

Bill Lacy 1992 Laureate Alvaro Siza Ceremony Speech

Tonight is a two-pronged celebration; the first is to honor this year's deserving prize recipient, Alvaro Siza; the other is to acknowledge a milestone in the Pritzker Architecture Prize's history—our fifteenth prize—an event which has been given visual form through an exhibition of Laureates' work from 1979 to 1992. We owe a debt to the hard work, talent and perseverance of Keith Walker and Robert Jensen for bringing it to fruition.

On such occasions, it is forgivable and perhaps inevitable to take a brief look backward. The prize was begun in 1978 at a time when little acknowledgment in the form of monetary awards was accorded architects.

There was the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, DC and the Graham Foundation run by John Entenza here in Chicago. Since that time, architects and architecture have become more and more visible in the media and in the minds of the public. In recent years, there has been a heartening increase in recognition to architects and their important role in society, with other prizes joining the Pritzker Prize's lead. We welcome these additional efforts to honor architects for their work. At the same time, we continue to be pleased by the adjective that most often precedes the mention of our prize, "prestigious." Just as we are honored to be regarded as the "Nobel equivalent" in the field of architecture.

The good reputation of the prize that we have enjoyed over the years has prompted the question of what contributes to that fact. The answer is simple. The prize can only be as good as those doing the selecting. We have been fortunate in having had a distinguished and dedicated jury since the Prize's inception, down to the present, and to have had the able and enlightened guidance all these years of our Chairman of the Jury, J. Carter Brown.

This evening's program lists the jury members who selected this year's winner, and I would like to introduce those who are present. In addition to Mr. Brown, whom you have met already, may I present Ada Louise Huxtable, critic, author and preeminent authority on architecture; Toshio Nakamura, editor of the world acclaimed *A+U* magazine and numerous books on architecture. Signor Agnelli and Lord Rothschild are regrettably unable to be with us.

Senor Ricardo Legorreta has the best reason of all for his rare absence from this ceremony. He is accepting the "Architect of America" award from the Federation of Architects of America at the same time as our event.

There are two new members joining the jury who are present this evening and who will assist us in maintaining our high standard for selection in the future: Mr. Frank Gehry, 1989 Pritzker Prize Laureate and world-renowned architect from Los Angeles, and Mr. Charles Correa with his wife Monika, from Bombay, India. He is recipient of the 1990 Gold Medal from the Union of International Architects and a tireless and talented spokesman for architecture of quality in the Third World countries. He will add yet another international dimension to our selection process.

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