

King Juan Carlos I of Spain 2003 Laureate Jørn Utzon Ceremony Speech

I feel very honored to preside over the award ceremony of the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize which this year goes to Jørn Utzon, Danish architect of universal renown who has lived for many years in Mallorca and to whom I direct my most sincere salutations. I very sincerely appreciate The Hyatt Foundation and its President, Mr. Thomas J. Pritzker for offering this opportunity to me and to have selected for the setting in which to award The Pritzker Architecture Prize 2003 the capital of Spain, and specifically, at the site of The Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, a royal academy that was created to promote a program of learning and a program of renovation and whose special sensibility regarding architecture is well evidenced by the renovation of the facade of this building, a work by one of the most outstanding Spanish architects of the 18th century, Juan De Villa Nueva.

Spanish architecture lives today during a time that is especially important, characterized by its creativity, ambition and mutually beneficial dialogue with the most innovative and attractive trends of our time. Work which is highlighted by numerous figures of important works. The Pritzker Prize has been sensitive to this reality with the awarding of the annual prize in 1996 to Rafael Moneo and with the selection of the Guggenheim in Bilbao, for the award ceremony in 1997 to Sverre Fehn. It has become the most prestigious international award in the field of architecture. This prize has consolidated into an essential household reference of respect, admiration and recognition that the greatest architects of today deserve.

The Pritzker Prize this year finds a laureate of the first magnitude in Jørn Utzon, who we send our best wishes, lamenting his absence because of health reasons. Without linguistic worries, without the obsession to make an architecture marked by the submission of one style, his works are direct and refreshing, respectful and daring, unexpected and logical at the same time. Within his characteristic traits he fits his independence and his willingness to reach a characteristic expression, always attentive to the society which he serves. Those who have had the opportunity to personally contemplate the Sydney Opera House with which he excelled as figure of the first order, admire the prodigious integration of this work with its surroundings, which beauty he has been able to enhance.

With this work, Utzon has achieved one of the loftiest goals to which an architect can aspire, to transform oneself into a symbol of a city and even of the country in which it is erected. Few have had a historical vision of architecture so ecumenical and so broad as Utzon. "I am a builder," he said recently. He is, specially, of dreams transformed into realities. We rejoice that an architect of the stature of Utzon has found in Baleares his place of residence, showing a special closeness to the aforementioned land, in the houses that he has built for himself and his own in Mallorca, without seeking applause or external recognition. Be it the first one in Porto Petro, situated on the coast without harming it, or the present, in Sahorta, that celebrates the integrity of that land and its scenery.

King Juan Carlos I of Spain, 2003 Laureate Jørn Utzon (continued)

I conclude my words expressing our congratulations to the Pritzker family for their decisive contribution to the encouragement of contemporary architecture, counting with the support of The Hyatt Foundation. Our congratulations as well to the distinguished members of the jury of this Prize, who with such certainty is preceded by Lord Rothschild. The Queen joins me in thanking all of you for your presence and to reiterate to Jørn Utzon our most sincere congratulations. Thank you very much.

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