

The Pritzker Architecture Prize

2025 Laureate
Liu Jiakun
People's Republic of China

Media Kit



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Media Release Announcing the 2025 Laureate

Liu Jiakun Receives the 2025 Pritzker Architecture Prize

The Pritzker Architecture Prize announces Liu Jiakun, of Chengdu, People’s Republic of China, as the 2025 Laureate of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, the award that is regarded internationally as architecture’s highest honor.

“Architecture should reveal something—it should abstract, distill and make visible the inherent qualities of local people. It has the power to shape human behavior and create atmospheres, offering a sense of serenity and poetry, evoking compassion and mercy, and cultivating a sense of shared community,” expresses Liu.

Intertwining seeming antipodes such as utopia versus everyday existence, history versus modernity, and collectivism versus individuality, Liu offers affirming architecture that celebrates the lives of ordinary citizens. He upholds the transcendent power of the built environment through the harmonizing of cultural, historical, emotional and social dimensions, using architecture to forge community, inspire compassion and elevate the human spirit.

“Through an outstanding body of work of deep coherence and constant quality, Liu Jiakun imagines and constructs new worlds, free from any aesthetic or stylistic constraint. Instead of a style, he has developed a strategy that never relies on a recurring method but rather on evaluating the specific characteristics and requirements of each project differently. That is to say, Liu Jiakun takes present realities and handles them to the point of offering sometimes a whole new scenario of daily life. Beyond knowledge and techniques, common sense and wisdom are the most powerful tools he adds to the designer’s toolbox,” states the 2025 Jury Citation, in part.

Liu creates public areas in populated cities where the luxury of space is largely absent, forging a positive relationship between density and open space. By multiplying typologies within one project, he innovates the role of civic spaces to support the breadth of requisites for a diverse society. West Village (Chengdu, China, 2015) is a five-story project that spans an entire block, visually and contextually contrasting with the matrix of characteristically mid- and high-rise buildings. An open yet enclosed perimeter of sloping pathways for cyclists and pedestrians envelopes its own vibrant city of cultural, athletic, recreational, office and business activities within, while allowing the public to view through to the surrounding natural and built environments. Sichuan Fine Arts Institute Department of Sculpture (Chongqing, China, 2004) displays an alternate solution to maximizing space, with upper levels protruding outward to extend the square footage of a narrow footprint.

“Cities tend to segregate functions, but Liu Jiakun takes the opposite approach and sustains a delicate balance to integrate all dimensions of the urban life,” comments Alejandro Aravena, Chair of the Jury and 2016 Pritzker Prize Laureate. He continues, “In a world that tends to create endless dull peripheries, he has found a way to build places that are a building, infrastructure, landscape and public space at the same time. His work may offer impactful clues on how to confront the challenges of urbanization, in an era of rapidly growing cities.”

Throughout his works, Liu demonstrates a reverence for culture, history and nature, chronicling time and comforting users with familiarity through modern interpretations of classic Chinese architecture. Flat eaves of the Suzhou Museum of Imperial Kiln Brick (Suzhou, China, 2016) and window walls of Lancui Pavilion of Egret Gulf Wetland (Chengdu, China 2013) reimagine the form of pavilions dating back many millennia. Tiered balconies of Novartis (Shanghai) Block - C6 (Shanghai, China, 2014) are reminiscent of towers representing many dynasties. Luyeyuan Stone Sculpture Art Museum

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Media Release (continued)

(Chengdu, China, 2002), housing Buddhist sculptures and relics, is modeled after a traditional Chinese garden, balancing water and ancient stones to reflect the natural landscape. Believing that the human relationship with nature is reciprocal, buildings both emerge and dissolve within their surroundings, such as The Renovation of Tianbao Cave District of Erlang Town (Luzhou, China, 2021) nestled in the lush cliffside landscape of Tianbao Mountain. Local and wild flora is featured in all of his works, as bricks are paved upended to enable grasses to flourish through the core holes, indigenous bamboo groves are planted in new sites, and floors and ceilings are designed with openings to allow the continuance of existing trees.

His honest architecture presents the sincerity of textural materials and processes, displaying imperfections that endure, rather than degrade, through time. He disfavors manufactured product, preferring traditional craft and often using raw local materials that sustain the economy and environment, built for and by the community. The Department of Sculpture building exposes swirling details of authentic Chongqing sand plastering handiwork that are left visible rather than honed. He revives materials—and spirits—upcycling rubble from the ruins of the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake and strengthening it with local wheat fiber and cement to produce fortified bricks with greater physical and economic efficiency than the original. The “Rebirth Bricks” can be found extensively throughout the Novartis building, Shuijingfang Museum (Chengdu, China, 2013) and West Village, his largest work. The devastation also yielded his smallest work to date, Hu Huishan Memorial (Chengdu, China, 2009), in the form of a permanent cement relief tent, exhibited not only for a 15-year-old girl in the aftermath of destruction, but for the collective memory of an entire nation in mourning.

“Liu Jiakun uplifts through the process and purpose of architecture, fostering emotional connections that unite communities,” remarks Tom Pritzker, Chairman of The Hyatt Foundation, which sponsors the award. “There is a wisdom in his architecture, philosophically looking beyond the surface to reveal that history, materials and nature are symbiotic.”

