

# Gang leader

## 建築先鋒

by DANIEL ALLEN

By providing fresh perspective through arresting designs, architect Jeanne Gang's latest hot property is herself

建築師Jeanne Gang以別具趣味的設計開創新視野，她的最新傑作就是個人風格的寫照

**A**S THE WOMAN responsible for one of the world's most elegant and widely feted new skyscrapers, Chicago-based architect Jeanne Gang is remarkably down-to-earth. At the busy office of Studio Gang, the practice she established in 1997, the slim 46-year-old flits between small groups of denim-clad designers and interns, exchanging ideas and democratically steering the creative process. Unassuming and approachable, Gang is the very antithesis of a traditional starchitect.


"Yes, it's true, I've been labelled an 'architectural anti-diva' in many reviews," she says with a ready smile, "but I don't think about it. I just take pleasure in building. My father was a civil engineer and my mother was into arts and crafts, so I guess you could say all the right ingredients were in me from the beginning. Growing up in a rural environment, I started out making tree houses, and it snowballed from there."

Gang's easygoing manner belies her drive, flair and courage – three qualities clearly embodied in the sinuous, flowing contours of the Aqua Tower. Completed late last year, this is the building that catapulted Gang onto the world stage, and it's not hard to see why. Surrounded by cookie-cutter apartment blocks and anodyne towers, the rippled, bleached balconies and aquamarine glass of this soaring 82-storey, 250-metre Gaudiesque masterpiece stand in stark contrast to contemporary Chicago's structural sobriety.



Aqua Tower's flowing balconies were inspired by local rock formations

Aqua Tower的流線型露台，設計靈感來自當地岩石的自然形態



Studio Gang's organic design for Aqua Tower has drawn praise for the elegance of its contours

Studio Gang 旗下的 Aqua Tower，其流麗的自然形態贏得不少讚譽



The curving balconies of the Aqua Tower provide a lofty perch over Chicago

Aqua Tower的曲線形露台，成為於半空鳥瞰芝加哥市容的好地方



An Aqua Tower apartment

位於Aqua Tower的公寓住宅



Jeanne Gang is adept at combining the practical with the poetic

Jeanne Gang擅長將實用與詩般美感相結合

Having won the prestigious Emporis 2009 Skyscraper of the Year award, the Aqua Tower's architectural cachet and stunning panoramic views over the Chicago River and Lake Michigan now make the building one of the Windy City's hottest properties. A mixed-use structure, most of its luxury condos and apartments have already been snapped up, and the first Radisson Blu hotel in the United States, slated to open late next year, will soon occupy the lower 18 floors.

Gang cites childhood memories for the spark of inspiration behind the creation of Aqua Tower's curvaceous exterior. "When I was younger I would travel a lot with my father," she says. "I remember seeing cool rock formations around Lake Michigan with the same kind of striated topography as Aqua's balconies. From a distance they're not so obvious, but up close they really give the building an organic, fluid feel. The outside of the building resembles a vertical landscape."

In a world where super-tall buildings are often interpreted as the ultimate expression of male egotism, it's rare to find a female architect with

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Gang's lofty ambition. Still, she is quick to apportion the credit to her staff for Aqua Tower's success. "It's all about teamwork here," she says. "At Studio Gang the design process is both collaborative and methodical. We collect all the relevant data and map out the parameters first – the creative input comes later. My philosophy of design is really about making some kind of poetry out of all the numbers and science."

Gang believes her talent for combining the practical with the poetic is in part due to several formative years spent in the company of renowned Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas. After training at the University of Illinois, then in Zurich and at Harvard University, she worked for Koolhaas' practice OMA in Rotterdam. "He was a great critic," she says. "That time was really challenging and educational for me, and taught me to work on a whole range of scales."

That ability to think big and small is reflected in Studio Gang's other recent and ongoing work. The practice's portfolio covers an eclectic mix of projects, ranging from urban living, education

AD  
FP (Right)

AD  
FP (Left)



**Multicoloured windows at Columbia College Chicago's Media Production Centre have television test patterns as a reference**

**Columbia College Chicago's Media Production Centre的窗戶色彩繽紛，其設計理念來自電視台測試信號畫面**

and community through to residential, interiors and exhibitions. The flavour is increasingly international, too – Studio Gang's architects designed Zhong Bang Village, a community made up of courtyard dwellings in Shanghai, and a 25-storey residential tower in Hyderabad, India.

Following on from the Aqua Tower, two very different Chicago-based projects completed this year have further enhanced Studio Gang's design credentials, as well as Gang's reputation as one of North America's most environmentally aware

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"These progressive, unique buildings attract visitors to Chicago from all over the globe," says Lynn Osmond, President of the Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF).

A guided tour is the best way to see Chicago's buildings, and those by the CAF are popular. With more than 85 different tours departing daily, visitors can choose historic or modern tours, or a special focus such as Art Deco.

