladio: Heathcote: Parry's exhibition design is "serious, scholarly, and superb": Terry: "Palladio-mania is just going too far...he was passé in his own time." (flower market, anyone?).

Newcomers in the world of policy design: two different reactions to the new Miini housing in London: Heathcote: Parry's exhibition design is "serious, scholarly, and superb": Terry: "Palladio-mania is just going too far...he was passé in his own time." (flower market, anyone?).

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"Palladio was passé in his own time": guest writer Francis Terry reassesses the master...Palladio-mania is just going too far...by contemporary taste, he should be derided as a backward looking plagiarist with no ideas of his own...not about innovation or cutting edge attitudes it is instead the architecture of politeness and good taste. [images] - HughPearman.com (UK)
An Artful Response to Disaster: Salvaging a FEMA-style trailer, the formaldehyde-ridden government response to temporary shelter, and reinventing it as the Emergency Response Studio...will be featured at Rice University Gallery through March 1. -- Paul Villinski [images, links] - Metropolis Magazine

So, how relative is your art visa? Bose Krishnamachari surely deserves an applause, for going ahead with "Relative Visa" [in Mumbai]...an exciting intersection of art, architecture and design...aspires to blur the boundaries between each form. - Times of India

Painting exhibition of Goldfinger's other modernist tower: ...elegies to Balfron Tower charm...Being inside the subject of the paintings was strangely incongruous, largely because Peter Wylie's interpretation of social housing is so optimistic...[slide show]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Book review: An Egotistical Architect as Seen by His Women: T. C. Boyle's dreary new novel "The Women" manages to turn the gripping, operatic saga of Frank Lloyd Wright and the women in his life into a tedious, predictable melodrama...inorganic, needlessly complex architecture — of the sort that Wright would utterly disdain in a building — serves no discernible purpose. - New York Times

Book reviews: Woolsworth's shrine to commerce: The limitless ambitions, and problematic achievements, of science and urban planning in the early 20th century: "The Skyscraper and the City: The Woolworth Building and the making of modern New York" by Gall Fenske; "Invented Edens: Techno-cities of the twentieth century" by Robert H. Kargon, Arthur P. Molella; "Another City: Urban life and urban spaces in the new American republic" by Dell Upton- The Times (UK)

Book review: "Slow-Tech" by Andrew Price: Manifesto for an Overwound World: why modern ideas of efficiency are bad, and why the world must get back to building things that last- The Times (UK)

Book review: The architecture of England's green and pleasant homes: "Building the New Jerusalem: architecture, housing & politics 1900-30" by Mark Swenarton examines the philosophical underpinnings of early 20th century British housing architecture and its contribution to the development of continental modernism. [images] - BD/Building Design (UK)

-- SMC Alsop: Stratford DLR Station, London, UK
-- Grimshaw Architects/Arcadis Architecten: Bijlmer ArenA Station, Amsterdam, The Netherlands - ArcSpace