Liu’s career spans over four decades, with more than thirty projects ranging from academic and cultural institutions to civic spaces, commercial buildings and urban planning throughout China. Significant works also include Museum of Clocks, Jianchuan Museum Cluster (Chengdu, China, 2007); Design Department on new campus, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute (Chongqing, China 2006), Lodging Center of China International Practice Exhibition of Architecture (Nanjing, China, 2012), Chengdu High-Tech Zone Tianfu Software Park Communication Center (Chengdu, China, 2010), and Songyang Culture Neighborhood (Lishui, China, 2020).

Liu is the 54th Laureate of the Pritzker Architecture Prize and the founder of Jiakun Architecture, established in 1999. Born in Chengdu, China, he resides and works in his native city. He will be honored at a celebration in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates this spring, and globally with a virtual ceremony video this fall. The 2025 Laureate Lecture and Panel Discussion will be held in May and open to the public in-person and online.

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Media Release (continued)

About the Pritzker Architecture Prize

The Pritzker Architecture Prize was founded in 1979 by the late Jay A. Pritzker and his wife, Cindy. Its purpose is to honor annually a living architect or architects whose built work demonstrates a combination of those qualities of talent, vision and commitment, which has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture.

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Jury Citation

The Pritzker Architecture Prize is conferred in acknowledgment of those qualities of talent, vision, and commitment, which have persistently produced significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture.

In a global context where architecture is struggling to find adequate responses to fast evolving social and environmental challenges, Liu Jiakun has provided convincing answers that also celebrate the everyday lives of people as well as their communal and spiritual identities.

Through an outstanding body of work of deep coherence and constant quality, Liu Jiakun imagines and constructs new worlds, free from any aesthetic or stylistic constraint. Instead of a style, he has developed a strategy that never relies on a recurring method but rather on evaluating the specific characteristics and requirements of each project differently. That is to say, Liu Jiakun takes present realities and handles them to the point of offering a whole new scenario of daily life. Beyond knowledge and technique, he adds common sense and wisdom to the designer's toolbox.

The built environment is often being pulled in opposite directions. While density appears to be a more sustainable solution for people to live together, the scarcity of space usually implies a poor quality of life. Liu Jiakun rethinks the fundamentals of density through cohabitation, crafting an intelligent solution that balances the opposite forces at play. Through transformative projects like the West Village in Chengdu, he reshapes the paradigm of public spaces and of community life. He invents new independent, shared ways of living together in which density does not represent the opposite of an open system. He also enables adaptation, expansion and replicability. Liu Jiakun enhances and welcomes the life that inhabitants bring to his projects, creating an architecture activated by its publics.

In Liu Jiakun's work, identity is as much about the individual as it is about the collective sense of belonging to a place. He revisits the Chinese tradition as a springboard for innovation devoid of nostalgia or ambiguity. For him, identity refers to a country's history, the traces of its cities and the relics of its communities. At the same time, he integrates the local and global dimensions with unprecedented results. In his subtle, memorable museums, Suzhou Museum of Imperial Kiln Brick or the Shuijingfang Museum in Chengdu, he creates new architecture that is at once a historical record, a piece of infrastructure, a landscape, and a remarkable public space. In the Hu Huishan Memorial in Chengdu, he understands that identity is a matter of both collective and personal memory, brilliantly elevating the individual perspective to a foundational element of place-making in order to revive a communal dimension.

Liu Jiakun also seeks a level of technology that is neither high nor low but rather the "appropriate" one based on local wisdom as well as materials and craftsmanship available. Since his early projects, he has broken the current architectural language to introduce the qualities of simplicity, deriving from the resources at disposal. His sincerity in the use of materials lets them speak for what they are, as their integrity does not require mediation or maintenance. It also enables them to age without fear of deterioration because the collective memory is held within them.

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Jury Citation (continued)

To such available cultural and social resources, Liu Jiakun adds nature creating new landscapes within the landscape. From the West Village to the Renovation of Tianbao Cave District of Erlang Town in Luzhou, to the Luyeyuan Stone Sculpture Art Museum in Chengdu, the built and natural environments co-exist in a reciprocal relation and in line with the most ancient Chinese philosophy and tradition.

For embracing rather than resisting the dystopia/utopia dualism and showing us how architecture can mediate between reality and idealism, for elevating local solutions into universal visions, and for developing a language that describes a socially and environmentally just world, Liu Jiakun is named the 2025 Pritzker Prize Laureate.

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Jury Members

Alejandro Aravena (Chair)

Architect, Educator and 2016 Pritzker Laureate
Santiago, Chile

Barry Bergdoll

Architecture Historian, Educator, Curator and Author
New York, New York

Deborah Berke

Architect and Dean, Yale School of Architecture
New York, New York

Stephen Breyer

U.S. Supreme Court Justice
Washington, DC

André Aranha Corrêa do Lago

*Architecture Critic and Secretary for Climate, Energy and Environment,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Brazil*
Brasília, Brazil

Anne Lacaton

Architect, Educator and 2021 Pritzker Laureate
France

Hashim Sarkis

Architect, Educator and Scholar
Boston, Massachusetts and Beirut, Lebanon

Kazuyo Sejima

Architect, Educator and 2010 Pritzker Laureate
Tokyo, Japan

Manuela Lucá-Dazio (Executive Director)

Venice, Italy

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Biography

Liu Jiakun's pathway to architecture was neither linear nor expected.

