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OMA HYPER BUILDING FOR LOUISVILLE?

Plans have been unveiled for the latest Rem Koolhaas signature building - a \$380m, 61-storey 'trio of towers' in downtown Louisville. Designed by Koolhaas' Office for Metropolitan Architecture, it will feature 'an acre-sized island, open to the public, that will hover 22 storeys in the air...a contemporary art museum, restaurants and retail stores, 85 luxury condominiums, 150 lofts, a 300-room hotel, office space and a 1,100-car underground parking garage...' OMA partner Joshua Prince-Ramus said the proposed Museum Plaza would be one building composed of many smaller buildings - 'a city block contained in one structure. I fully expect people to be shocked by the building...I can't think of another building that looks quite like this...'

<http://tinyurl.com/85f92>

However, the similarities with Koolhaas' earlier theoretical work is marked: 'When I saw the rendering this morning, I thought it looked a little familiar...the proposed Bangkok Hyperbuilding appears to be an ideological - as well as formal - predecessor to the Museum Plaza...'

<http://tinyurl.com/78xv9>

LOTS TOWER FINALLY APPROVED

UK Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott has finally approved the twin tower development at Lots Road in Chelsea in London after a much fought over public inquiry and acrimonious five year journey through the planning process. The issues with the towers stemmed from the fact that the project straddled two different councils with the borough of Kensington and Chelsea had refused planning permission to the scheme whilst the neighbouring borough of Hammersmith and Fulham had approved it. Mindful of the fact that Kensington and Chelsea opposed development whilst Hammersmith and Fulham did not the developer, Circadian Ltd had had their original plans rearranged so the taller of the two towers would stand in Fulham rather than Chelsea helping to strengthen their case.....

<http://www.skyscrapernews.com/news.php?ref=538>

NEW 'HIGHEST' FOR CHILE?

The 'Portada de Vitacura mixed-use tower', at 52 floors and 181m will be the tallest building of Santiago, approved by the district urban department of Las Condes. Construction work has begun in the first days of January 2006. Designed by the architect Abraham Senerman, for the holding group ASL and Bethia group, the main characteristic of this project is that it will become Chile's tallest, surpassing historical buildings such as "Entel Tower", the "Marriot Hotel" and the "Telefónica" tower.....

<http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=312771>

BALTIMORE TAKES TO THE WATER

The most expensive experiment in waterside regeneration in Baltimore's history is about to get underway with the development of a polluted stretch of land bordering the Patapsco River. 'A handful of private developers have bought big chunks of real estate, setting off a ripple of investment buying...five or six years from now, if all goes as planned, the riverbanks will be crowned with glittering condominiums, townhouses, shopping arcades, and entertainment venues. Where factories once belched smoke, well-heeled taxpayers will be stacked 10 storeys deep...' And extraordinarily for such an ambitious scheme, the plans have achieved unprecedented consensus among disparate interest groups, including environmentalists...

<http://www.citypaper.com/news/story.asp?id=11385>

A PUSH FOR HIGH IN BELFAST?

Work on the tallest building in Belfast, N. Ireland, the Obel has started construction less than a year after it was approved following a massive amount of demand for the residential accommodation it contains. Developers Donegall Quay Ltd were completely overwhelmed when marketing the apartments within, every single one of the 182 units including the pricey penthouses was sold in the space of only 48 hours showing the huge unsatisfied demand in Belfast, a factor that is sure to spur other developers into proposing their own tall residential projects to mention encourage confidence in the province that still has more than it's fair share of sectarian troubles and needs large high prestige projects to hammer into outside investors times really are changing there.....

<http://www.skyscrapernews.com/news.php?ref=537>

INTERNATIONAL SNIPPETS.....

NEW YORK: A new tower for the Lower East Side by Bernard Tschumi Architects.

<http://tinyurl.com/932k9>

CHICAGO: Donald Trump's Chicago tower has been in the wings for a while. Now, the first structural columns for the 92-storey hotel-condo tower have popped above Wabash Avenue and, all of a sudden, the project seems very real and, truth be told, a little terrifying...'

<http://tinyurl.com/8emsf>

LOS ANGELES: President George Bush claims the Liberty Tower was the intended target of an Al Qaeda terrorist attack. He meant the Library Tower...

<http://tinyurl.com/7b65a>

NASHVILLE: Latest image of the 302 unit 'Viridian Tower'

<http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=313353>

CANADA: The design competition shortlist for a 52-storey condominium tower, and this lacy, organic entry by Mexican practice Rojkind Arquitectos seems to be everywhere...

