

The Pritzker Architecture Prize

Press Release

Hyatt Foundation Names New Executive Director for the Pritzker Architecture Prize

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Martha Thorne, currently associate curator of architecture at the Art Institute of Chicago, has been named executive director of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, it was announced today by Thomas J. Pritzker, president of The Hyatt Foundation which sponsors the annual award.

Thorne assumes the post immediately and replaces Bill Lacy, former president of Purchase College in New York, who has been the executive director since 1988. The executive director, while not a voting member of the jury, facilitates deliberations, acts as secretary to the jury, and is responsible for many of the on-going proceedings. Nominations should be directed to her at The Hyatt Foundation, Suite 4700, 71 South Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606. Her e-mail address is MarthaThorne@PritzkerPrize.com

Thorne, who has been with the Art Institute since 1995, has curated such exhibitions as the Pritzker Architecture Prize: The First Twenty-five Years, as well as *Modern Trains and Splendid Stations* and *Bilbao: The Transformation of a City*. She also serves as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Graham Foundation.

Among her many books and articles, she co-authored the recent book, *Masterpieces of Chicago Architecture*; edited *David Adler: The Elements of Style*; co-edited *Skyscrapers: the New Millennium*; and wrote the text for the publication, *The Audrey Jones Beck Building, The Museum of Fine Arts Houston*.

Throughout her career, Thorne has promoted an understanding of architecture through publications, exhibitions, symposia and other activities. Before Chicago, she worked in Spain, producing exhibits and publications for the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation, as well as several other public institutions. She was a member of the editorial board of *Quaderns d'Arquitectura i Urbanisme*, a respected journal published in Barcelona.

"She joins the Pritzker Prize with a broad understanding of international contemporary architecture," said Pritzker, "which is important to our jury that must select each year's laureate from a list of nominees from around the world. There have been 29 laureates chosen since the prize was founded in 1979, only eight of which have been from the U.S."

Generally acknowledged throughout the world as "architecture's most prestigious award," and often described as "the Nobel of architecture," the purpose of the Pritzker Architecture Prize is to honor annually a living architect whose built work demonstrates a combination of those qualities of talent, vision and commitment, which has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture.

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