Born in 1956 in Chengdu, People's Republic of China, he spent much of his childhood in the corridors of Chengdu Second People's Hospital, founded as Gospel Hospital in 1892, where his mother was an internist. He credits the environment of the Christian medical institute for cultivating his lifelong inherent religious tolerance. Although nearly all of his immediate family members were physicians, he displayed an interest for creative arts, exploring the world through drawing and literature, eventually prompting a teacher to introduce architecture as a profession.

At seventeen, Liu was part of China's Zhiqing, or program of "educated youth" assigned to vocational peasant farming in the countryside. Life, at the time, felt inconsequential, until he was accepted to attend the Institute of Architecture and Engineering in Chongqing (renamed Chongqing University) in 1978. Admittedly, he didn't fully comprehend what it meant to be an architect but, "like a dream, I suddenly realized my own life was important".

Liu graduated with a Bachelor of Engineering degree in Architecture in 1982 and was amongst the first generation of alumni tasked with rebuilding China during a transformative time for the nation. Working for the state-owned Chengdu Architectural Design and Research Institute in his early career, he volunteered to temporarily relocate to Nagqu, Tibet (1984–1986), the highest region on earth, because, "my major strength of the time seemed to be my fear of nothing, and, in addition, my painting and writing skills." During those years and the several that followed, he was an architect by day, but an author by night, deeply engrossed in literary creation.

He nearly relinquished his architecture career until attending the 1993 solo architectural exhibition of Tang Hua, a former classmate from university, at the Shanghai Art Museum, reigniting his passion for the profession and fueling a new mindset that he, too, could deviate from prescribed societal aesthetics. He considers this transformational realization—that the built environment could serve as a medium for personal expression—as the moment that his architectural career truly began. He would soon experience his most formative years of intellectual growth, debating the purpose and power of architecture with contemporaries, including artists Luo Zhongli and He Duoling, and poet Zhai Yongming.

"I always aspire to be like water—to permeate through a place without carrying a fixed form of my own and to seep into the local environment and the site itself. Over time, the water gradually solidifies, transforming into architecture, and perhaps even into the highest form of human spiritual creation. Yet, it still retains all the qualities of that place, both good and bad."

He established Jiakun Architects in 1999 in Chengdu, firmly upholding the transcendent power of architecture while understanding that it is a product of community, spirituality, tradition and the preexisting. "Identity is as much about the individual as it is about the collective sense of belonging to a place. Liu Jiakun revisits the Chinese tradition without nostalgic approach nor ambiguity, but as a springboard for innovation," states the 2025 Jury Citation, in part. "[H]e creates new architecture that is at once a historical record, a piece of infrastructure, a landscape and a remarkable public space."

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Biography (continued)

Spanning four decades, Liu, along with his team, has built more than thirty projects, ranging from academic and cultural institutions to civic spaces, commercial buildings and urban planning throughout China, and was selected to design the inaugural Serpentine Pavilion Beijing (2018).

“Writing novels and practicing architecture are distinct forms of art, and I didn’t deliberately seek to combine the two. However, perhaps due to my dual background, there is an inherent connection between them in my work—such as the narrative quality and pursuit of poetry in my designs.”

His written works have included *The Conception of Brightmoon* (Times Literature and Art Publishing House, 2014), exploring the conflict between utopias and human life, *Narrative Discourse and Low-Tech Strategy* (China Architecture & Building Press, 1997), *Now and Here* (China Architecture & Building Press, 2002) and *I Built in West China?* (Today Editorial Department, 2009).

Liu has been featured in international exhibitions including Experimental Architecture by Young Chinese Architects - The 20th UIA World Congress of Architects (1999, Beijing, China); TU MU Young Architecture From China (2001, Berlin, Germany); Urban Creation, Shanghai Biennale (2002, Shanghai, China); the 1st, 3rd and 7th Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture (2005, 2009 and 2017, Shenzhen, China); the 11th and 15th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (2008 and 2016, Venice, Italy); the 56th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (2015, Venice, Italy); Now and Here - Chengdu | Liu Jiakun: Selected Works (2017, Berlin, Germany); and Super Fusion - Chengdu Biennale (2021, Chengdu, China).

Currently, he is a visiting professor at the School of Architecture Central Academy of Fine Arts (Beijing, China), and has previously lectured at Cité de l’architecture et du patrimoine (Paris, France), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States of America), Royal Academy of Arts (London, United Kingdom), and leading institutions in China. Awards have included the Far Eastern Architectural Design, Outstanding Award (2007 and 2017); ASC Grand Architectural Creation Award (2009); Architectural Record China Awards (2010); WA Awards for Chinese Architecture (2016); Building with Nature, Architecture China Award (2020); *Sanlian Lifeweek* City for Humanity Awards for Public Contribution (2020); and UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation, New Design in the Heritage Contexts (2021).

