• ASAP is a new model for collecting and chronicling architecture; it launches tonight in Manhattan (perhaps we'll see some of you there!).

• Zandberg is taken with a final thesis by a landscape architecture major who dealt with the "settlements of the so-called Bedouin diaspora" that "should not be seen as targets for demolition, but rather as spaces that deserve redefinition and organization for the benefit of their residents."

• Scotland's new Maggie's Centres are "small but perfectly formed constructions" that aim "to make sure people do not lose the joy of living in the fear of dying."

• LaBarre on the firestorm brewing over MRDV's design for luxury residential skyscrapers in South Korea (for the DreamHub development master planned by Libeskind): does the "pixelated cloud" resemble the twin towers exploding on 9/11?

• Li looks at how and why AIAANY "has increasingly been involved in the social and living impacts of urban planning and architecture."

• We wonder if there were any activist architects at Occupy Broadway that wants to reclaim New York City's Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) _ terrific slide show with PPS's Kent pointing out the good, the bad, and the useless.

• Doig digs plans for underground parks in a long-abandoned subway and trolley tunnels: could "the basement the new penthouse?"

• Meanwhile, Safdie's U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, DC, is an "open, light-filled design that befits an organization dedicated to the better angels of our nature."

• Queensland's Gold Coast gives the green light to a $950 million triple-tower resort.

• Campbell has some very nice (and some very not-so-nice) things to say about Stern's new Harvard Law building: it's "a little pompous and a little dull...blandly handsome in its stiff-shirted, slightly overfed way," but "It's a good building" (sounds like a lot of lawyers we know)."

• Rochon cheers Safdie's first residential tower in Toronto that proves "when intelligent rigor is applied to a promising design, architecture sparkles not only for the people who live inside but also for the public walking by."

• Slevin looks to Architecture Research Office and Gustafson Guthrie Nichol folks for answers to "the profound question: why is this year different than any other year (or why was it the same)?"

• Appleyard meets Heathenwick, "whose quirky style points to a new kind of architecture...not the old modernist hero-architect hiding behind a mask of whimsy."

• Today’s News - Monday, December 12, 2011

• ArcSpace brings us the Steel and Silver Huts at the Toyo Ito Museum of Architecture in Japan.

• Berg contemplates "what the 2012 TED Prize Meant for The City 2.0."

• How Maggie's Centres built a design for life:...two new Maggie's on the way for Scotland...These small but perfectly formed constructions...despite their very different designs, the aim of each building is the same -- to make sure people do not lose the joy of living in the fear of dying. -- Frank Gehry; Zaha Hadid; Maggie Keswick Jencks; Charles Jencks; Patel/Giark Architects; Reieah and Hall- The Scotsman (UK)

• How do these skyscrapers look like the twin towers exploding? MVRDV Responds: ...architects describe a pair of luxury residential skyscrapers [The Cloud]...in South Korea as rising through a "pixelated cloud." Others say the buildings look like the twin towers exploding on 9/11..."We are highly surprised by the reactions...there was no intention to create a resemblance to 9/11 or hurt anybody's feelings..."...By Suzanne LaBarre [images, links]- Fast Company

• Does this year's RIBA Gold Medal set a new precedent? Germany's walkable rollercoaster is "loopily lovable," and a new exhibition shows us light at the end of the Tube...RIBA's President's Medals Student Awards 2011... By Rowan Moore - Peter Zumthor; David Chipperfield; Rem Koolhaas/OMA; Adam Khan; O'Donnell and Tuomey; Assemble; Rafael Vinoly- Observer [UK]

• The best architecture of 2011: It was the year of pop-ups and postmodernism -- and the playful Frank Gehry went sky high...a strong field of turkeys...By Rowan Moore - Peter Zumthor; David Chipperfield; Rem Koolhaas/OMA; Adam Khan; O'Donnell and Tuomey; Assemble; Rafael Vinoly- Observer [UK]

• Right to life: Unrecognized Bedouin settlements should not be seen as targets for demolition, but rather as spaces that deserve redefinition and organization for the benefit of their residents. By Esther Zandberg -- Noa Tal- Haaretz (Israel)

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• London architects win Lake District Windermere Steamboat Museum contest: Practice which took the Young Architect of the Year award in 2007 beats seven others to house dear old Dolly and the swanky Esperance. By Martin Wainwright -- The Atlantic Cities

• How Maggie's Centres built a design for life:...two new Maggie's on the way for Scotland...These small but perfectly formed constructions...despite their very different designs, the aim of each building is the same -- to make sure people do not lose the joy of living in the fear of dying. -- Frank Gehry; Zaha Hadid; Maggie Keswick Jencks; Charles Jencks; Patel/Giark Architects; Reieah and Hall- The Scotsman (UK)

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the image the law school wants to project...From the point of view of urban design, Threepeat has some virtues...interiors are posh and predictable...One hopes that the students...will mess things up a little...It's blandly handsome in its stiff-shirted, slightly overfed way...It's a good building. By Robert Campbell [images]- Boston Globe

Safdie building will bring new sophistication to East Bayfront: The $200-million Monde...is the architect's first foray into the coveted Toronto residential market...when intelligent rigour is applied to a promising design, architecture sparkles not only for the people who live inside but also for the public walking by. By Lisa Rochon -- Moshe Safdie; Janet Rosenberg [images]- Globe and Mail (Canada)

New on the National Mall: A Fitting Monument to Peacemaking: ...new headquarters of the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP)...a rags-to-riches story...open, light-filled design belts an organization dedicated to the better angels of our nature...has the grandeur of a typical D.C. landmark but exhibits an airiness unusual in the stone slabs of the city's monuments. By Katherine Gustafson - Huffington Post

Triple-tower approved on Gold Coast: DBI Design and Oppenheim Architecture+Design: A $950m triple-tower resort with 45 levels named the Jewel has been given the green light at Surfers Paradise on Queensland’s Gold Coast. -- DBI Design; Chad Oppenheim [images] - Architecture & Design (Australia)

Economy and Technology Steering Winners of Cooper Hewitt's National Design Awards: As we approach the end of 2011, more and more attention will be applied towards answering the profound question: why is this year different than any other year (or why was it the same)? ...Architecture Research Office (ARO) and Gustafson Guthrie Nichol (GGN) on this matter. By Jacob Slevin [slide show] - Huffington Post

The Designer Who Makes Buildings: He makes pavilions from seeds and breathes life into buses. Bryan Appleyard meets Thomas Heatherwick, whose quirky style points to a new kind of architecture...clearly a tough, strategic thinker, not the old modernist hero-architect hiding behind a mask of whimsy. -- Heatherwick Studio [images]- The Economist / Intelligent Life (UK)

Tina di Carlo, ASAP: A new model for collecting and chronicling architectural acts, the Archive of Spatial Aesthetics and Praxis launches on December 12 in New York...collects objects, texts and ephemera and digital media. -- Danielle Rago; Jerszy Seymour; Alex Schweder La; Bjarke Ingels [images] - Domus