• More musings on the Venice Biennale: Heathcote finds it "good to look at but also unsettlingly light on ideas"...People may meet in architecture but what happens once they've met?
By Edwin Heathcote—Financial Times (UK)

• This year's Venice Architecture Biennale is about people, not plans: Too many design exhibitions are big on architectural theory, but miss what really matters: human beings. This one is different...much more about what should happen inside buildings...puts the human experience back at the heart of architecture. By Justin McGuirk — Kazuyo Sejima/SANA; Tetsuo Kondo/Transsolar; Junya Ishigami; Olafur Eliasson—Guardian (UK)

• The house that Muf built: ...British pavilion...brings together people and ideas in a rich and complex exchange between London and Venice, and between architecture, science and education...Villa Frankenstein riffs on Ruskin's verdict on suburban London and the strange things that happen when architectural styles travel...a triumph...represents London at its critical and reflective best....By Kieran Long [images]—Evening Standard (UK)

• Four powerhouse teams named finalists in central waterfront design: All teams have substantial local involvement by architecture and landscape architecture firms...Each is headed by a firm or person with international recognition...How could we possibly miss? In theory we shouldn't. By Mark Hinshaw — Gustafson Guthrie Nichol/Foster + Partners/Jones & Jones; Weinstein A/U; Michael Van Valkenburgh/Ken Greenberg/James Carpenter/Peter Steinbrueck; James Corner Field Operations
Wallace Roberts & Todd (WRT)/Atelier Dreiseitl/SRG Partnership—Crosscut (Seattle)

• A disdain for urban planning is the problem, not overcrowding: Lack of planning has given us urban squarer, where, with a bit of regulation, dense populations could live in comfort...doesn't necessitate draconian immigration caps, but rather something terribly unfashionable — town planning. By Owen Hatherley — Ray Mark Rinaldi— Brad Cloepfil/Allied Works

• A bold landmark by the Expo Line: Eric Owen Moss' Samitaur Tower in Culver City will display video and artwork visible to transit riders on the light-rail line...Part monument and part building...It looks like a work in progress, a gathering spot and seeds of future troubles. — Abdelhalim Ibrahim Abdelhalim—New York Times

• A bold landmark by the Expo Line: Eric Owen Moss' Samitaur Tower in Culver City will display video and artwork visible to transit riders on the light-rail line...Part monument and part building...It looks like a work in progress, a gathering spot and seeds of future troubles. — Abdelhalim Ibrahim Abdelhalim—New York Times

• To Catch Cairo Overflow, 2 Megacities Rise in Sand: ...government's original plans...conceived of 6 October City...and New Cairo...as havens for working-class Cairoens. So far, however, the overwhelming majority of new residents come from Egypt's uppermost economic strata...doesn't necessitate draconian immigration caps, but rather something terribly unfashionable — town planning. By Edwin Heathcote—Financial Times (UK)

• Can Designing for a Dictator Actually Be Virtuous? Baby-faced starchitect Bjarke Ingels sits down with Co.Design to discuss

• Long sees Britain's Villa Frankenstein "a triumph" that "represents London at its critical and reflective best." (we liked it, too!)

• Four "powerhouse teams" in the running to re-shape Seattle's central waterfront, each headed by an international star; "How could we possibly miss? In theory we shouldn't," says Hinshaw.

• Libeskind tapped to design Halifax memorial to mark Canada's refusal of Jews in 1939.

• Hatherley takes on density and urban squalor: the solution is not "draconian immigration caps, but rather something terribly unfashionable - town planning."

• Cairo sees two mega-cities as a haven for the city's overcrowded working class, but there's a catch: "the overwhelming majority of new residents come from Egypt's uppermost economic strata."

• Russell x 2: Brad Pitt's Make It Right project in New Orleans mixes "insightful designs by local architects with adventurous work by rising stars and big names from around the world...to fit the city's post-Katrina reality."

• Perhaps if "a few cowardly members of Congress" visited the Empire State Building's uber-green makeover, they would see "proof that reducing energy and carbon emissions is good for the bottom line." By Mark Hinshaw—Guardian (UK)

• To Catch Cairo Overflow, 2 Megacities Rise in Sand: "the overwhelming majority of new residents come from Egypt's uppermost economic strata...doesn't necessitate draconian immigration caps, but rather something terribly unfashionable - town planning."

• Sheikh Zayed's DNA: How did a small family Clan win a billion-dollar commission to build a modern metropolis in the desert of Abu Dhabi...Can Designing for a Dictator Actually Be Virtuous? Baby-faced starchitect Bjarke Ingels sits down with Co.Design to discuss
a controversial commission and saving Brazil from the Olympics curse. By Cliff Kuang -- BIG/Bjarke Ingels Group [images, links]- Fast Company

University architecture shapes up for a revolution: Learning Landscapes in Higher Education, a research project into the relationship between students, lecturers and researchers and the buildings they use, aims to bring a new creativity to campus design. By Jonathan Glancey -- Mike Neary; David Chidick; Rick Mather; DEGW; MacCormac Jamieson Prichard; SANAA [links]- Guardian (UK)

I.D. Annual Design Review winners: ...the best in product, furniture, graphic, and environment design, from the iconic to the obscure. -- Clive Wilkinson Architects/Woods Bagot/Fitzpatrick + Partners; Jane Hutton/Adrian Blackwell; Pentagram/Thom Mayne/Morphosis; Hoberman Associates; Studio O+A; MUMA (McInnes Usher McKnight Architects); Grimshaw; Rogers Marvel Architects; etc. [links to images, info]- I.D. magazine

The Art of Ennobling Communities: Interview with Sara Caples and Everardo Jefferson: These architects have proven time and time again that architecture can transform reality and change attitudes. By Vladimir Belogolovsky [images]- ArchNewsNow

KK Letter: Work and time off in Beijing: ...working on the installation of the first Frank Gehry exhibition in China...an opportunity to combine work with a short vacation...We will be back on September 6th. -- Foster + Partners; Kengo Kuma; Arata Isozaki; Paul Andreu [images]