

Martha Thorne 2010 Laureates Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa Ceremony Speech

Good evening and welcome to the 2010 Pritzker Architecture Prize Ceremony. Tonight we recognize two architects who have worked together for over 15 years—Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa.

Before the speeches by the Chair of the Jury and the President of the Hyatt Foundation, I would briefly like to recognize some other special guests here tonight. We are pleased to have the following former laureates with us: Kevin Roche 1982, Richard Meier 1984, Hans Hollein 1985, Frank Gehry 1989, Christian de Portzamparc 1994, Rafael Moneo 1996, Renzo Piano 1998, Glenn Murcutt 2002, Thom Mayne 2005, and Jean Nouvel 2008.

Of course, the Pritzker Prize would never be complete without its jury. We are honored to have three former jurors with us tonight: Cesar Pelli, Jorge Silvetti, and former Executive Director of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, Bill Lacy. Thank you for your years of service.

Finally, a few words about the prize itself and the nature of architecture prizes. Today there are numerous awards for architecture, for individual buildings, typologies, materials, styles and so on. It is heartening to see so much attention paid to this field. However, there are several reasons that the Pritzker Architecture Prize stands apart. I admit that I am biased, but I truly believe that this award is at the top of its field. The award was founded in 1979 as an independent award, not reflecting the goals or values of an industry, collective, professional association, or institution. The jury is independent. Each jury member serves a minimum three-year term, and does so on a pro-bono basis. The nominations procedure is extremely open and streamlined. There are no cumbersome letters to write or application forms with weighty portfolios to submit. Nominations are accepted from any architect anywhere in the world. And, just to keep things in perspective, a lot of non-architects are asked by me for their suggestions and advice. Today the Pritzker Architecture Prize is revered at the top of the list of architecture awards.

But, there is one more important reason for the strength, longevity, and continued relevance of the prize. And that is due to the generosity and support of the Pritzker Family and especially due to a person who is here tonight with us. An award-winning person in her own right, please join me in thanking and congratulating the founder of the Pritzker Prize, Mrs. Cindy Pritzker.

Now, I would like to thank you for your attention and I will turn the podium over to the Chair of the Jury, the Lord Palumbo.

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For more information, please contact:

Eunice Kim
Director of Communications
The Pritzker Architecture Prize
Tel: +1 240 401 5649
Email: eunicekim@pritzkerprize.com