

Best Tall Buildings for 2012

13-Dramatic towers in Canada, Qatar, Australia and Italy have been named the best tall buildings in the world for 2012 by the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH), the international not-for-profit association.

The four regional winners include the Absolute Towers in Mississauga, Canada (Americas); 1 Bligh Street, Sydney (Asia and Australia); Palazzo Lombardia, Milan (Europe); and Doha Tower/BurjQatar, Doha (Middle East and Africa). The Al Bahar Towers in Abu Dhabi won the CTBUH's first Innovation Award for the project's computer-controlled sun-screen.

In addition to ground-breaking designs, this year's award winners demonstrate the continued renaissance of tall building development around the world. Palazzo Lombardia is the first tall building in Italy to earn CTBUH recognition and 1 Bligh is the first building in Australia honored.

A record number of towers of height greater than 200 meters were completed in 2011--88 compared to 32 in 2005, according to CTBUH data. Another 96 are projected to complete this year, with China the biggest builder.

"The winners display remarkable creativity, as well as a respect for the

environment, connection with place, and the urban surroundings," said Richard Cook, awards committee chairman and founding partner of Cook+Fox Architects.

An overall winner for the "Best Tall Building Worldwide" will be named at the CTBUH 11th Annual Awards Ceremony and Dinner at the Illinois Institute of Technology, October 18, in the iconic Crown Hall, designed by Mies van der Rohe.

The CTBUH Best Tall Building Awards are an independent review of new

projects, judged by a panel of industry executives. Projects are recognized for making an extraordinary contribution to the advancement of tall buildings and the urban environment, and for achieving sustainability at the broadest level.

This year the CTBUH Board of Trustees also awarded the Lynn S. Beedle Lifetime Achievement Award to Helmut Jahn, the architect known for his simple and elegant designs.

Past winners of the Lynn S. Beedle Award, named after the founder of the CTBUH, include Lord Norman Foster, Cesar Pelli, William Pedersen and the 2011

winner, Adrian Smith of Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture.

The Fazlur R. Khan Lifetime Achievement Medal went to Charles Thornton & Richard Tomasetti, founders of Thornton & Tomasetti, the structural engineers who helped design many of the most innovative and advanced tall buildings around the world.

The recognition of Mr. Thornton and Mr. Tomasetti represents the first time the panel has awarded the prize to two people.

"Charlie and Richard are one of the industry's enduring great partnerships in structural engineering, reminding us that no building is about one single person," said Timothy Johnson, Chairman of the CTBUH and a Principal at NBBJ Architects.

The Council received 78 entries from around the world for the Best Tall Building awards. The majority of the entries were from Asia, followed by the Middle East. The number of entries from the Americas continued to decline, reflecting the impact of the recent global recession.

About CTBUH

The Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH) is the world's leading resource for professionals focused on the design and construction of tall buildings and future cities. A not-for-profit organization based at the Illinois Institute of Technology, the group facilitates the exchange of the latest knowledge available on tall buildings around the world through events, publications and its extensive network of international representatives. Its free database on tall buildings, The Skyscraper Center, is updated daily with detailed information, images and news. The CTBUH also developed the international standards for measuring tall building height and is recognized as the arbiter for bestowing such designations as "The World's Tallest Building."

Absolute Towers, Mississauga, Canada (Americas)

Dubbed the “Marilyn Monroe” building, due to its sexy curves, Absolute Towers has added a new landmark to the skyline of Mississauga, the fast-growing suburb of Toronto. The architects sought to add to something “naturalistic, delicate and human in contrast to the backdrop of listless, boxy buildings.” the design features smooth, unbroken balconies that wrap each floor of the building. The torsional form of the towers is underpinned with a surprisingly simple and inexpensive structural solution.

Jury comment: “There have been several curvaceous towers completed in recent years – some using balconies to achieve the free-form edge, and others using the whole façade. With Absolute we see the entire building twisting to achieve the organic form, creating a beautiful new landmark for a developing urban area.”

-David Scott, head of structural engineering, Laing O’Rourke

Location
Mississauga, Canada

Completion Date
August, 2012

Height
Tower 1, 179.5 meters; Tower 2, 158 meters

Stories
Tower 1, 56 stories; Tower 2, 50 stories

Use
Residential

Owner
Fernbrook and Cityzen

Design Architect
MAD architects

Associate Architect
Burka Architects

Structural Engineer
Sigmund Soudack

MEP Engineer
Stantec

Project Manager
MAD: Ma Yansong, Dang Qun, Fernbrook: Anthony Pignetti, Sergio Vacilotto, Ivano DiPietro, Faruq Ahmad, Jordana Scola



(Photo: Tom Arban)

Photo: ingenhoven architects + Architectus / H.C. Esch, Hennerl



1 Bligh Street, Sydney (Asia and Australia)

A difficult site in Sydney's central business district was transformed by the elliptical tower, which offers tenants several ground-breaking technological advances. The centerpiece is Australia's tallest naturally ventilated skylit atrium, trimmed in glass and aluminum, which soars the full height of the building. Other innovations include a double-skin, naturally-ventilated glass façade and a hybrid system using gas and solar energy to generate cooling, heating and electricity for the building.

Jury comment: "The dramatic, naturally-ventilated central atrium connects the office workers with nature at the inner depths of the plan, giving a sense of openness for the entire building. The series of communal spaces throughout the building, and especially the fantastic rooftop garden, add greatly to the quality of life for the tenants."