Liu continues to practice and reside in Chengdu, China, prioritizing the everyday lives of fellow citizens through his works.

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Built Works

- 2021** The Renovation of Tianbao Cave District of Erlang Town, Luzhou, People's Republic of China
- 2020** Songyang Culture Neighborhood, Lishui, People's Republic of China
- 2017** OCT-LOFT (Renovation of Ningliang Auto Factory), Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- 2016** Suzhou Museum of Imperial Kiln Brick, Suzhou, People's Republic of China
- 2015** West Village, Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- 2014** Novartis (Shanghai) Block - C6, Shanghai, People's Republic of China
- 2013** Shuijingfang Museum, Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- Lancui Pavilion of Egret Gulf Wetland, Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- Blue Roof Museum (New), Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- 2012** Lodging Center of China International Practice Exhibition of Architecture (CIPEA), Nanjing, People's Republic of China
- 2011** Additions of Banyan district of Xilai old town, Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- Eastern Suburb Memory, Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- 2010** Chengdu High-Tech Zone Tianfu Software Park Communication Center, Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- St John's Church, Chengdu (now Shangxiang Christian Church), Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- 2009** Hu Huishan Memorial, Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- Panda Maternity Ward of Chengdu Panda Base, Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- 2008** Shanghai Xiang-Dong Buddhist Art Museum, Shanghai, People's Republic of China
- 2007** The Public Space in Rose Garden, Guangzhou, People's Republic of China
- Museum of Clocks, Jianchuan Museum Cluster, Chengdu, People's Republic of China

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Built Works (continued)

- 2006** Design Department on new campus, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Chongqing, People's Republic of China
- Shanghai Qingpu District Exhibition Center of New Town Construction, Shanghai, People's Republic of China
- No.5 Tea House in Jinhua Architecture & Art Park, Jinhua, People's Republic of China
- 2005** Ping'anqiao Catholic Church, Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- 2004** Department of Sculpture, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Chongqing, People's Republic of China
- 2003** Motorola Chengdu Software Center, Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- 2002** Luyeyuan Stone Sculpture Art Museum, Chengdu, People's Republic of China

Works in Progress

- The Grand Canal Hangzhou Steelworks Park, Hangzhou, People's Republic of China
- Xichang Jianchuan Museum Cluster – Film Sound Museum & Feature Film Exhibition Hall, Xichang, People's Republic of China
- Yunnan Huize Baiwu Village Librairie Avant-Grade, Qujing, People's Republic of China

Selected Installations

- 2025** Bamboo Fire Tower, Guillin, Guangxi, People's Republic of China
- 2018** Serpentine Pavilion Beijing, Beijing, People's Republic of China
- 2017** The Golden House, Chengdu, People's Republic of China
- 2016** People Mountain People Sea - A Celebration of Everyday Life, The 15th International Architecture Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia 2016, Central Pavilion, Venice, Italy
- 2015** With the Wind 2015 - It is Your Call, The 56th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, Chinese Pavilion, Venice, Italy
- 2014** With the Wind, Series, Chengdu, Shenzhen, Hong Kong, People's Republic of China

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Selected Exhibitions

- 2021** Super Fusion - 2021 Chengdu Biennale, Chengdu Tianfu Art Park, Chengdu, People's Republic of China.
- 2018** Serpentine Pavilion Beijing, WF Central, Beijing, People's Republic of China
- 2017** The 7th SZ-HK Urbanism/Architecture Bi-City Biennale, Nantou Old Town, Nanshan District, Shenzhen, People's Republic of China
- 2016** The 15th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, Central Pavilion, Venice, Italy
- 2015** Now and Here - Chengdu | Liu Jiakun: Selected Works, Andes Architecture Forum, Berlin, Germany
- Other Future - The 56th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, Chinese Pavilion, Venice, Italy
- 2009** City Mobilization - The 3rd Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture, Shenzhen Civic Center & Shenzhen Bay Avenue & Yitian Holiday Plaza, Shenzhen & Hong Kong, People's Republic of China
- 2008** The 11th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, Chinese Pavilion, Venice, Italy
- 2005** City, Open Door! - The 1st Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture, OCT Contemporary Art Terminal (South Area of OCT-LOFT), Shenzhen, People's Republic of China
- 2002** Urban Creation - Shanghai Biennale 2002, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, People's Republic of China
- 2001** TU MU Young Architecture From China, Andes Architecture Forum, Berlin, Germany
- 1999** Experimental Architecture by Young Chinese Architects - The 20th UIA World Congress of Architects, Beijing International Convention Center, Beijing, People's Republic of China

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Selected Awards

- 2022** German Design Award Gold, Suzhou Museum of Imperial Kiln Brick, 2022.
- 2021** UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation - New Design in the Heritage Contexts for Songyang Culture Neighborhood, 2021.
- 2020** *Sanlian Lifeweek* City for Humanity Awards, Public Contribution Award, West Village, 2020.
- Building with Nature, Architecture China Award, 2020.
- 2017** The 9th Far Eastern Architectural Design Award - Outstanding Award, West Village, 2017.
- 2016** WAACA, WA City Regeneration Award, West Village, 2016.
- 2010** Architectural Record China Awards - Best Public Building, Shanghai Qingpu District, Exhibition Center of New Town Construction, 2010.
- Architectural Record China Awards - Best Preservation Project, Shanghai Xiang-Dong Buddhist Art Museum, 2010.
- 2009** ASC Grand Architectural Creation Award, Luyeyuan Stone Sculpture Art Museum, 2009.
- 2007** The 6th Far Eastern Architectural Design Award - Outstanding Award, Shanghai Qingpu District Exhibition Center of New Town Construction, 2007.