"Every CAF tour is led by a highly trained, volunteer docent," says Osmond. "Our experts guide visitors on the Chicago River and through Chicago streets for an unparalleled view of the city's architecture. Providing authentic, insider information along with fascinating history and anecdotes, these docents make the buildings really come alive."

<http://caf.architecture.org>

Photos: Columbia College Chicago Media Production Centre: Both by Steve Hall – Hedrich Blessing

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## 建築大師

**芝**加哥女建築師Jeanne Gang設計的摩天大樓Aqua Tower，被譽為全球最優雅的建築之一，但這位大師級人物卻非常的平易近人。

現年46歲的Jeanne Gang於1997年成立Studio Gang建築師事務所；在繁忙的辦公室內，身材窈窕的她輕快地穿梭於多組設計師之間，與他們交流意見，毫無架子、親切可人，以開明的態度領導創作過程。她笑說：「沒錯，我被標籤為『建築界的平民天后』，但我並不在意這些言論。建築為我帶來無窮樂趣。」

於去年年底竣工的Aqua Tower，令Gang晉身世界舞台。這幢高82層、總高度達250米的高第風格建築傑作，擁有著酷似波浪的外型、水藍色玻璃外牆及白色露台，與城中的冷酷建築群形成強烈對比。

贏得「Emporis 2009 Skyscraper of the Year」大獎，令Aqua Tower享負盛名，再加上可俯瞰芝加哥河及密歇根湖的壯麗全景，令這幢大樓成為芝加哥最炙手可熱的物業，大部分的豪華套房及公寓已被搶購一空。美國首間Radisson Blu酒店亦將進駐Aqua Tower最低的18個樓層，預定於明年年底開幕。

Aqua Tower流線外型的設計，源自Gang童年時的回憶。她說：「我小時候常與父親旅遊。我還記得密歇根湖的岩石形態，Aqua露台的造型與之非常相似。」

Gang表示：「我的設計理念是在一堆數字與科學論據中創造詩意。」她深信自己能擁有糅合實用與詩情畫意的才華，與早年曾在建築大師Rem Koolhaas的事務

A project revitalising a pond area in Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo included the construction of a multiuse pavilion (top) inspired by a turtle shell and the planting of native plants (above)

芝加哥Lincoln Park Zoo的池區重建項目，包括搭建一個設計靈感來自龜殼的多功能涼亭（最上圖），以及在園區內種植當地植物（上圖）

architects. The first commission, at Lincoln Park Zoo, includes a beautiful wooden pavilion inspired by a turtle shell beside the zoo's South Pond, which has been deepened, purified and made more accessible to the public.

The second project – Columbia College Chicago's US\$21 million Media Production Centre – also has a strong green theme and is equipped with a roof garden, radiant heating and cooling, extensive use of windows for natural illumination, and intelligent lighting. References to film and video dominate the design – a rainbow of glass panels stretches across the building's front like the stripes of a television test pattern, warming the interior with technicoloured bars of light.

Unlike many of today's architects producing eye-catching designs, Gang's buildings are a brilliant balance of form and function. As her star continues to rise, Gang perpetuates a long list of pioneering architects – luminaries such as Louis Sullivan and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe – whose creative efforts relied on the same midwestern pragmatism. Modern Chicago is lucky to have such a talented poet, and master builder. ■

所工作有關。在伊利諾大學畢業後，她到蘇黎世及哈佛進修，然後在Koolhaas位於鹿特丹的OMA事務所工作。她說：「那段時期非常具挑戰性，令我獲益良多。」

Studio Gang的創作範疇廣泛，除了住宅及室內設計等項目，更參與多個國際項目，包括上海的中邦村，及印度海德拉巴的住宅大廈。此外，Studio Gang今年於芝加哥落成的兩個項目亦備受矚目，更突顯Gang對環保的關注。其中位於Lincoln Park Zoo的項目，包括位於動物園South Pond的木構建築，其設計靈感來自龜殼。另一個項目則是Columbia College Chicago耗資2,100萬美元建造的Media Production Centre。設計講究環保，除了有助散熱及降溫的天台花園，還大量採用天然光及智能燈光，並從電影及影像擷取靈感。

有別於時下設計師的耀眼設計，Gang的建築巧妙結合外形及功能；隨著聲譽日隆，她已晉身建築界不朽大師如Louis Sullivan等人的行列。當代芝加哥能得此天才橫溢的建築詩人，實屬幸運。

芝加哥擁有美國多座標誌性的建築，包括Wrigley Building、Tribune Tower、John Hancock Centre及Willis (Sears) Tower等。芝加哥建築基金(CAF)主席Lynn Osmond解釋道：「這些劃時代的獨特建築，吸引世界各地的遊客到訪芝加哥。」參加導賞團是欣賞芝加哥美麗建築的最好方法，而CAF舉辦的導賞團極受歡迎，每天均有超過85個不同類型的團隊出發，由專業導遊帶領遊客參觀指定地點。

Photos: Lincoln Park Zoo pavilion: Both by Daniel Allen

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