

EMILIO AMBASZ

CURRICULUM VITAE

Emilio Ambasz, born in 1943 in Argentina, studied at Princeton University. He completed the undergraduate program in one year and earned, the next year, a Master's Degree in Architecture from the same institution. He served as Curator of Design at the *Museum of Modern Art*, in New York (1970-76), where he directed and installed numerous influential exhibits on architecture and industrial design, among them "*Italy: The New Domestic Landscape*," in 1972; "*The Architecture of Luis Barragan*," in 1974; and "The Taxi Project," in 1976. His most recent book, Natural Architecture, Artificial Design, was published by Electa in 2001.

Mr. Ambasz was a two-term President of the *Architectural League* (1981-85). He taught at Princeton University's School of Architecture, was visiting professor at the *Hochschule für Gestaltung* in Ulm, Germany, and has lectured at many important American universities.

Mr. Ambasz' large number of prestigious projects include the **Mycal Sanda Cultural Center** in Japan, the **Museum of American Folk Art** in New York City; and an innovative design of the **Conservatory at the San Antonio Botanical Center**, Texas, which was inaugurated in 1988. Among his award winning projects are the **Grand Rapids Art Museum** in Michigan, winner of the *1976 Progressive Architecture Award*; a house for a couple in Cordoba, Spain, winner of the *1980 Progressive Architecture Award*; and for the **Conservatory at the San Antonio Botanical Center** in Texas he was awarded the *1985 Progressive Architecture Award*, the *1988 National Glass Association Award for Excellence in Commercial Design*, and the highly esteemed *1990 Quaternario Award* for high technological achievement.

His **Banque Bruxelles Lambert** in Lausanne, Switzerland, a bank interior, received the *1983 Annual Interiors Award* as well as a *Special Commendation* from the jury. His design for the Banque Bruxelles Lambert branch in Milan, Italy, and his design for their New York City branch at Rockefeller Center have been completed. He won the *First Prize* and *Gold Medal* in the closed competition to design the Master Plan for the **Universal Exhibition of 1992**, which took place in Seville, Spain, to celebrate the 500th anniversary of America's discovery. This project was also granted the *1986 Architectural Projects Award*; from the *American Institute of Architects*/New York.

The headquarters he designed for the **Financial Guaranty Insurance Company of New York** won the *Grand Prize* of the *1987 International Interior Design Award* of the United Kingdom, as well as the *1986 IDEA Award* from the *Industrial Designers Society of America* (IDSA). He won *First Prize* in the 1986 closed competition for the *Urban Plan for the Eschenheimer Tower* in Frankfurt, West Germany.

The magazine **Progressive Architecture** in 1987 and the *American Institute of Architects, New York*, in its *1986 Architectural Projects Award*, cited for awards the **Mercedes Benz Showroom** design.

Mr. Ambasz represented America at the *1976 Venice Biennale*. He has been the subject of numerous international publications as well as museum and art gallery exhibitions, principal among them the *Leo Castelli Gallery*, the *Corcoran Gallery*, the *Museum of Modern Art*, New York and the *Philadelphia* and *Chicago Art Institutes*. An exhibition entitled "*Emilio Ambasz: 10 Years of Architecture, Graphic and Industrial Design*", was held in Milan in the fall of 1983, traveling to Madrid in May '84, and Zurich in the fall of '84.

The *Axis Design and Architecture Gallery* of Tokyo dedicated a special exhibition of his work in April 1985. In 1986, the *Institute of Contemporary Art of Geneva*, Switzerland at "*Halle Sud*" and, in 1987, the "*Arc-en-Ciel*" Gallery of the *Centre of Contemporary Art* in Bordeaux, France also presented one-man shows of his work.

In 1989, a retrospective of Mr. Ambasz' architectural designs, "*Emilio Ambasz: Architecture*", was held at *The Museum of Modern Art*, New York; and a second traveling exhibition, "*Emilio Ambasz: Architecture, Exhibition, Industrial and Graphic Design*", was held in June of 1989 at the *San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art*, traveling to, among others, the *Musee des Arts Decoratifs de Montreal*, the *Akron Art Museum* in Ohio, the *Art Institute of Chicago* in Illinois, and the *Laumeier Sculpture Park* in St. Louis. Another retrospective of Mr. Ambasz' complete works was held in 1993 at the *Tokyo Station Gallery* in Japan, and in 1994 at the *Centro Cultural Arte Contemporaneo* in Mexico City, as well as in other locations in South America and Europe.

