

Tom Pritzker **2018 Laureate Balkrishna Doshi** **Ceremony Speech**

This year we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Pritzker Architecture Prize. I need to start by thanking our friends Vicky and Ambassador Bruce Heyman. Without their encouragement and help, we wouldn't be here today.

This anniversary takes place at the delightful intersection of cultures, places, buildings, and artists. We have brought the prize so very close to home, to Canada, with whom we enjoy an uncommon and remarkable relationship. It is fitting that this year's prize is celebrated in Toronto, which is one of the most nationally, ethnically, and religiously diverse cities in the world. Close to 50% of its population is foreign born. Toronto is a city great with varieties. It is a global financial center. It is home to the works of many Pritzker Prize Laureates. These virtues of Toronto serve to accentuate our mourning and deep sadness over the recent assault and tragic loss of life. Toronto's remarkably civil and diverse culture stands in good stead. May this great city never again face such pain. We are gathered in the Aga Khan Museum. I want to acknowledge and thank His Highness Prince Aymin, brother of the Aga Khan who has travelled from Europe to join us. The Aga Khan is the leader of the Nizaris, the largest branch of the Ismaili Shi'a Muslims, the second largest branch of Islam. Nizari teaching emphasizes reason, pluralism, and social justice. The Aga Khan Museum was designed by the Pritzker Prize Laureate, Fumihiko Maki, whose pioneering work fuses the cultures of east and west. The museum he designed has in its permanent exhibition over 1,000 objects that include masterpieces from a broad range of artistic styles and materials that span ten centuries of human history, covering a geographic area that stretches from the shores of the Atlantic and the Iberian Peninsula to China and the Pacific. At a time when so many cultures and countries are beset with disorder it is inspiring to be here in this city, in this museum, celebrating this great architect Balkrishna Doshi. Our gathering echoes the promise of the harmony and stability that architecture, in service to humanity, seeks to attain.

Before we get to the main course, Sri Doshi, I have three people that deserve extended mention because they reflect the lineage of our Prize. Let me start by expressing our gratitude to Lord Palumbo. He has led the Jury and represented the Prize with wit, intelligence, and competence for so many years. Peter's style was a mix of wit, charm and, when needed, the wisdom to be directive. As you might imagine, Chairing this Jury brings some unexpected twists and turns. Peter, I thank you for letting me observe a Master at work. Thank You. I must also extend that Thank You to Hayat Palumbo my dinner date and conscience. Hayat, you spell your first name incorrectly, but you are otherwise perfect.

Our journey has been defined in large part by our juries and particularly our Chairman. Peter was only our third Chairman. He followed Jacob Rothschild and before that Carter Brown. As Peter stepped down, we were in need of a transition that would touch our roots in architecture. Were you to design that person from a clean sheet of paper, it would end up as Glenn Murcutt. Maybe a different accent, but otherwise it would be Glenn Murcutt. Glenn agreed to do this for a year and now two. For those of you who know Glenn and his practice, you will understand why we so appreciate his willingness to take this on. Many years ago, the jury went on retreat to discuss the Prize. Our meetings were in Renzo's offices. I remember asking the group how they would define the Prize. Glenn said that was easy. Since the beginning, he used the Prize to understand excellence. Each year he would study that year's Laureate in order to deepen his understanding of architecture. It was pure Glenn. Inspiring and insightful. Glenn, all of us want to thank you for your contribution as a juror and then our fourth Chairman.

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Tonight, as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, I am filled with awe and gratitude as we honor the vision of my mother and my late-father, Cindy and Jay Pritzker. Forty years ago, when they established the Architecture Prize, they raised this great art to remarkable prominence. The Prize has not only paid tribute to great architects and their artistry but has inspired several generations of young architects. Each year, the night before our Ceremony, we hold a private dinner with our family, the Laureate and past Laureates and our Jurors. It is known as Cindy's Dinner and is a hallowed and sometime boisterous event. Mom, you have brought beauty, fun, elegance and wisdom to the Pritzker Prize family.

In India, as in a few other cultures, if you want to understand someone, you don't ask them, "Who are your parents?" You don't ask, "What do you do for a living or a profession?" You ask, "Who are your teachers and who are your students?" What is your intellectual, spiritual, and cultural genealogy, and to whom do you seek to pass this on? Through this prism we can only see Balkrishna Doshi as the son of Mother India. To come from the lineage of Le Corbusier and Louis Khan introduces us to tonight's Laureate. It gives you a context for what Doshi has brought to the people of India. Now let us look at how Mother India influenced Doshi, and how Doshi has influenced Mother India.

Shanti, shanti, shanti.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna teaches his friend, Arjuna, about the meaning of shanti. Like many important words in every culture and language, shanti has layers of meaning. Let's content ourselves with this explanation. Shanti is peace, the attainment of inner-tranquility. As Krishna tells Arjuna, there are many wars going on within each of us. Wars raging in our own hearts and minds.

Look at the boldness of Doshi, who is at ease with himself as he navigates the inner-clash of cultures and civilizations. He begins his journey by apprenticing to the West. But as you all know, that was just the beginning of his journey. Doshi's journey was not just a professional journey, not just a trip to another continent. He traveled not just to the West, but to the inner depths of his spirit. Doshi then returns to Mother India. His built work is deeply tied to India and its history. He regularly balances modernism and tradition. Note especially his studio, Sangath, which connects nature and the individual. It is a building that summons people to begin. It is a building whose inner-structure summons people to search. His work in India is rooted in its life and climate. Most of all, in returning from the West, Doshi developed an architecture in response to the question, "What can I do with my buildings for people, societies, and communities?" An example of this is the Aranya Low Cost Housing Township designed to establish "a sustainable society" where a mix of economic classes could live together.

His goal is the built work. His purpose is housing to serve people. He cares as much about his art as he does about the life and the pursuit of the spirit that will dwell within the architecture he builds. In the Bhagavad Gita we read, "Approach those who have realized the purpose of the life in question with reverence and devotion. They will instruct you in this wisdom." This describes how Doshi approached great architectural masters of the West. In returning home to India, it was to its people, their communities and societies that he turned to seek wisdom that he might serve them better. In his built work he has opened up gates that invite us into his buildings. His built work interacts with society beyond the building, it interacts with nature in which the building is found, and with those inside the building.

Tom Pritzker, Ceremony Speech (continued)

Margot and I are students of India. We have probably been there 40 times. It is, after all, Mother India. About 15 years ago we wanted to share our passion so we took Frank and Berta Gehry to India. We made pilgrimage to Doshi-ji who showed us the Mill Owners Building which he worked on with Corbusier. To listen to Doshi speak to these buildings gave further depth to our passion for India. For our family, this year's selection resonates deeply.

Sri Doshi, please come forward. It is with great pleasure that I present you with the Pritzker Architectural Prize for the year 2018.

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