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Selected Publications

- 2014** Liu, Jiakun. *The Conception of Brightmoon*, edited by Xi Liu. Times Literature and Art Publishing House, 2014.
- 2009** Liu, Jiakun. *I Built in West China?*, edited by Today. Today Editorial Department, 2009.
- 2002** Liu, Jiakun. *Now and Here*, edited by Wang Mingxian and Du Jian. China Architecture & Building Press, 2002.
- 1997** Liu, Jiakun. *Narrative Discourse and Low-Tech Strategy*, edited by The Architect. China Architecture & Building Press, 1997.

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Ceremony Venue

Created by an exceptional agreement between the governments of Abu Dhabi and France, Louvre Abu Dhabi was designed by Jean Nouvel, 2008 Pritzker Architecture Prize Laureate, and his team, Ateliers Jean Nouvel. Opened on Saadiyat Island in November 2017, the museum is inspired by traditional Islamic architecture and its monumental dome creates a rain of light and a unique social space that brings people together. Louvre Abu Dhabi celebrates the universal creativity of mankind and invites audiences to see humanity in a new light. Through its innovative curatorial approach, the museum focuses on building understanding across cultures: through stories of human creativity that transcend civilizations, geographies, and times.

The museum's growing collection is unparalleled in the region and spans thousands of years of human history, including prehistoric tools, artifacts, religious texts, iconic paintings, and contemporary artworks. The permanent collection is supplemented by rotating loans from 19 French partner institutions, regional and international museums.

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Previous Laureates

Riken Yamamoto, 2024 Laureate

Japan
Presented at the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois

Sir David Alan Chipperfield CH, 2023 Laureate

United Kingdom
Presented at the Ancient Agora, Athens, Greece

Diébédo Francis Kéré, 2022 Laureate

Burkina Faso and Germany
Presented at The Marshall Building, The London School of Economics and Political Science, London, United Kingdom

Anne Lacaton and Jean-Philippe Vassal, 2021 Laureates

France
Presented virtually

Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara, 2020 Laureates

Ireland
Presented virtually

Arata Isozaki, 2019 Laureate

Japan
Presented at the Château de Versailles, Versailles, France

Balkrishna Doshi, 2018 Laureate

India
Presented at the Aga Khan Museum, Toronto, Canada

Rafael Aranda, Carme Pigem and Ramon Vilalta, 2017 Laureates

Spain
Presented at the State Guest House, Akasaka Palace, Tokyo, Japan

Alejandro Aravena, 2016 Laureate

Chile
Presented at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, New York

Frei Otto, 2015 Laureate

Germany
Presented at the New World Center, Miami Beach, Florida

Shigeru Ban, 2014 Laureate

Japan
Presented at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Toyo Ito, 2013 Laureate

Japan
Presented at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston, Massachusetts

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Previous Laureates (continued)

Wang Shu, 2012 Laureate

The People's Republic of China

Presented at the Great Hall of the People, Beijing, The People's Republic of China

Eduardo Souto de Moura, 2011 Laureate

Portugal

Presented at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium, Washington, DC

Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa, 2010 Laureates

Japan

Presented at the Immigration Museum, Ellis Island, New York Bay

Peter Zumthor, 2009 Laureate

Switzerland

Presented at the Palace of the Buenos Aires City Legislature, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Jean Nouvel, 2008 Laureate

France

Presented at the Library of Congress, Washington, DC

Richard Rogers, 2007 Laureate

United Kingdom

Presented at the Banqueting House, Whitehall Palace, London, United Kingdom

Paulo Mendes da Rocha, 2006 Laureate

Brazil

Presented at the Dolmabahçe Palace, Istanbul, Turkey

Thom Mayne, 2005 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion, Millennium Park, Chicago, Illinois

Zaha Hadid, 2004 Laureate

United Kingdom

Presented at the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia

Jørn Utzon, 2003 Laureate

Denmark

Presented at Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, Madrid, Spain

Glenn Murcutt, 2002 Laureate

Australia

Presented at Michelangelo's Campidoglio in Rome, Italy

Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, 2001 Laureates

Switzerland

Presented at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia

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Previous Laureates (continued)

Rem Koolhaas, 2000 Laureate

Netherlands

Presented at the Jerusalem Archaeological Park, Israel

Norman Foster, 1999 Laureate

United Kingdom

Presented at the Altes Museum, Berlin, Germany

Renzo Piano, 1998 Laureate

Italy

Presented at the White House, Washington, DC

Sverre Fehn, 1997 Laureate

Norway

Presented at the construction site of the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain

Rafael Moneo, 1996 Laureate

Spain

Presented at the construction site of the Getty Center, Los Angeles, California

Tadao Ando, 1995 Laureate

Japan

Presented at the Grand Trianon and the Palace of Versailles, France

Christian de Portzamparc, 1994 Laureate

France

Presented at The Commons, Columbus, Indiana

Fumihiko Maki, 1993 Laureate

Japan

Presented at Prague Castle, Czech Republic

Alvaro Siza, 1992 Laureate

Portugal

Presented at the Harold Washington Library Center, Chicago, Illinois

Robert Venturi, 1991 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at Palacio de Iturbide, Mexico City, Mexico

Aldo Rossi, 1990 Laureate

Italy

Presented at Palazzo Grassi, Venice, Italy

Frank O. Gehry, 1989 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at Todai-ji Buddhist Temple, Nara, Japan

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Previous Laureates (continued)

Oscar Niemeyer, 1988 Laureate

Brazil

Presented at the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois

Gordon Bunshaft, 1988 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois

Kenzo Tange, 1987 Laureate

Japan

Presented at the Kimball Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

Gottfried Böhm, 1986 Laureate

Germany

Presented at Goldsmiths' Hall, London, United Kingdom

Hans Hollein, 1985 Laureate

Austria

Presented at the Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens, San Marino, California

Richard Meier, 1984 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

Ieoh Ming Pei, 1983 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York

Kevin Roche, 1982 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois

James Stirling, 1981 Laureate

United Kingdom

Presented at the National Building Museum, Washington, DC

Luis Barragán, 1980 Laureate

Mexico

Presented at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC

Philip Johnson, 1979 Laureate

United States of America

Presented at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC

About the Medal



The bronze medallion awarded to each Laureate of the Pritzker Architecture Prize is based on designs of Louis Sullivan, famed Chicago architect generally acknowledged as the father of the skyscraper. On one side is the name of the prize. On the reverse, three words are inscribed, "firmness, commodity and delight." These are the three conditions referred to by Henry Wotton in his 1624 treatise, *The Elements of Architecture*, which was a translation of thoughts originally set down nearly 2,000 years ago by Marcus Vitruvius in his *Ten Books on Architecture*, dedicated to the Roman Emperor Augustus. Wotton, who did the translation when he was England's first ambassador to Venice, used the complete quote as: "The end is to build well. Well-building hath three conditions: commodity, firmness and delight."

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History of the Prize

The Pritzker Architecture Prize was established by The Hyatt Foundation in 1979 to annually honor a living architect whose built work demonstrates a combination of those qualities of talent, vision and commitment, which has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture. It has often been described as “architecture’s most prestigious award” or as “the Nobel of architecture.”

The prize takes its name from the Pritzker family, whose international business interests, which include the Hyatt Hotels, are headquartered in Chicago. They have long been known for their support of educational, social welfare, scientific, medical and cultural activities. Jay A. Pritzker, who founded the prize with his wife, Cindy, died on January 23, 1999. His eldest son, Thomas J. Pritzker, has become chairman of The Hyatt Foundation. In 2004, Chicago celebrated the opening of Millennium Park, in which a music pavilion designed by Pritzker Laureate Frank Gehry was dedicated and named for the founder of the prize. It was in the Jay Pritzker Pavilion that the 2005 awarding ceremony took place.

Tom Pritzker explains, “As native Chicagoans, it’s not surprising that we are keenly aware of architecture, living in the birthplace of the skyscraper, a city filled with buildings designed by architectural legends such as Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies van der Rohe and many others.”

He continues, “In 1967, our company acquired an unfinished building which was to become the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. Its soaring atrium was wildly successful and became the signature piece of our hotels around the world. It was immediately apparent that this design had a pronounced effect on the mood of our guests and attitude of our employees. While the architecture of Chicago made us cognizant of the art of architecture, our work with designing and building hotels made us aware of the impact architecture could have on human behavior.”

And he elaborates further, “So in 1978, when the family was approached with the idea of honoring living architects, we were responsive. Mom and Dad (Cindy and the late Jay A. Pritzker) believed that a meaningful prize would encourage and stimulate not only a greater public awareness of buildings, but also would inspire greater creativity within the architectural profession.” He went on to add that he is extremely proud to carry on that effort on behalf of his family.

Many of the procedures and rewards of the Pritzker Prize are modeled after the Nobel Prize. Laureates of the Pritzker Architecture Prize receive a \$100,000 grant, a formal citation certificate, and since 1987, a bronze medal. Prior to that year, a limited edition Henry Moore sculpture was presented to each Laureate.

Nominations are accepted from all nations; from government officials, writers, critics, academicians, fellow architects, architectural societies or industrialists, virtually anyone who might have an interest in advancing great architecture. The prize is awarded irrespective of nationality, race, creed, gender or ideology.

The nominating procedure is continuous from year to year, closing each November. Nominations received after the closing are automatically considered in the following calendar year. The final selection is made by an international jury through undisclosed deliberations and voting.

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The Evolution of the Jury

The first jury, assembled in 1979, consisted of the late J. Carter Brown, then director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC; the late J. Irwin Miller, then chairman of the executive and finance committees of Cummins Engine Company; the late César Pelli, architect and at the time, Dean of the Yale University School of Architecture; the late Arata Isozaki, architect from Japan and future 2019 Pritzker Prize Laureate; and the late Kenneth Clark (Lord Clark of Saltwood), noted English author and art historian.