Major international publications, **Domus**, **ON**, **Space and Design**, **Architectural Record** and **Architecture plus Urbanism**, among others, have dedicated special issues to his architectural work. In 1989, *Rizzoli International Publications* printed a monograph of Mr. Ambasz' work to coincide with his exhibition at *The Museum of Modern Art*. In 1993 *Rizzoli International Publications* printed a second monograph chronicling Mr. Ambasz' complete works.

Mr. Ambasz also holds a number of industrial and mechanical design patents. Since 1980 he has been the Chief Design Consultant for the *Cummins Engine Co.*, a company internationally celebrated for its enlightened support of architecture and design. Mr. Ambasz has received numerous industrial design awards. Included among them are the *Gold Prize* awarded for his co-design of the **Vertebra Seating System** by the IBD (USA) in 1977, the *SMAU Prize* (Italy) in 1979, and the coveted *Compasso d'Oro* (Italy) in 1981. In 1991 Mr. Ambasz was again awarded the *Compasso d'Oro* (Italy) prize for his new seating design, **Qualis**.

The **Vertebra** chair is included in the *Design Collections* of the *Museum of Modern Art*, New York, and the *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York. *The Museum of Modern Art*, New York, has also included in its *Design Collection* his 1967 3-D Poster **Geigy Graphics** and his **Flashlight**, a design also cited for awards by the *Compasso d'Oro* (Italy) in 1987 and the *IDSA* in 1987. His design for Cummins' **N14 Diesel Engine** won the 1985 *Annual Design Review* from *Industrial Design* magazine. This publication also awarded him similar prizes in 1980 for his **Logotec** spotlight range (which also received the 1980 *IDSA Design Excellence Award*), in 1983 for the **Oseris** spotlight range, as well as in 1986 for his design of **Escargot**, an air filter designed for *Fleetguard Incorporated*.

In 1987, the *Industrial Designer's Society of America* granted its *Industrial Design Excellence* top award for his **Soffio**, a modular lighting system. In 1988, the *IDSA* awarded him the same top honor and in 1989, the *ID Designer's Choice Award* for design excellence and innovation was given for **AquaColor**, a water color set. In 1992, *IDSA* again awarded Mr. Ambasz top honors for his innovative design of the **Handkerchief Television**, as well as awards for his Sunstar **Toothbrushes** and the **Soft Notebook**, and in 2000, the *IDSA/Business Week GOLD AWARD for Design Excellence* went to Mr. Ambasz for **Saturno**, an innovative street lighting system. The *Tenth Biennial of Industrial Design* (BIO 10, Ljublianna, 1984) granted Mr. Ambasz their *Jury Special Award* "for his many contributions to the design field."

In 1997, Ambasz received the *Vitruvius Award* from the *Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes* for the innovative quality in his work. Recently, the **Mycal Cultural Center** in Shin-Sanda, constructed within close proximity to the epicenter of the devastating Kobe earthquake, received a special award from the *Japanese Department of Public Works*. Its high quality of construction and structural integrity allowed it to withstand this overwhelming natural disaster. This building, the **Mycal Cultural Center at Shin Sanda**, Japan, received the *2000 Saflex Design Award*.

In 1999, his design for **Cummins Signature 600 Engine** received an *Industrial Designers Society of America/Business Week Award for Design Excellence* and in 2000 he received from the same group the *Gold Award* for his design of **Saturno**, an urban lighting pole system. The very prestigious *American Institute of Architects/Business Week Architectural Award* was granted in 2000 to Mr. Ambasz for his design of the **Fukuoka Prefectural and International Hall** in Fukuoka, Japan. The same building received in 2001 the *First Prize* for environmental architecture from the *Japanese Institute of Architects*. **Monument Towers** in Phoenix, Arizona, was awarded the *American Architectural Award* in 2002, sponsored by The Chicago Athenaeum. In 2001, Mr. Ambasz received the coveted *Compasso d'Oro* (Italy) for an unprecedented third time for his design of **Saturno**. Mr. Ambasz was awarded Gold in *iF design award 2003* with his chair design **Stacker** sponsored by iF (International Forum for Design).

Mr. Ambasz is the author of several books on architecture and design. The most recent publications on his work are: Natural Architecture, Artificial Design, published by Electa in 2001, Emilio

Ambasz – A Technological Arcadia by Fulvio Irace published by Skira in 2004, Emilio Ambasz – Casa de Retiro Espiritual with photographs by Michele Alassio and an essay by Peter Buchanan, which was published on the occasion of the exhibition of the Casa de Retiro Espiritual at The Museum of Modern Art, New York in 2005.