



COMMENTABLE ACHIEVEMENT

## W Fort Lauderdale, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

MCLA

**Category:** Whole Building

### Jury Comments

The lighting exhibits the right amount of balance between meeting the practical needs of the hotel and creating a distinctive signature lighting feature for each of the principal public spaces. • By paying attention to how the different surfaces are lit, light becomes its own texture.

### Details

**Client:** DYL Group, Miami

**Architect:** Adache Group Architects,  
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

**Lighting Designer:** MCLA,  
Washington, D.C.

**Interior Designer:** Clodagh,  
New York

**MEP Engineer:** Steven Feller,  
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

**Photographer:** Prakash Patel,  
Washington, D.C.

**Project Size:** 816,628 square feet

**Project Cost:** Withheld

**Lighting Installation Cost:** Withheld

**Watts per Square Foot:** 0.95

### Manufacturers

ALM, Belfer Group, Bega, B-K Lighting,  
Edison Price, Hydrel, Lee Filters, Philips  
Color Kinetics, Specialty Lighting  
Industries, Steng, Tokistar Lighting, USAI



THE HOTEL LOBBY



THE HOTEL'S WHISKEY BLUE BAR



THE ENTRY PORTE COCHÈRE



THE POOL STAIR

With their roughly 50 locations worldwide, the W Hotel chain has set a loose but reliable formula for hip, laid-back hospitality. However, when a Miami development group decided they wanted to bring the franchise to a stretch of oceanfront in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., already brimming with fashionable, unbuttoned beachside resorts, Afache Group Architects and the lighting designers at Washington, D.C.-based MCLA had to up the ante in order to stand out. To compound the challenge, their desire to achieve distinction on the strip was foisted by a local ordinance that forbids flashy light displays. The adjacent beach, while an asset, is also a sea turtle nesting habitat.

"The lighting design was intended to enhance the relaxing beach environment and provide guests with a few unique, playful moments—both indoors and out," says Scott Guendler, senior designer at MCLA. Guendler and his team invented the precast frames and punched openings of the hotel entry with linear neon tubes, pulling the area out from the street and minimizing light pollution. The designers also hung custom LED ring fixtures beneath the 40-foot-high porte cochère,

humanizing the cavernous space and increasing its allure. Recessed in-grade 50W halogen fixtures serve as line dividers, dramatizing guests' experience as they alight from their vehicles.

Inside, the lighting plan unobtrusively emphasizes the architecture while creating moments of spectacle. In the lobby, a custom-designed fixture outfitted with 1W LEDs hangs above a water feature, anchoring the low, ambient light level. Resin bands backlit with RGB color-changing LEDs emit a saturated blue light in the room. The bar has a ceiling hung with blue LED lamps mounted in undulating polished brass tubes. Amber and white MR-16s add warmth and accent to this drinking pad.

But it is the pool, an in itself the case in south Florida, that provides the setting for the most ethereal lighting performance. The stair, encased in a transparent resin shroud, descends into the water, and 50W MR16s outfitted with blue dichroic lenses create a subtle glow, invoking an oceanic majesty. It also doesn't disturb the sea turtles, who go about their own majestic business just a few yards away. **AS**