• Jacobs pens one of the most thoughtful pieces we've read about Ground Zero, the 9/11 Museum that "does what it's supposed to do, diligently and surprisingly well," and the transit hub that "might turn out to be the transcendent space that the WTC badly needs" - it "has the audacity to look like New York."

• Cuozzo, on the other hand, minces no words about what he thinks of the transit hub rising from Ground Zero, and "the embarrassing ugliness of this $4 billion boondoggle. What happened to the "building they were promised"?" (it's called value engineering).

• Pogrebin reports on the new Congressional report re: Gehry's Eisenhower Memorial - is it really "just another Washington boondoggle"?

• Pedersen, on the other hand, takes issue with "a few glaring omissions in Pogrebin's story," but "that this whole episode sadly mirrors the larger paralysis gripping Washington should come as no surprise."

• Hockenberry waxes practically poetic about "a resurgent street culture emerging" in NYC, "using spaces that would have been graffiti-covered concrete emptiness just a few years ago - people have found a Moses workaround."

• Steuteville parses a Pew study and "why 'place' is the new American dream" in both cities and suburbs.

• Wyeth cheers "growth and change" in Melbourne as "both a beautiful and inevitable thing," but "the conversation needs to change away from selfish and counter-productive protectionist sentiments, and towards making the city's growth inclusive."

• In China, "the urbanizing population is starting to demand a better quality of dwelling" that "is stirring even the Chinese housing dragon," and for a new generation of designers, a chance to have "a greater say in the country's changing urban face."

• Capps pen a "requiem for a nightmare" that is the FBI HQ building, "maybe the most despised structure in Washington, D.C. As Brutalism edges toward extinction, cities should take stock" (and whatever replaces it "will be regular, orderly, safe, and worse").

• Farago offers a small, international round-up of "buildings we love to hate" (including the FBI HQ).

• Lubell reports that Neutra and Alexander's buildings and Eckbo's landscape at Orange Coast College are under threat...

• Saitta says the Aspen Ideas Festival doesn't offer a lot of compelling ideas for improving city life, "but it has its moments."

• O'Toole files two reports from UIA2014 in Durban: it gets a bit better after the "congress opened in lackluster fashion": Architecture is a "scarce skill monopolized by whites" + "Presentations on earthquake readiness and slum settlement solutions highlighted contributions to human dignity."

• An impressive shortlist in line for the LEAF Awards 2014.

• Call for entries: Springburn Winter Gardens open ideas competition to bring the gardens back to full use (deadline looms!) + Sinclair launches the Dead Prize, "a sort of Razazzies for architecture" (or Carbuncle Cup with an enviro bent).
Does the Aspen Ideas Festival Offer Compelling Ideas for Improving City Life? ...didn't offer much that's particularly compelling, but it has its moments: ...affordable housing is a recommendation that's more compelling than any offered by the Leading Voices...However, embedded in the video are a few excellent observations that might generate more creative thought... By Dean Saitta -- Geoffrey West; Alissa Walker; Jeff Speck; Jennifer Pahlka; M. Sanjayan - PLANetizen

Architecture: A scarce skill monopolised by whites: The alarm has been raised at UIA2014 congress over stats revealing that only 24% of built environment professionals are black and 9% female: ...congress opened in lacklustre fashion...in Durban. By Sean O'Toole -- Hilton Judin; Nina Saunders; Toyo Ito; David Southwood; Nic Coetzer; Cameron Sinclair/Architecture for Humanity- Mail & Guardian (South Africa)

Architectural solutions to slums and earthquakes: Presentations on earthquake readiness and slum settlement solutions at the 25th world congress of the International Union of Architects (UIA) have highlighted contributions to human dignity. By Sean O'Toole -- Cameron Sinclair/Architecture for Humanity; Diébédo Francis Kéré; Andrew Makin; Rahul Mehrotra; Shigeru Ban; Toyo Ito - Mail & Guardian (South Africa)

LEAF Awards 2014 Shortlist Announced -- Tabanlioglu Architects Melkan Gursel & Murat Tabanlioglu; CORNELIUS + VÖGE; Mount Fuji Architects Studio; PTW Architects; Makoto Yamaguchi Design; studio mk27; Aedas; Hopkins Architects; CoCo Architecture; Henning Larsen Architects; O’Donnell + Tuomey; etc. - Arena International

Call for entries: "An intervention at Springburn Winter Gardens" open ideas competition to be a community led enterprise, bringing the Winter Gardens back to full use; registration deadline: August 15 (submissions due August 21) - Glasgow Institute of Architects

Call for entries: Cameron Sinclair Launches New Prize For Crappy Architecture: Dead Prize, a sort of Razzies for architecture, will call out designs that cause environmental harm; deadline: November 1 - carbunkle Cup - Fast Company

ANN Feature: Sociologists Rather than Signature Architects: Q&A with Behnisch Architekten Partners: They pull no punches in discussing the challenges of urban planning, the differences working in Europe and the U.S., architects' social and ethical responsibilities, and what their dream projects would be. By Alexander Gutzmer - ArchNewsNow.com

10 Architectural Highlights in New York: The city sports some of modern civilization's crowning structural achievements... -- Gehry Partners; Snøhetta; Morphosis; SANAA; Diller Scofidio + Renfro; Foster + Partners; Arquitectonica; OMA; Renzo Piano

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