• ArcSpace brings us Kiser on Kuma's Contemporary Art Center (FRAC) in Marseille; and a round-up of new books.

• Heathcote and Ijie are less kind than others re: Gehry's Fondation Louis Vuitton: "It is being hailed as a masterpiece...But is it?" and it "shoots for the spectacular. But does it thrive or flounder?" (though there are moments they like).

• Anderton offers "5 takeaways from Gehrygate: he is "a crusty, difficult guy who makes warm, welcoming, interesting, places. Let's give him a break on his bad boy behavior" (i.e., giving the now-infamous finger).

• Kamin x 2: while he regrets a grove of trees being sacrificed for a university parking garage and visitors center, P+W's design is "a welcome and welcoming surprise - hardly the rude, crude intruder many predicted it would be" (and trees will be planted elsewhere).

• He cheers Harboe's "meticulous restoration" of Mies's "God Box" at ITT that "simultaneously attended to form and function."

• King reports that Snøhetta has been tapped for its third San Francisco project - and its first tower - to replace a Meier tower plan that bit the dust.

• Saffron x 2: Philadelphia's "scandal-plagued" Family Court project may be a "dispiriting example of bland, office-park architecture," but "there is real compassion hidden behind its cheap, corporate-looking glass veneer" (thanks to the architects and family law advocates).

• She bemoans the sad fate that could befall a number of Philly's long-standing community gardens that have become easy targets for developers and the city's "autocratic leadership" who find it "hard to accept that community gardens, long seen as a better-than-nothing option, might be an amenity in need of preservation."

• Duarte delves into the gentrification debate, and the "need to begin to embed income inequality within the debate" - and just what is the difference between affordable housing and cheap housing.

• Bernstein queries the school's acting dean re: the decision to open an architecture school in NJ that has "left some bewildered," but Mohney argues that "Chinese officials wanted a new architecture school with U.S. accreditation and the Michael Graves School was created to serve their needs."

• Meanwhile, Graves thinks his design for his school on Kean's Wenzhou campus is "an A-plus. It's one of my better buildings, if not my best building" (we'll withhold judgment for now).

• Speaking of China, Horton ponderers "how seriously should architects take" the Chinese president's recent remarks on "weird architecture": "the real question now is how this will be used in the design procurement process."

• Eyeful of some young Chinese firms that prove there's some wonderful, very "un-weird" local talent around (though archi-babbie abounds).

• Strafford offers a fabulous take on overlooked L.A. architecture that has "fueled democratic fantasies" by some of the greats in science fiction: too bad the "facelessness" of new McMansions and "the ruthlessness with which they are built...makes them feel like the architecture that comprises the sort of dystopian world Bradbury described so trenchantly."

• Christensen delves into the pitfalls of turning public housing over to private developers: often, "the results aren't pretty - so-called 'public-private partnerships' often exacerbate the very problems they claim to be addressing."

• DJV formally questions the need for Kean University's Michael Graves School of Architecture in New Jersey (never mind the Wenzhou, China, campus).

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Duarte/Gresham Savage Nolan & Tilden- PLANetizen

NJIT formally questions Kean University's plan for architecture program: New Jersey Institute of Technology issued a formal statement...questioning Kean's intentions to open another public architecture program in the state, saying the initiative was duplicative and costly...will grow to 500 students evenly divided between the stateside [Michael Graves School of Architecture] and one in Wenzhou, China. - The Record (New Jersey)

Q&A: David Mohney, Acting Dean of the Michael Graves School of Architecture: ...Kean University...will have two campuses, one in New Jersey and the other in Wenzhou, China. But the decision to open an architecture school in New Jersey left some bewildered...Chinese officials wanted a new architecture school with U.S. accreditation and the Michael Graves School was created to serve their needs. By Fred A. Bernstein- Architectural Record

Kean University announces Michael Graves School of Architecture: ...Graves is designing a new facility for his school at the university's campus in Wenzhou, China. "I think [it's] an A-plus...It's one of my better buildings, if not my best building." [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

On China's Problem with "Weird" Architecture: How seriously should architects take Xi Jinping's remarks on unusual buildings? ...the real question now is how this will be used in the design procurement process. By Guy Horton -- OMA; Alex Yong/Jerde Partnership; Ai Weiwei; Mike Tunkey/CannonDesign - Metropolis Magazine

China's "Un-Weird" Architecture: In response to Chinese leader Xi Jinping's call for an end to "weird architecture" in China, we...highlight some firms working in a different vein. -- Wang Shu/Lu Wenyu/Amateur Architecture Studio; AZL Atelier Zhanglei; John Lin/Joshua Bolchover/Rural Urban Framework; Zhu Xiaofeng/Scenic Architecture; Zhang Ke/Zhang Hong/Claudia Taborda; standardarchitecture; Hua Li/TAO (Trace Architecture Office); Tong Ming/TM Studio; Gong Dong/Vector Architects [images]- World-Architects.com

Home and History in the Fiction of Los Angeles: ...despite the sprawl and isolating car culture that fueled dystopian fancies, the city has certainly not been a dystopia...we tend to overlook the beauty, inventiveness, and quirky charm of so much of LA's architecture....The facelessness of the mansions, the ruthlessness with which they are built...makes them feel like the architecture that comprises the sort of dystopian world Bradbury described so trenchantly. By Sarah-Jane Stratford- Los Angeles Review of Books

New Museum Names Joseph Grima as Director of IDEAS CITY: ...the institution's high-profile ideas festival that explores the future of cities with culture as a driving force...Partnering with like-minded cities that believe culture is fundamental to urban growth and innovation, the initiative has been taken global over the past two years... - Broadway World

Call for entries: AIA 2015 Small Project Awards: 11th annual award program to recognize the work of small project practitioners...theme, PLEASURE, intends to recognize projects that express joy and pleasure through architecture; open to architects licensed in the U.S.; deadline: November 3 - American Institute of Architects (AIA)

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