-Werner Sobek, award juror, founder Werner Sobek Group

Location
Sydney, Australia

Completion Date
July, 2011

Height
135 meters

Stories
28

Use
Office

Owner
DEXUS Property Group; Cbus Property

Design Architect
ingenhoven architects; Architectus

Structural Engineer
Enstruct Group

MEP Engineer
Arup Sydney

Project Manager
APP Corporation

Palazzo Lombardia, Milan (Europe)

Palazzo Lombardia, the first CTBUH award winner from Italy, turns a government office complex into a new public space for Milan. The project, anchored by a 160-meter-tall tower, offers a variety of open spaces and passageways, linking the project to the nearby Pirelli Tower. Sustainability measures include green roofs and active climate walls with vertical blades that rotate to provide shade. The central piazza is covered by curved glass roof, recalling Milan's famous Galleria.

Jury comment: "In a city known for history and fashion, the tower is perfectly attuned to the urban environment. More than simply a tower, the project creates a cohesive blend of parks and commercial space, with an appropriately local flair."

-Antony Wood, executive director, CTBUH

Location

Milan, Italy

Completion Date

March, 2011

Height

161 meters

Stories

40

Use

Government

Owner

Regione Lombardia

Design Architect

Pei Cobb Freed & Partners

Associate Architect

**Paolo Caputo Partnership; Sistema Duemila
Architettura e Ingegneria s.r.l.**

Structural Engineer

Thornton Tomasetti

MEP Engineer

Arup

Project Manager

Infrastrutture Lombarde



(Photo: Fernando Guerra)



(Photo: Ateliers Jean Nouvel)

Doha Tower, Doha (Middle East and Africa)

The distinctive cylindrical form is elegant and efficient, creating a distinctive new landmark for the fast-growing Qatar capital. The façade is constructed of multi-layered patterns invoking ancient Islamic screens designed to shade buildings from the sun. Similar in concept to Mr. Nouvel's Torre Agbar office building in Barcelona, the Doha tower is the first tall building to use a reinforced concrete dia-grid columns in a cross shape. There is no central core, maximizing the interior space available for tenants.

"The skin of the building is a beautiful expression of the local culture, connecting this very modern tower with ancient Islamic designs. It also provides a fantastic pattern of light within the building, while efficiently dampening the impacts of the sun's rays."

- Richard Cook, awards committee chairman and founding partner of Cook + Fox Architects.

Location
Doha, Qatar

Completion Date
March, 2012

Height
238 meters

Stories
46

Use
Office

Owner
H.E. Sheikh Saoud bin Mohamed bin Ali al-Thani

Design Architect
Ateliers Jean Nouvel

Structural Engineer
Terrell International

MEP Engineer
Terrell International

Al Bahar Towers, Abu Dhabi (Innovation)

The tower's innovative dynamic façade opens and closes in response to the movement of the sun, reducing solar gain by more than 50 percent, creating a more comfortable internal environment for occupants and producing a distinctive external aesthetic which helps to define the building as a gateway to the UAE capital. The façade was conceived as a contemporary interpretation of the traditional Islamic "mashrabiya"; a popular form of wooden lattice screen found in vernacular Islamic architecture and used as a device for achieving privacy while reducing glare and solar gain.

"The dynamic façade on Al Bahar, computer-controlled to respond to optimal solar and light conditions, has never been achieved on this scale before. In addition, the expression of this outer skin seems to firmly root the building in its cultural context"

- Antony Wood, executive director, CTBUH

Location
Abu Dhabi, UAE

Completion Date
June, 2012

Height
145 meters

Stories
29

Use
Office

Owner
Abu Dhabi Investment Council

Design Architect
Aedas Architects Ltd

Associate Architect
Diar Consult

Structural Engineer
Arup

MEP Engineer
Arup

Project Manager
Mace International



(Photo: Aedas)

Lynn S. Beedle Lifetime Achievement Award **Helmut Jahn**

Never predictable, never simplistic, Helmut Jahn has developed a complex portfolio of iconic buildings around the world. Standout projects include the Sony Center in Berlin, Xerox Center in Chicago, Liberty Place in Philadelphia and the new MGM Veer Tower in Las Vegas. Once defined as a modernist, he broke away from rigid labels to create his own blends of efficient structures, paving the way for a new era of sustainable buildings.

"Helmut has created a fantastic legacy of tall buildings that spans the globe. His reputation is as buoyant in Europe and Asia as it is in his hometown of Chicago, based on his long-standing commitment to excellence and embracing environmental themes."

- Antony Wood, executive director, CTBUH

Fazlur R. Khan Lifetime Achievement Medal **Charles Thornton and Richard Tomasetti**

The long-standing partnership between

Charles Thornton and Richard Tomasetti has provided the backbone for many of the most dramatic and innovative tall buildings around the world. Their legacy includes Taipei 101 in Taiwan, Petronas Twin Towers in Malaysia, the World Financial Center in New York City, Plaza 66 in Shanghai, China and Pittsburgh's Mellon Bank building. Equally as important, they have tirelessly given back to the community as educators and lecturers, helping to train the next generation of structural engineers.

"Charlie and Richard are one of the industry's enduring great partnerships in structural engineering, reminding us that no building is about one single person. By presenting this award to two people for the first time, the Council acknowledges the importance of the collaboration between two leaders who have helped build some of the world's most important structures."

- Timothy Johnson, chairman of the CTBUH and design partner with NBBJ