

Jay A. Pritzker **1981 Laureate James Stirling** **Ceremony Speech**

You know in this imposing structure with those awesome pillars and the resounding voice, I wish I could invoke some unforgettable prose but I'm afraid I'm unable to. Some five years ago, Carlton [Smith] came into the office to discuss the possibility of establishing an award in a field that had been overlooked by Nobel. As a result of our involvement in the planning, design and construction of hotels, we became fascinated with the field of architecture. The creation of a product, hopefully aesthetically beautiful, in a living environment within commercial constraints seemed to us to combine the highest attributes of man's achievements. I must admit that during the periods between awards, we began to wonder how in the world Carlton had convinced us of the advisability of such a project. The efforts involved in choosing an awardee and preparing for the presentation involves an enormous amount of time and energy, which fortunately Cindy engages in. But each year this effort has been justified by the jury's selection of such eminent architects and delightful gentlemen as Phillip, Luis Barragán and now, James Stirling. Jim Stirling lives up to the highest standards set by his predecessors and yet adds another ingredient to the mix.

We're all familiar with Phillip Johnson's work. In fact, we're surrounded with it throughout modern America. Luis Barragán provided another dimension – architecture that blends incomparably with its landscape. Now Jim Stirling has demonstrated that it's possible to harmonize modern and traditional styles, an increasingly vexatious problem as we try to expand our existing structures without destroying them physically or esthetically. Jim at this point, we normally presented the awardee some tangible evidence of the award. It's a statue done by Henry Moore and named by him, "Ode to Architecture." I promised Cindy I wouldn't explain what really happened but I don't know which takes precedence, a promise to your wife or being honest with 200 illustrious citizens. The truth is I left it at the apartment at home and nobody was home today and I couldn't have it flown here. As a matter of fact, Jim, you're probably lucky because it was quite heavy and I probably would have dropped it on your foot. Therefore, we're going to arrange to have Tom and Margot bring it to London with them when they come in several weeks.

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