<http://www.mississauga.com/mi/news/story/3293516p-3812417c.html>

UK: A new wave of canalside development could bring family homes into the city centre.

<http://www.hughpearman.com/2006/02.html>

LONDON: Another mid-rise on the edge of the City of London, 30 Crown Place, in Shoreditch has been approved, this time by Hackney Council. 19 floor triangular shaped tower designed by Horden Cherry Lee Architects will be 81 metres tall with an interlinked 9 storey lower rise block sitting next to it. The development features glass curtain walling and will contain 23,225 square metres of largely office space with retail on the ground floor

<http://www.skyscrapernews.com/news.php?ref=539>

Meanwhile, plans have been announced to build a new residential tower and a series of lower rise blocks on the much in-demand area around St Katharine's Dock to the immediate east of the City of London and Tower of London in Wapping.

<http://www.skyscrapernews.com/news.php?ref=534>

SHEFFIELD, UK: Sheffield's late surge into the Urban Renaissance continues with the submission of an outline application for another 100m plus tower. The 137m, 27 floor Eco Tower, if approved, will stand on Spital Hill in S4, approximately half a mile away from the heart of the city centre.....

<http://www.skyscrapernews.com/news.php?ref=521>

MIDDLESBOROUGH, UK: The northern city of Middlesbrough could be in line for a new tallest with the announcement by local developer Mandale they plan on cashing in on their current success in the area by building an even larger project as a follow-up. The mostly residential development will contain 4 floors of private residential accommodation above 600 new student apartments and one floor of office on the ground level. The scheme will have a total of 27 floors and rise to a whopping 114.37 metres in height.

<http://www.skyscrapernews.com/news.php?ref=540>

ISTANBUL: Images of proposals for the Turkish City:

<http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=295886>

JAPAN: Stricter penalties, including prison terms, will be written into law this year to punish architects and housing developers who breach building standards. Included in the draft legislation is a proposal to make public 'the names of disciplined architects, including those who have their licenses revoked...'

<http://www.asahi.com/english/Herald-asahi/TKY200601310146.html>

TOKYO: The world's first elevators controlled by magnetic levitation will debut as early as 2008.

http://www.cnn.com/2006/TECH/01/17/maglev.lift.ap/index.html?section=cnn_tech

Temporary stay of execution for Nagakin Capsule Tower...

<http://tinyurl.com/e33tq>

SHANGHAI: The skyline of China's largest city 'has become a strangely exuberant version of the Blade Runner aesthetic'. But at street level, there's a taste for a 'Disneyfied old downtown...'

<http://www.newyorker.com/critics/skyline/>

http://archrecord.construction.com/china/1_projects/xintiandi.asp

As the 2010 Shanghai World Expo comes into focus, commercial reconstruction means forcibly relocated residents...

<http://tinyurl.com/duvtk>

INDIA: Economic momentum is reshaping traditional urban landscapes with 'totally faceless architecture' says one critic, who despairs at 'this willingness to convert historic cities into global showpieces and gallery space for Western architects...'

http://www.hindustantimes.com/news/181_1607442.00120002.htm

Bangalore, a boom town driven by outsourcing, is experiencing spiralling property prices. Architect Tom Thomas has been a key figure in the transformation of the skyline. 'In short, the economy has woken up and people are looking at ways to spend money...'

<http://www.tmcnet.com/submit/2006/01/19/1298007.htm>

BURMA: Burma is moving its capital 400km north from Rangoon to a remote rural area near the town of Pyinmana...

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_pictures/4647100.stm

KENYA: The collapse of a partially-built Nairobi office building has killed 14 and injured more than 100. Police are 'still seeking the owner of the building and the construction project manager for questioning as officials blamed the collapse on shoddy building material, technique and planning...'

<http://tinyurl.com/7uew8>

HOUSING WORLD: More than half the urban property markets surveyed in the UK, Ireland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States are 'seriously or severely unaffordable'...

<http://www.planetizen.com/node/18591>

Full (.pdf) report:

<http://www.planetizen.com/news/redirect.php?lid=20591&nid=18591>

THE ICON DEBATE: Charles Jencks vs. Deyan Sudjic in a discussion on whether architectural icons have had their day...

<http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/printarticle.php?id=6926&category=138&issue=514&author=>

ARCHITECTURAL PREVIEW OF 2006: To accompany last month's 'review of 2005' here is: the '12 Most Intriguing Things to Come in 2006', including Seven World Trade Center, the Skywalk over Colorado River, a new Wembley Stadium etc...

<http://www.sixnewthings.com/top12.htm>

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