• Filipino architects kick off newly-chartered United Architects of the Philippines Qatar Chapter (UAPQaC) celebrating National Architecture Week.

• An eyeful of "Fractured Landscapes," the winning design for Atlantic City Holocaust Memorial competition by two Columbia U. students.

• San Jose’s soaring plans for high speed rail track crossing the heart of downtown “has attracted the most controversy and sparked fears of a permanent eyesore” (from video, looks like there might be "design" involved).

• It’s a Foster kind of day: Pearman on Bucky’s surprising influence on Masdar City’s transport system + Rumors are F+P could be taking the same lessons to Cupertino, CA, for Apple + Who knows what he might have in store for Bloomberg HQ in London, “likely to depart markedly from the existing consent for four glass buildings.”

• China’s skyscraper boom is “an economic lifeline for the elite club of skyscraper builders” (some staggering statistics included).

• Moore on Robin Hood Gardens: it may have “seen better days, but you should see the monstrosities they want to replace it with” (Hong Kong minus the vibrant street life, anyone?).

• Southwest D.C. continues its love affair with Bing Thom, who’s now taking on the task of transforming an abandoned school into "an ambitious gallery and mixed use development" (for the Rubell foundation, no less!).

• Saffron cheers Philly’s ambitious Green2015 plan to “establish an archipelago of green oases on scraps of land” that "intentionally relies on a shop-your-closet philosophy" (a smart strategy when a city doesn’t have money).

• Getting there: With the long-awaited Crossrail about to start burrowing beneath London “the image of an ugly aerial track comes to mind...would only run about three miles. But because it crosses the heart of downtown, that section — more than any other part of the 20-mile high speed rail corridor in San Jose — has attracted the most controversy and sparked fears of a permanent eyesore.”

• China’s skyscraper boom buoys global industry: It’s an economic lifeline for the elite club of skyscraper builders...by 2012...45 of the tallest will be in Asia, with 34 of those in China alone...The boom has drawn a Who’s Who of star architects and given Chinese firms their first shot at designing a skyscraper. — Gensler; Thornton Tomasetti; Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); Skidmore Owings & Merrill (SOM); A+E Design - Associated Press/AP

• Rio de Janeiro favelas to get facelift as Brazil invests billions in redesign: Architects grapple with the problem of integrating the shanty towns into the city...authorities are...implementing “pioneering” pacification schemes...as part of an urbanisation initiative called Morar Caroço (roughly “Rio Living”). The selection process...will see 40 architecture practices tasked with redesigning 582 inner-city slums...— Luiz Carlos Toledo; Sergio Magalhães/IAB; Oscar Niemeyer [links]- Guardian (UK)

• The Crossrail project “about to start burrowing beneath London” is “the connectivity of a modernist’s dream” (with hopes that “the millions in the streets above are not left to rue our need for speed”).

• The estate we’re in: don’t knock it… down: Robin Hood Gardens in east London has seen better days, but you should see the monstrosities they want to replace it with...Both schemes are generic developers’ fare...There is no sense of place, no distinctiveness...One proposal...is pure Hong Kong, minus the vibrant street life or dramatic topography...The other bid...is only slightly less crude. By Rowan Moore — Peter and Alison Smithson (1972) - Observer (UK)

• San Jose’s soaring plans for high speed rail track crossing the heart of downtown “has attracted the most controversy and sparked fears of a permanent eyesore.” D.C.’s Southwest Revival by Art: Vancouver’s Bing Thom designs a mixed-use project atop a repurposed school in a once blighted neighborhood...Southwest D.C. is on an upswing and Don and Mera Rubell of Miami’s Rubell Family Collection foundation have commissioned Thom to design an ambitious gallery and mixed use development...— The Architect's Newspaper

• Discussions on downtown high speed rail track begins: “...the image of an ugly aerial track comes to mind...would only run about three miles. But because it crosses the heart of downtown, that section — more than any other part of the 20-mile high speed rail corridor in San Jose — has attracted the most controversy and sparked fears of a permanent eyesore.”

• Getting there: With the long-awaited Crossrail about to start burrowing beneath London, the most unconventional thing about this public project is the way private developers have been needed to make it happen...It’s the connectivity of a modernist’s dream...Whether design quality will suffer the scourge of value engineering...remains to be seen...One hopes that when all’s said and done...the millions in the streets above are not left to rue our need for speed. — Foster + Partners; Weston Williamson; Hawkins/Brown; Stanton Williams; AHMM; McAslan; PLP; Aedas; BDP; Gillespies [images] - RIBA (UK)

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Best Architecture Books of 2010; Ten books pointing the way to larger professional horizons. By Norman Weinstein -- Eric J. Cesal; Thomas Fisher; Mark Garcia; Philip Jodidio; Charles Jencks/Edwin Heathcote; Giovanni Curatola; George Ranalli; James P. Cramer/Jane Paradise Wolford; etc.

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