



### The ruination of architecture

Ground Zero: the words say it all. There is no place on earth right now which has generated more emotion, more politics or more media attention. Ground Zero is a focal point of contemporary history.

Lower Manhattan: an icon of Western civilization. This is not any old city district, but the facade of the free world, the gateway to freedom, prosperity and happiness. It is also the place where the world economy is made or broken, where the money of the world's greatest power is got and spent.

The American people: for the first time in history the homeland itself has been hit. All over the world this nation has imposed its will on others. This time the trauma is its own. Yet, because it possesses the most powerful media in the world, the trauma is also universal. We are all affected. We are all American.

The gaping hole of the World Trade Centre: here human beings had attained to the highest, the wealthiest, the best. And those superlatives were multiplied by two. The Twin Towers were the icon of supreme power. A power that in the space of an hour was reduced to a cloud of dust.

The resurrection of the architecture: never has so much 'vision' been assembled for an architectural commission. The

best architects of the day were chosen to produce their very best. It was the most that architecture as art, discipline and expertise had to offer. Never before in history has so much merit, so much significance, so much emotion and so much talent come together in one commission. Never has the need for epiphany been greater. Never has the call for architecture to surpass itself been more pressing. Never has there been a greater opportunity for genius.

Hallo, are you still there? You surely don't think that the issue is bigger than you, do you? Rest assured, the issue will not be decided by history, metaphysics, the nation or charisma. You will decide. Seven teams of architects have reconstructed The Big Apple's skyline and are waiting for your vote. Go to CNN via [www.archis.org](http://www.archis.org) and make yourself heard. Architecture relies on your good judgement and is now waiting on your endorsement. Power to the people. Use your interactive button now.

Have fun.