

Projects of Note

SOM's Jin Mao Tower Brings "Much Gold" and Good Luck to Shanghai

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The tallest building in China—and the third tallest in the world—the Jin Mao Tower multiuse complex by Skidmore Owings & Merrill LLP with the Shanghai Institute of Architectural Design and Research, is the pride of the business and financial center of the Pudong economic zone in Shanghai. The 88-story building (offices in the lower 50 floors, and the five-star Grand Hyatt Shanghai hotel on the upper 38 floors) plays against a 6-story podium building (containing the hotel's function areas, a conference center, and 226,000 square feet of retail space), for a total of 3 million square feet. A landscaped courtyard, replete with reflecting pool and seating, softens and complements the tower.

In form, the slender tower is capped with setbacks, suggesting a pagoda on the roof. When lighted against the night, the pagoda



becomes a lantern for the waterfront of the Huang Pu River. A study in glass and steel inside as well as out, the building's interior features an open network of horizontal bridges and vertical circulation spaces that serve as a foil for the display of information technologies within major architectural elements.

The geometry of the tower itself is inspired by the number 8—considered lucky in China—from the use of 88 occupied floors to the proportions for story levels and setbacks. Each segment of the tower is an eighth smaller than the 16-story base. Structurally, it claims as its vertical elements an octagonal reinforced-concrete shearwall, 8 exterior composite columns, and 8 exterior steel columns. At the foundation, high-capacity steel piles sink to a depth of 80 meters.

The Jin Mao Building, whose name means "much gold," was opened on 8/28/98, a lucky date for the Chinese. The building also proved lucky on May 19, 2001, when its architects and owners received a 2001 AIA Honor Award for Interiors at the AIA national convention in Denver. ■

