• An in-depth look at New Songdo City and plans to standardize many elements in other high-tech, green, built-from-scratch cities (Cisco has 9 green cities on the boards; 20 more could follow), but is it really the way to go?
• Once-shunned Marrakech has transformed itself into a luxury hot spot, but not all of the effects have been positive (does it really need 15 golf courses?).
• Aberdeen could one day sport a Guggenheim Scotland, but is it such a good idea; there's a "vital difference between the Guggenheim effect and the Bilbao effect."
• Dublin's Tara Street Station redevelopment, including a landmark office development, gets the go-ahead.
• The NYC Active Design Guidelines offers user-friendly common sense ideas to engineer physical activity back into the city (hopefully, other cities will take advantage as well).
• Top sustainability trends: will the next 10 years be "the turning point for addressing climate change by using effective urban management strategies," or seen the 'time when we collectively fumbled the Big Blue Ball."
• RMJM tapped for an indoor ski centre in Vladivostok that will rival facilities in Dubai.
• Beijing's Water Cube slated to be a water park and large-scale entertainment destination "reportedly being designed by a yet-to-be-named Canadian firm."
• Moscow's mayor calling out the wrecking balls once again
• this time an artists' colony that is one of the city's "last green enclaves" (even Corbu had a house there).
• It's pastor vs. preservationists in plans for a landmarked church in Manhattan.
• Plans to demolish an International Style church in Salem, MA, to make room for an apartment building hit a road block.
• Saffron cheers NYC's urbanSHED competition to redesign sidewalk sheds, but "it's likely to take some persuasion" to get installers to use it.
• This year's Times Square valentine to the city will melt your heart.
• Weekend diversions;
• Ouroussioff cheers four films as "an unusually earnest, and long overdue, effort to explore a fascinating question: What is it like to live or work inside a piece of art?"
• Architects' notebooks are the center of attention at Montreal's CCA and Belfast's PLACE gallery.
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Inhabiting a Piece of Art: It's Not Always So Pretty: Four films by Ila Beka and Louise Lemoine...at the Storefront for Art and Architecture...feel like fresh takes on architecture, avoiding the clichés about architects as pretentious eggheads oblivious to their clients' needs...represent an unusually earnest, and long overdue, effort to explore a fascinating question: What is it like to live or work inside a piece of art? By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- Rem Koolhaas; Frank Gehry; Richard Meier; Herzog & de Meuron- New York Times

CCA presents the exhibition "Take Note":...traces selected pivotal moments in the ongoing relationship between writing and architecture over the past 50 years...explores the intellectual dimension of architecture...in which architects visualise their ideas and transcribe them in their notes... -- Sylvia Lavin; Gordon Matta-Clark; John Hejduk; Gehry Partners; Greg Lynn FORM; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Stan Allen Architect; Bernard Tschumi; Reiser+ Umemoto RUR Architecture- Archiseek (Canada)

"Hidden World" of Architecture Revealed: "The Secret Laboratory - Notebooks and Narratives" at Belfast's PLACE gallery brings together a series of private reflections by architects from across Ireland and the UK...captured in their notebooks. - 4NI (UK)

Ewan Gibbs' drawings suite marks SFMOMA's 75th: Devotees of San Francisco, like the zealous defenders of any locale, tend to be spooked by change...That's why an outsider's perspective on the city can be revealing, if only to remind us that big cities are far more flexible than we think...a procession of impressions, legible and elusive at once. by John King [images] - San Francisco Chronicle

It's time we took design seriously: These books all do something to fill the gap of serious criticism; but much more is needed. By Edwin Heathcote -- "Glimmer: How Design Can Transform Your Life and Maybe Even the World"/Warren Berger; "Woman as Design" by Stephen Bayley; "Design in Britain: Big Ideas (Small Island)") edited by Dejan Sudjic; "Dansk Design by Thomas Dickson; "Limited Edition: Prototypes, One-offs and Design Art Furniture" by Sophie Lovell- Financial Times (UK)

Today's preservation ethic is destructive: "The Future of the Past: A Conservation Ethic for Architecture, Urbanism and Historic Preservation" by Steven Semes asks professionals in those fields to re-examine the ethic that many of them embrace today, which sees historic buildings as "documents of their time" with "little relevance to how we design buildings and cities today." By David Brussat- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

Photo book focuses on redundant architects: Ex Heatherwick employee's project highlights positive side of job losses - BD/Building Design (UK)

INSIGHT: Can Green Interiors Help Power the Recovery? How the demand for sustainability and long-term value are shifting attitudes in the world of commercial interiors, creating an environment ripe for design professionals with incentives for both landlords and tenants to move the sustainability agenda forward. By Sascha Wagner, IDA, CID, LEED AP, and Robin Bass, LEED AP- ArchNewsNow

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