• Hatherley minces no words about new, highly-touted developments that are more spaces "of hubris," dated even before completed, built on ideas that are "as derelict and desolate as the buildings themselves" (ouch!).
• Does Masdar really offer lessons for Jakarta (or anywhere) as the "answer to the sustainable urban planning conundrum," or will it "turn out to be another method of separating the rich from the poor"?
• Perhaps we'd be better off studying Fathy's 1952 New Gourna Village in Luxor, now to be safeguarded by UNESCO.
• TV's "Extreme Makeover" project inspires local Buffalo groups to tackle a new strategy of transforming whole blocks instead of one house at a time.
• Russell ruminates on MVVA's plans for the St. Louis Arch: "Can skating and eco-education hope to reverse the effects of...decades of wrong-headed urban renewal? I say yes, with caveats" (perhaps other finalists' proposals were better?).
• BMW Guggenheim Labs: a way to "engage with architects without collecting more buildings."
• Wilkie's latest masterpiece: a pleasurable stroll to the Underworld.
• Kansas City residents are riled by plans for a treasured place: the "current design proposed for this location is simply not good enough"; the developer regrets the controversy it generated (and brings in some back-up talent).
• New, pricey federal regulation requires street signs across the country to use upper and lower case letters: "I see my tax dollars are hard at work."
• Pogrebin on the growing trend of firms changing their monikers to names "that sound more like video games than architecture practices" (!@#? didn't quite work).
• FLW's Marin County Civic Center is "a prime example of his long-held view that organic architecture was the best way to build a building" (terrific slide show!).
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Guggenheim to Create Architect-Designed ‘Labs’: ...has been looking for ways to extend its global reach even further, without bricks and mortar...Over the next six years, three 5,000-square-foot BMW Guggenheim Labs will travel, in consecutive cycles, to three locations...and “engage with architects without collecting more buildings.” — Atelier Bow-Wow - New York Times

Architecture Now Building New Names: ...firms are moving away from calling themselves by a slew of partner names and toward nomenclature that better reflects the collective nature of the enterprise. By Robin Pogrebin — Polshek/Ennead; /Hugh Hardy/H3; Obra; Brian Price/Jonathan Lott/PARA-Project; Indie; Amale Andrade/Dan Wood/Work Architecture Company/WORKac; Michael Meredith/Hilary Sample/MOS/@#; Florian Idenburg/Jing Liu/Solid Objectives — Idenburg Liu (SO-IL); Pei Cobb Freed; Davis Brody Bond Aedas; Gehry Partners; Thom Mayne/Morphosis/ Rem Koolhaas/OMA/Office for Metropolitan Architect; Gropius/The Architects’ Collaborative/TAC; Fox & Fowle/ FXFowle - New York Times

A Frank Lloyd Wright gem in Northern California: ...he wanted the Marin County Civic Center to be a prime example of his long-held view that organic architecture was the best way to build a building..."only when we know that the good building is not one that hurts the landscape, but is one that makes the landscape more beautiful than it was before that building was built." — slide show, links - CNET

New Yorkers outraged as bureaucrats order city to change lettering on every single street sign: Street names will change from all capital letters to a combination of upper and lower case on roads across the country thanks to the pricey federal regulation...drivers identify the words more quickly...and can sooner return their eyes to the road..."I see my tax dollars are hard at work." - NY Daily News

NYC’s Fake Grass Gamble: A $300M Mistake? In 1998, New York City began installing synthetic turf fields in parks and playgrounds, saying the artificial material would be more durable than grass. But a City Limits investigation finds that many turf fields are falling apart... — City Limits (NYC)

Marcel Wanders’ Wacky Moooi Showroom Opens in London: Get your horse lamps! Your hog tables! Your bludgeoned piggy banks!...his latest bit of insanity...it looks like a 19th-century British tearoom smashed into a Salvador Dali painting. By Suzanne LaBarre [images] - Fast Company

Exhibition: John Pawson: Plain Space, Design Museum, London, UK

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