• Farrelly minces no words about Sydney’s “determination to snatch mediocrity from the jaws of excellence” when it comes to the Barangaroo development: it’s not too big, but it’s “too boring. The site demands Opera House-type audacity.”

• MacCash went in search of Architect Barbie at the AIA confab, but found Andres Duany “in an especially feisty mood,” offering “an amusingly acidic account of what he calls “silver bullets” intended to make New Orleans better (but don’t quite get there).

• Campbell is almost wistful on his annual spring stroll of Boston’s Kennedy Greenway: “The good news is that [it] is getting more beautiful. The bad news is that almost nobody is using it.”

• Baghdad “faces a new scourge: tastelessness” as buildings erupt in riotous colors: “the best hope may be a plague of sandstorms” (with pix to prove it!).

• High hopes for Mumbai getting a facelift with street furniture, “but celebrations may be premature.”

• A conference on the changing face/place of libraries: their role as community centers “is in the ascendancy.” “We’re moving books out and replacing them with coffee shops.”

• After months of controversy, San Antonio’s 1923 Municipal Auditorium heads towards becoming the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts (with lots of interior recycling to other non-profits).

• A once-derelict marina in Far Rockaway, Queens, to see new life as a “far-out art scene” (shipping containers included).

• Heathenwick’s TEDTalk includes “some remakes of the ordinary” - and one “extraordinary pavilion” (three guesses which one, first two don’t count).

• An in-depth (and interesting) profile of Jeanne Gang who really digs construction and “likens the architect to a cook, a prospector and a nomad.”

• April’s AIA Architecture Billings Index took a fall + We are very sad to hear the news that D.C.’s long established - and respected - Group Goetz Architects is shutting its doors after 32 years: “Regrettably, the firm is another statistic of the U.S. economy.

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• On a brighter note: Yale to be the first Ivy League school to offer free online access to its museum, archive, and library collections with a massive “harvesting” of images underway.

• There’s a zero-energy future for old federal buildings via the Metropolis =Next Generation 2011 winning proposal, which “reads like a sci-fi script from Hollywood” (but is totally doable - we hope!).

• Milan’s Piazza Affari has a pointed finger raising eyebrows: it’s either rude or ironic.

• Call for entries: ACADIA 2011 Design + Fabrication Competition (deadline extended) + Montreal’s Namur-Jean-Talon West Urban Design Competition (alas, Canadian teams only).
Yale announces free online access to museum, library collections: No license will be required for transmission of the images, and no limitations will be imposed on their use... (AP)- Boston Globe

Group Effort: The Next Generation 2011 Winner: A large, multidisciplinary team of architects and engineers envisions a zero-energy future for our federal government...proposed energy retrofit of a Los Angeles federal building reads like a sci-fi script from Hollywood..."Process Zero: Retrofit Resolution"...bring a typical, energy-guzzling 1960sbuilding...to a net-zero energy standard. By Linda Hales -- HOK, Vanderweil [images]- Metropolis Magazine

At Milan's Bourse, Finger Pointing Has Business Leaders Up in Arms: Sculptor Maurizio Cattelan Made a Rude Statement: Why Not? Wall Street Has a Bull..."Some people have a sense of irony, and some do not"..."It makes Piazza Affari look like a De Chirico painting" [image, video]- Wall Street Journal

Call for entries: ACADIA 2011 Design + Fabrication Competition: Integration Through Computation...experimental projects that digitally pursue...alteration of methods, processes and techniques of fabrication and assembly for Lighting, Partitions, Furniture; deadline extended to June 15-

Call for entries/proposals: Namur–Jean-Talon West Urban Design Competition to transform the heart of the sector's road corridors into quality public spaces for community use, give greater prominence to pedestrians...and make a positive contribution to the district's new identity; open to multidisciplinary Canadian teams; no fee; registration deadline: May 27 - City of Montreal / Ville de Montréal

MVRDV. China Comic and Animation Museum, Hangzhou, China