Jury members are assembled from around the world and reflect a diversity of societies, professions and experiences. Jurors are invited to serve for a minimum three-year tenure, and the gradual changes over time in the jury composition allow for a balance between stability and new perspectives on the committee. Lord Rothschild (London, UK) was Chair of the Pritzker Prize Jury from 2002–2004. Lord Peter Palumbo (London, UK), well-known architectural patron and former chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain, former trustee of the Mies van der Rohe Archives of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and former chairman of the trustees, Serpentine Galleries, served as Chair from 2005–2016 and continued as a member through 2018. Glenn Murcutt (Sydney, Australia), 2002 Pritzker Prize Laureate, joined the Jury in 2011 and held the Chair position from 2017–2018. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer (Washington, D.C.), joined the Jury in 2012, was appointed Chair from 2019–2020, and presently remains a member of the Jury.

The current Jury Chair, since 2021, is Alejandro Aravena (Santiago, Chile), 2016 Pritzker Prize Laureate, who leads fellow jury members Barry Bergdoll (New York, New York, USA), Meyer Schapiro Professor of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University; Deborah Berke (New York, New York, USA), Edward P. Bass Dean of the Yale School of Architecture and architect; André Aranha Corrêa do Lago (Brasília, Brazil), Secretary for Climate, Energy and Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Brazil, and architecture critic; Anne Lacaton (Paris, France), 2021 Pritzker Prize Laureate and architect; Hashim Sarkis (Boston, Massachusetts, USA), Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, architect and scholar; and Sejima Kazuyo (Tokyo, Japan), 2010 Pritzker Prize Laureate and architect.

Others who have served include people from the world of business such as the late Thomas J. Watson, Jr. (Greenwich, Connecticut, USA), former chairman of IBM; the late Giovanni Agnelli (Turin, Italy), former chairman of Fiat; Rolf Fehlbaum (Basel, Switzerland), then chairman of Vitra; and the late Ratan N. Tata (Mumbai, India), Chairman of Tata Trusts.

Critics, journalists and curators composing the Jury have included the late Toshio Nakamura (Tokyo, Japan), former editor of *a+u* in Japan; the late Ada Louise Huxtable (New York, New York, USA), author and architecture critic and the longest serving juror to date; Victoria Newhouse (New York, New York, USA), architectural historian and author; Karen Stein (New York, New York, USA), writer, editor and architectural consultant in New York; and Kristin Feireiss (Berlin, Germany), architecture curator, writer and editor.

Numerous architects from around the world have served including the late Philip Johnson, inaugural 1979 Laureate; the late Kevin Roche, 1982 Laureate; the late Ricardo Legorreta (Mexico City, Mexico); the late Fumihiko Maki (Tokyo Japan), 1993 Laureate; the late Charles Correa (Mumbai, India); Frank Gehry (Los Angeles, California, USA), 1989 Laureate; Jorge Silvetti (Boston, Massachusetts), architect and professor of architecture at Harvard University Graduate School of Design.

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The Evolution of the Jury (continued)

Since 2000, there have been many outstanding architects associated with the Pritzker Prize Jury including Carlos Jimenez (Houston, Texas) architect and professor at Rice University; the late Balkrishna Vitaldas Doshi (Ahmedabad, India), 2018 Pritzker Prize Laureate; Shigeru Ban (Tokyo, Japan), 2014 Pritzker Prize Laureate, architect and professor at Keio University; Renzo Piano (Paris, France), 1998 Pritzker Prize Laureate and architect; the late Zaha Hadid (London, United Kingdom), 2004 Pritzker Prize Laureate and architect; Juhani Pallasmaa (Helsinki, Finland), architect, professor and author; Yung Ho Chang (Beijing, The People's Republic of China), architect and educator; the late Richard Rogers (London, United Kingdom), 2007 Pritzker Prize Laureate and architect; Benedetta Tagliabue (Barcelona, Spain), Italian architect and educator; and Wang Shu (Hangzhou, The People's Republic of China), 2012 Pritzker Prize Laureate, Chinese architect and educator.

Manuela Lucá-Dazio (Venice, Italy) is the current Executive Director of the Pritzker Prize and the former Executive Director of the Department of Visual Arts and Architecture of La Biennale di Venezia. Martha Thorne (Madrid, Spain), former Dean of IE School of Architecture and Design and former associate curator of architecture at the Art Institute of Chicago was Executive Director from 2005–2021, following the late Bill Lacy, architect and advisor to the J. Paul Getty Trust, and former president of the State University of New York at Purchase, who was Executive Director from 1998 to 2005. Previous secretaries to the jury were the late Brendan Gill, who was architecture critic of *The New Yorker*, and the late Carleton Smith. The late Arthur Drexler, former Director of the Department of Architecture and Design at The Museum of Modern Art in New York City, was a consultant to the jury for many years.

