• One we couldn't resist: eyefuls of an amazing “Las Vegas-style” snow festival in a “gritty, grubby, bitter-cold city” in northern China (very cool - literally and figuratively).

• Green reports on the recent Transforming Transportation conference to find out “what can more cities do to become a Melbourne, not a Moscow?” (step #1: stop counting on the ‘U.S. car-centric model’).

• Wainwright bemoans a new U.K. law allowing office buildings to be turned into residential buildings without planning permission, “the latest step in a piecemeal erosion of the building was daunting and labor intensive, but the result is nothing short of transformative. -- Cass Gilbert (1912); Cannon Design [images] - The Architect's Newspaper

• A new report illustrates how Naples is slowly dying of neglect.

• If preservationists had issues with the previous mayor of Moscow, things are even worse now with “the final, shameful ‘blitzkrieg’ of city authorities” against the historic building.

• Kennicott cheers Hoff's "modest, pragmatic and surgical addition" to the "big and plug-ugly box of blank marble" that is the Kennedy Center.

• A most impressive list of finalists vying for the 2013 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence.

• Betsky has some issues with Koolhaas's plans for the 2014 Venice Biennale to show how it’s part of the new, homogenized global Modernism...claims that this Biennale will...is beginning anew (via demolition or extensive remodeling) the most appropriate response to a tragic act? Perhaps...does designing out tragedy truly help to prevent violence in the future? By Vanessa Quirk -- Erlend Blakstad Haffner/Fantastic Norway; Jack Swanzy; Mahlum [images, links] - ArchDaily

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• Call for entries: National Design ideas Competition for a new Prime Minister's Lodge in Canberra, Australia.

• See Naples before it dies of neglect: Report and protests highlight shoddy state of Unesco World Heritage site...a petition...was circulated at the end of last year calling for the city to be stripped of its Unesco title. [images] - The Art Newspaper (UK)

• A smart response to urban design challenges: ...a modest, pragmatic and surgical addition to the Kennedy Center is the best news in a generation...[it] has been a study in urban isolation since its opening in 1971...it will always be a big and plug-ugly box of blank marble. But a little bit of life will flow in through a new side channel, and that will be a distinct improvement. By Philip Kennicott -- Edward Durell Stone; Steven Holl Architects [images] - Washington Post

• A new report illustrates how Naples is slowly dying of neglect.

• The 8 Things Domestic Violence Shelters Can Teach Us About Secure School Design -- Corrie Rosen/Mahlum Architecture - ArchDaily

• The Secret to Harbin's Tourism Success: A Las Vegas-style snow festival in a “gritty, grubby, bitter-cold city” in northern China (very cool - literally and figuratively).
Call for entries: The Lodge on the Lake: National Design Ideas Competition for a new Prime Minister’s Lodge in Canberra; cash prize; deadline: May 31 - University of Canberra / Gallery of Australian Design

Nuts + Bolts: Mission Possible: Increase Your Value Without Lowering Your Fees; Fact or fiction: Lowering your fees makes you competitive? You decide. By Steve Whitehorn - ArchNewsNow.com

-- MAD: Absolute Towers ["Marilyn Monroe" towers], Mississauga, Canada
-- Barreca & La Varra Studio: B5 Building, Milan, Italy
-- "ARCHIGRAM - A Guide to Archigram 1961-74" by Pamela Johnston, Catherine Crompton, Philip Mann, Christian Steiner & Toni Stooss

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