To subscribe to the free daily newsletter click here

-- Zaha Hadid Architects: Port House, Antwerp, Belgium
-- Under construction: MAD Architects: The Absolute Towers, Mississauga, Canada

Old Damascus struggles to cope in the new Syria: ...crowded district...is in danger of losing this endearing character...Now, the debate on how much latitude to give private enterprise is gathering steam as authorities try to balance revitalizing the 128-hectare old city with preservationist goals..."This city is being turned into an amusement park"... (AP) - The Daily Gleaner (Canada)

A thing of beauty is a joy forever: I am...surprised that with so many brilliant minds engaged in Architecture, Town and Country Planning...so much offends the eye and mind in our habitat...Now that we have got many talented architects, I expect Ghana and especially Accra, to be a town of beauty. But I am greatly disappointed in what I see. -- T.S. Clerk; David Wilberforce Kwame Dawson - myjoyonline.com (Ghana)

Strange loop: Is Rem Koolhaas's gravity-defying Beijing monument [CCTV] the world's most important building? Alex Pasarack digs deep into the "anti-icon icon", CCTV and the "construction of a conundrum" (one of the best analyses we've seen).
-- Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) - The National (Abu Dhabi)

French-Vietnamese artist unveils city of the future: Tran Van Liem's vision for a cultural city of the future may be one step closer to fruition as many local architects praised it as a bold and creative vision...has spent 20 years developing the plans for Van Lang City. - VietNamNet Bridge

Disorder in the court: Wrong-headed ruling threatens Chicago's architectural treasures: ...aims a dagger at the heart of Chicago's landmarks law and measures like it around the nation. By Blair Kamin - Chicago Tribune

Forget 'stunning' or 'hideous.' How'd the place work? As Wake County prepares to demolish its landmark Garland Jones Building to make way for a courthouse in downtown Raleigh, fans and foes are carrying on a lively debate...But overlooked...is what the building was like to work in. "It really was bad...just overall gloomy." -- Howard Musick (1961) [image]- News & Observer (North Carolina)

New Capitol Visitor Center: not a capital idea: ...when it comes to the aesthetic and financial perils of government-sponsored architecture, you could hardly invent a more perfect cautionary tale than the one embodied by this grandiose complex sunk into the east side of Capitol Hill...an architectural combination uniquely suited to Washington: marbled pork. By Christopher Hawthorne -- RTKL; Alan M. Hantman [images]- Los Angeles Times

North Myrtle Beach eyesore to become smart growth persuasive precedent: ...on its way to becoming a welcoming town center complete with shops and a single family home neighborhood. -- Environmental Concepts [images]- North Myrtle Beach Online.com (South Carolina)

The Shipping Container as Building Block: A design competition challenged architects to use prefabricated containers as housing "modules."..."Live the Box" posed a new and more extensive challenge: creation of an urban multifamily mixed-use project... -- R+M: Modulaire; Tang & Yang Architects [images]- New York Times

A roof over your head? So last year: Design innovations are showing that houses - and cars - can have flexible shapes...Sliding House...answers an old question in a new way: how can we employ efficient materials and the latest technology to make the very best use of this site? By Stephen Bayley -- dRMM (de Rijke Marsh Morgan) [image, links]- Observer (UK)

Laura Bush enthusiastic about landscape architect for presidential library: However, SMU's ownership of part of the library...
grounds is still in dispute. -- Michael Van Valkenburgh

Architects want polar bears on Korkeasaari: Winning entry in competition calls for imposing new entrance building to Helsinki Zoo -- Beckmann-N'Thepe [images] - Helsingin Sanomat (Finland)

Maple Grove moves ahead with town green plans: A stylized bandshell will be a focal point for a lively community gathering place. -- HGA Architects [image] - Minneapolis Star Tribune

The World's Best Gadget Designers Speak in "Objectified": Gary Hustwit gathered the world's top designers for his forthcoming documentary, telling the story of the magic behind the objects we use every day. [links, video] - Gizmag (Australia)

Call for entries: 2009 Dulux Colour Awards (projects must be in Australia); deadline: February 20 - Dulux Australia

Land ho! House glides across ice on White Bear Lake: Like a ship, the two-story, 60-ton house seemed to gracefully skim the frozen waters...Without the ice rescue the 1880s-era house would be torn down. [images, video] - Minneapolis Star Tribune

Gossip is good for testing business ideas: Researchers have said.

Gossip is good for testing business ideas: Companies should harness water-cooler gossip to test business ideas, researchers have said. -- Telegraph (UK)