

# Aqua named 2009 Skyscraper of the Year



Steve Hall at Hedrich Blessing

## EDITORIAL

### Judges praise Chicago tower for fascinating shape and technical achievement

Chicago's Aqua, the world's third tallest building designed by a woman, has been announced as winner of the Emporis 2009 Skyscraper of the Year award. The Skyscraper Award jury members convene annually to judge buildings of at least 100 metres tall completed in the award year. Reaching a height of 262 metres, Aqua is currently the 40th tallest in the United States and the 5th tallest building completed in 2009.

Designed by Jeanne Gang, Principal and founder of Chicago-based Studio Gang Architects, the 81-storey residential and hotel tower is situated in a large lakeside development. Aqua intersperses undulating balconies with flat glassy planes to create a wavy façade in keeping with its nautical theme. The effect has been compared to a rippled curtain or, according to its architect, to the striated limestone formations common to the Great Lakes region.

Members of the jury praised Aqua for its innovative shape, the appearance of which changes drastically depending on the perspective. They also commended the technical achievement in relation to the precision of the building's construction and the green design innovations employed despite the massive size of the tower.

The Silver Award was given to O14 in Dubai, designed by Reiser + Umemoto Architecture. O14, whose unusual name is taken from its lot number in the massive Business Bay development, is an office tower wrapped in a curved concrete sheath punctuated by circular holes of varying sizes. The shell forms a shield against the powerful sunlight in the Arabian desert.

The Met in Bangkok, designed by WOHA Architects, received the Bronze prize. The 69-storey residential tower incorporates multiple green features and optimizes energy-efficient comfort in a tropical climate. A presentation ceremony will be held in Chicago later this year.



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### Top 10 Skyscrapers of 2009

Below are the top results of the Emporis Skyscraper Award Jury's voting:

1. Aqua Chicago U.S.A.
2. O14 Dubai U.A.E.
3. The Met Bangkok Thailand
4. Torres de Hércules Los Barrios Spain
5. Trump International Hotel & Tower Chicago U.S.A.
6. The Red Apple Rotterdam Netherlands

- 7. Bank of America Tower New York City U.S.A.
- 8. Almas Tower Dubai U.A.E.
- 9. Millennium Tower San Francisco U.S.A.
- 10. William Beaver House New York City U.S.A.

Laura Paton  
Editorial

### Key Facts

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| <b>Status</b> | <b>Complete</b> |
| <b>Value</b>  | <b>0(m€)</b>    |

**Studio Gang Architects**  
[www.studiogang.net](http://www.studiogang.net)

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