

**Lord Palumbo  
2013 Laureate Toyo Ito  
Ceremony Speech**

Just over a century ago, in 1910 to be precise, a gentleman by the name of John Collins Bossidy coined a jingle for a toast at the Holy Cross Alumni Reunion Dinner in Boston. With the passage of time the words of that jingle became so well-known, so popular, and so celebrated, that it came as no surprise when it achieved immortality in The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations where it remains, incidentally, to this day! Bostonians, of course, will know it by heart; whilst for others it may be no more than a faded memory. It goes like this:

'And here in good old Boston,  
The home of the bean and the cod,  
Where the Lowell's talk only to Cabots,  
And the Cabot's talk only to God'

If we were tempted to re-formulate these words in the context of this evening's stellar event, I suppose we might say:

'And here in good old Boston,  
In the glorious month of May,  
We come to honour the Pritzker,  
On JFK's Birthday!'

Be that as it may, it really is an enormous privilege to stand in the John F Kennedy Library Building, in front of such distinguished company, whilst calling to mind at one and the same time, the words of President Kennedy himself during the course of a speech that he gave at Amherst College, fifty years ago, in 1963: 'And the nation', he said, 'that disdains the mission of art, invites the fate of having nothing to look backward to with pride, and nothing to look forward to with hope'. Now, it must be the kiss of death for any nation to be deprived of pride or hope, but happily those two precious commodities are on display in abundance to-day first of all, 'From this time and place' as President Kennedy would have said of his beloved city of Boston: And now, with the Award of this year's Pritzker Prize for Architecture to the Japanese Master, Toyo Ito.

For well over 30 years, Toyo Ito has been on a voyage of discovery. Had he been a navigator in the mould of Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, or James Cook, he would have been Master of the good ship 'Innovation' ploughing uncharted waters with only the stars in the night sky and his own unerring conceptual instinct as a guide. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, he would have made landfall successfully time and time again at points of the compass quite unknown to others, turning concept into reality in the process: And equally impressive, he would have circumnavigated the globe, and found for each and every port of call a new and different architectural solution suited to specific need and environment.

The buildings that have emerged from his hand are superbly executed, concept merging seamlessly and effortlessly with reality, to produce an ordered calm that is all too rarely achieved. In addition, his acute sense of social responsibility to those who inhabit his buildings, offers them the utmost versatility within which to fulfil their varying activities.

The work involved in bringing these projects to a successful conclusion is prodigious, yet Toyo Ito still finds time to devote to the mentoring of aspiring young architects, encouraging them to develop pioneering techniques of their own. Only an endlessly patient, open, and generous mind, together with a breadth of palette that knows no bounds, could contemplate such a program that continues to break new ground with every passing year.

**Lord Palumbo, 2013 Laureate Toyo Ito (continued)**

The long and arduous voyage of exploration and discovery has been a resounding success. It has enabled Toyo Ito to perfect an architectural syntax of his own, combining structural and technical ingenuity, with clarity of form. It has underlined the challenge that all great architects confront, accept, and overcome, - namely, that the creative process is a lonely and an isolating experience, initiated at high altitude, where the wind howls and the air is thin, with no guarantee of success, but simply the thrill of the chase of an elusive, three-dimensional vapour-trail, otherwise known as Vision. And finally this resounding success has brought the revelation that however brutal the battering of a ship by a storm of epic proportions there always follows the promise of a dawn of unimaginable beauty: a soft swell: and the quiet satisfaction of dropping anchor in a safe, untroubled, haven.

Toyo Ito has been called an Architect for All Seasons, and it is true that his buildings have about them a timeless, magical aura that represents his distillation of a lifetime's experience. As we are honoured to name Toyo Ito the Laureate of the 2013 Pritzker Prize for Architecture, we are left to ponder the rhetorical question: 'Who could possibly ask for more?'

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Before stepping down, I would like to introduce to you the individual members of the jury who I will ask to stand as I call out their names in alphabetical order.

The distinguished architect from Santiago, Chile, Alejandro Aravena.

The distinguished Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States of America, from Washington DC, Stephen Breyer.

The distinguished art historian, writer, architectural curator, communicator and educator extraordinary, from Berlin, Germany, Kristin Feireiss.

The distinguished architect and Pritzker Prize Laureate in 2002, from Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, Glenn Murcutt.

The distinguished architect, architectural historian and professor, from Helsinki, Finland, Juhani Pallasmaa.

The distinguished industrialist and until recently Chairman of the Group that bears his name, from Mumbai, India, Ratan Tata.

And last, but by no means least, the distinguished architect and educator, from Beijing, the People's Republic of China, Yung Ho Chang.

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