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Pritzker Ceremonies Through the Years

Soon after establishing the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 1979, the Pritzker family began a tradition of moving the award ceremonies to architecturally and historically significant venues throughout the world. Befitting a truly international prize, the ceremony has been held in seventeen countries on four continents from North and South America to Europe to the Middle East to Far East Asia.

For the first three years of the Prize, the ceremony was held at historic Dumbarton Oaks in the Georgetown neighborhood of Washington, D.C. USA, where the first Laureate, Philip Johnson, designed a major addition to the estate. During the fourth year of the Pritzker Prize, the ceremony traveled for the first time, to the Art Institute of Chicago.

It wasn't until 1986 that the Pritzker Prize was awarded at an international location, to Goldsmith's Hall in London, UK. Since then, the ceremony has been hosted in Europe thirteen additional times in nine countries, thrice in the United Kingdom and twice each in Spain, Italy and France. Beyond Europe and the USA, the Prize has traveled thrice to East Asia, twice to the Middle East and once to Latin America.

The ceremony has taken place at five UNESCO World Heritage sites. In 1989, Frank Gehry was honored at the 8th century Buddhist temple Todai-ji in Nara, Japan. Tadao Ando and then Arata Isozaki, in 1995 and 2019, respectively, were celebrated at the Palace of Versailles, France. In 2001, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron were awarded jointly at Monticello in Virginia, USA. Paulo Mendes da Rocha was commemorated at Dolmabahçe Palace in Istanbul, Turkey in 2006 and Sir David Chipperfield CH was recognized at the Ancient Agora of Athens, Greece, which dates back to the 6th century BCE.

Historically significant sites have served as venues for the prize, including the 1991 ceremony at the Palace of Iturbide in Mexico City, Mexico, where the first Emperor of Mexico was crowned, the 9th century Prague Castle in the Czech Republic in 1993, and at the foot of Temple Mount in Jerusalem Archaeological Park, Israel in 2000. In 2002, the ceremony occurred on one of the seven traditional hills of Rome, Italy in Michelangelo's monumental Piazza di Campidoglio. In 2004, the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia, comprised of palaces of czars, hosted the ceremony honoring the first female winner of the award, Zaha Hadid. In 2010, the ceremony was held in the middle of New York Harbor, USA, at Ellis Island's Immigration Museum.

In 2012, the Prize ceremony was held for the first time in the People's Republic of China. Coincidentally, Chinese architect Wang Shu was the appointed Laureate and received the award in Beijing's Great Hall of the People. Shu was not the first architect to be honored in his home country, but as ceremony locations are usually chosen each year long before the Laureate is selected, there is no direct relationship between the honoree and the ceremony venue.

As architecture is as much art as design, the Pritzker Prize ceremony has been held in numerous museums including New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, USA, in 1983; Washington, D.C.'s National Gallery of Art, USA, in 1984; Fort Worth's Kimbell Art Museum, Texas, USA, in 1987; Bilbao's Guggenheim Museum, Spain in 1997; Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum, Netherlands, in 2014; and Toronto's Aga Kahn Museum, Canada in 2018. American libraries have been a popular venue choice, including the Huntington Library, San Marino, California in 1985; the Harold Washington Library in Chicago in 1992; the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. in 2008; and the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston, Massachusetts in 2013.

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Pritzker Ceremonies Through the Years (continued)

The Pritzker Prize ceremony often visits newly opened or unfinished buildings such in 1996, when the occasion was held at the construction site of the Getty Center, Los Angeles, USA. In 2005, the ceremony was held at the new Jay Pritzker Pavilion at Chicago's Millennium Park, designed by 1989 Laureate Frank Gehry. In 2022, the ceremony took place at the recently opened Marshall Building, London School of Economics and Political Science, designed by Grafton Architects, led by 2020 Laureates Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara.

Heads of state have been among the many dignitaries to attend Pritzker Prize ceremonies. U.S. Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama attended ceremonies in Washington, D.C. in 1998 and 2011 respectively, the former being held at the White House. The King of Spain attended the 2003 ceremony at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando in Madrid, Spain, and the President of the Czech Republic and the Prime Minister of Turkey also attended ceremonies when held in their respective countries in 1993 and 2006. Their Majesties, the Emperor and Empress of Japan, attended the 2017 ceremony at the Akasaka Palace, Tokyo, Japan, originally designed as the residence for the Crown Prince in 1909.

In 2020 and 2021, special ceremony videos were produced and shared virtually due to limitations associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Farrell and McNamara, and 2021 Laureates Anne Lacaton and Jean-Philippe Vassal, and dignitaries filmed their remarks remotely, at public and private locations around the world including the Long Room, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland; the State Reception Room, Áras an Uachtaráin, Dublin, Ireland; Palacio de Liria, Madrid, Spain; Fort of Bregançon, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, France; and at built works by the Laureates including Frac Grand Large—Hauts-de-France, Dunkerque, France and Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France.

The 2024 ceremony returned to the Art Institute of Chicago, this time in the modern wing designed by Renzo Piano, in the hometown of Cindy Pritzker, who co-founded the award with her late husband, Jay A. Pritzker in 1979, in honor of her centennial birthday.

This season, the Pritzker Prize will travel to the Arab world for the first time, celebrating the 2025 Laureate in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

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