

Carme Pigem

2017 Laureates Rafael Aranda, Carme Pigem and Ramon Vilalta Ceremony Acceptance Speech

Your majesties, the Emperor and Empress of Japan; Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso; Your excellencies ambassadors, Tom and Margot Pritzker and members of the Pritzker family, ladies and gentlemen.

Emotions, happiness, pride, humility, respect, responsibility, admiration for those who have gone before us and for those who will receive this award in the future.

There is an infinite mixture of many overlapping feelings that we are experiencing now, but the strongest sensation is one of gratitude:

To the Pritzker Family, who for years have been generously supporting and bringing attention to architecture, and we ask that they continue to do this. To each and every member of the jury, to each and every one of our collaborators, to each and every one of our clients and to each and every member of our families, ... to Montse.

Being in this palace, in Japan, brings to the surface other feelings that were awakened when we began our professional career together as RCR

When, for the first time, we experienced this country and its culture, with its exquisite perfection and love for nature, that has accompanied us since then.

We know that the best decision of our lives has been to share architecture together. The second best decision was to do this from our home town, Olot. That we have been able to do this together for so many years is an achievement.

We recognize that we love to dream and we love to build. For us, architecture is the art of materializing dreams throughout a long journey. And on this journey we are pursuing architecture that contains the whole universe, just as the universe is comprised in the most delicate sheet of paper graced with the words of a poet, which help us understand it.

Please allow me to recite a few words of the Buddhist poet Thich Nhat Hanh.

If you are a poet, you will see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper. Without a cloud, there will be no rain; without rain, the trees cannot grow; and without trees, we cannot make paper. The cloud is essential for the paper to exist.

If we look into this sheet of paper even more deeply, we can see the sunshine in it. If the sunshine is not there, the forest cannot grow. ...

And if we continue to look, we can see the logger who cut the tree and brought it to the mill to be transformed into paper. And we see the wheat. We know the logger cannot exist without his daily bread, and therefore the wheat that became his bread is also in this sheet of paper. And the logger's father and mother are in it too. When we look in this way, we see that without all of these things, this sheet of paper cannot exist.

Suppose we try to return one of the elements to its source. Suppose we return the sunshine to the sun. ...Or if we return the logger to his mother, then we have no sheet of paper either. The fact is that this sheet of paper is made up only of "non-paper elements."Without "non-paper elements," like mind, logger, sunshine and so on, there will be no paper. As thin as this sheet of paper is, it contains everything in the universe in it."

Aranda, Pigem and Vilalta, 2017 Laureates (continued)

We must admit that it may not be easy, but our commitment is to awaken emotions in the people who live in the spaces we create. To become conscious of their experience, to comprehend the true nature of things and to transcend the established, to arrive to new and unexpected results.

Architecture is like music, but less ephemeral. It is like poetry, but more prosaic.

All this is because we want to feel and make others feel. It is the part of our lives that we offer to others.

And we want to continue to dream, to wake up again and again, and live this and other magical realities. With the granting of this prize, we are headed along this wonderful journey.

Moltíssimes gràcies, gracias, thank you, domo arigatou gozaimasu!

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