Most reports indicate that the World Summit in Johannesburg is resulting in a series of disappointing compromises. That leaves it up to architects and organizations to make a difference on local scales, as demonstrated by the new offices of the Natural Resources Defense Council, and indicated by RIBA president Paul Hyett’s Johannesburg speech. On a local scale of global proportions is - and will be for some time - plans for lower Manhattan. The New York Times offers overviews of the historic implications of both the rebuilding and the memorial. From the UK, there are great expectations for the New York Times’ initiative (to be unveiled next week) that involves Peter Eisenman, Rafael Vinoly, Richard Meier, Steven Holl, Zaha Hadid and Rem Koolhaas, and Maya Lin. Meanwhile, work on the Pentagon “can lead the way for the rest of society in areas such as energy efficiency, information management, office adaptability, code compliance, and pleasantness for the everyday workforce.” On the West Coast, José Rafael Moneo’s cathedral draws rave reviews and protests that the almost $200 million should have been spent on the poor (we’re still looking for the review that calls it “the yellow armadillo”). Frank Gehry’s new museum in Jerusalem is raising eyebrows on a number of levels. In Connecticut, “nature abhors a vacuum, and real estate developers seem to be in tune with nature” Stonehenge will have a fitting visitors center designed by an Australian. It looks like it will be “pick one from column A…” for U.S. embassy designs. “Cramped” has become “cozy” in Japan… and much more.