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See it Split, See it  
Change, and See  
for the Price of a  
Subway Ticket

## Top Prize

By Michael Silverberg

Wednesday, January 21, 2009 5:16 pm



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Move over, [Het Strijkijzer](#). There's a new darling of the high-rise set. Tokyo's [Mode Gakuen Cocoon Tower](#) has just been named the skyscraper of the year by [Emporis](#), a German-based Web site that compiles data on very tall buildings. The [Gherkin](#)-esque tower, designed by [Kenzo Tange Associates](#), bested Seoul's [Boutique Monaco](#) (Mass Studies; void-pocked mixed-use block) and the [Shanghai World Financial Center](#) (Kohn Pedersen Fox; giant bottle-cap opener) to join such past winners as Calatrava's Turning Torso, Norman Foster's Hearst Building, and the aforementioned Het Strijkijzer, a Flatiron look-alike in The Hague. The 668-foot-tall Cocoon is one of a pair of skyscrapers that Tange designed for Mode Gakuen, a trade school in Tokyo's Shinjuku ward.

Given the rosy outlook for global architecture and real estate, we can safely predict that next year's winner will be a two-story Home Depot on the New Jersey Turnpike.

- ▶ Letsplay
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1. I'm in Tokyo now, and I agree with the award, the building has really let Shinjuku's skyline become something worth seeing. The way Tokyo spreads out doesn't allow it to have many Manhattan-style moments, but this building gives your eye something to look for, an anchor for the neighborhood, and a winner in my book.

*Comment by Sara K — January 21, 2009 @ 10:45 pm*

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