• The building industry cheers Obama's "Better Buildings Initiative" that "could save businesses nearly $40 billion over the next decade in lower energy costs."

• Holl responds to Curtis's critique of the Glasgow School of Art project: "We welcome criticism as long as it's based on an accurate understanding of our design."

• Duany Plater-Zyberk teams up with The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment to envision "a new, middle-class residential, commercial and governmental district literally built upon the rubble" of Port-au-Prince.

• Re: Vancouver Art Gallery's "edifice complex": Bing Thom's "Washington triumph" (Arena Stage) "should tell Vancouver something about its own overreaching aspirations...if the company is going to keep people in Pittsburgh...it has to offer perks beyond killer stock options."

• Saffron cheers the renovation of a Rittenhouse Row tower that acknowledges the building's "modernist heritage...one of the rare instances where a major alteration has improved a historic building."

• An eyeful of Niall McLaughlin's "Elgin Marbles" adorning the Athletes Village in London's Olympic Park.

• LaBarre on Google's new office in Pittsburgh that "goes easy on the Google-ness...You could do worse than a big toy of a place in an old bakery."

• An eyeful of Niall McLaughlin's "Elgin Marbles" adorning the Athletes Village in London's Olympic Park.

• Bullivant says "Hyperlinks" at the Art Institute of Chicago "tells us that design is a best friend of our times, there not just in need but also provoking interaction...with a friendly, existential, 'coming home to ourselves' agenda."

• Michael Graves "settles into a new niche" as a painter with a show in Lawrenceville, NJ, that "will surprise people."
Unseeing Modernism: Ezra Stoller at Yossi Milo Gallery: ...articulation of the various species of heroic modernism...classifies and idealizes them in ways architecture itself would have been unable to achieve without the great architectural photographers of the era...50 images...do something that is still surprising: they liberate the architectural photograph from its original client/media context... By Alan Rapp [images]- Urban Omnibus

Reading L.A.: "The Truth About Los Angeles," by Louis Adamic (1927) and "Los Angeles," by Morrow Mayo (1933): ...while sometimes a bit loose with the facts and clearly dated in their attitudes toward race and other subjects - make clear that a certain tradition of caustic skepticism also has deep roots here. By Christopher Hawthorne [images, links]- Los Angeles Times

Sustainable design is wearing thin: Sustainability -- all matronly browns and little green arrows -- has drained the sexiness from design. If designers want to do some genuine good, it's time to re-engineer their thinking...."Sustainism is the New Modernism: A Cultural Manifesto for the Sustainist Era" by Michiel Schwarz and Joost Elffers...sustainable design needs a shot in the arm. But I don't believe a book full of platitudes and colourful symbols is the necessary serum. By Justin McGuirk- Guardian (UK)

Diana Balmori Issues Marshing Orders: "A Landscape Manifesto"...packed with ideas...a history of landscape, a study of attitudes toward nature, a monograph, and a call to arms with a very radical battle plan...She is interested in "shaping spaces… not objects within the landscape"... By Jayne Merkel -- Balmori Associates - The Architect's Newspaper

Book Review: "Visual Planning and the Picturesque" by Nikolaus Pevsner. Edited by Mathew Aitchison: A rediscovered manuscript unveils a portrait of the famed architectural historian as neglected urban designer. His commitment to the picturesque aesthetic for buildings and towns is as urgently needed as ever. By Norman Weinstein - ArchNewsNow

Designers of the Year: Q&A with Verda Alexander and Primo Orpilla of Studio O+A: Today Contract magazine named Verda Alexander and Primo Orpilla of San Francisco's Studio O+A Designers of the Year. We asked them about their experiences during the high and low points of the dot-com era and the ways high-tech continues to influence office design today.- ArchNewsNow